

Meeting: [Children's Overview and Scrutiny Board](#) **Date:** [29th July 2024](#)

Wards affected: [All](#)

Report Title: [Young Carers Service](#)

When does the decision need to be implemented? [Immediately](#)

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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The Young Carers Service transferred back to Torbay Council on the ^{1st} of June 2023 following a period of the service being run by Torbay Youth Trust. It was clear that there had been some challenges experienced by the service during the pandemic, when children and young people were not in school and social activities had to be put on hold. The service had returned to standard practice when it was able, however there were delays to assessments and transition reviews being undertaken and there was a clear need for service to 'catch up' with the backlog of transition reviews needed.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to give an overview of the current situation, a review of the Young Carers Service and identify existing areas of need against the U25 Strategy and Action Plan and to highlight the need for investment going forward.
- 1.3 The Young Carers Service works closely with the Young Adult Carers (YAC) service and Torbay Carers (Adult carers service) to ensure the actions set out in the Action Plan are completed, and progress is made. The areas of shared concern are still access to appropriate mental health support for carers, services available to young carers (outside of the carers services) during the transition into adulthood, identification of young carers by adult services such as Adult Social Care, Substance Misuse Services and Mental Health Services. Work is ongoing in all these areas to improve the current situation and the experience of carers and therefore not included in this proposal.

2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

- 2.1 The proposals in this report help us to deliver our vision of a healthy, happy and prosperous Torbay by recognising the importance of and contribution made by young carers and their families. Torbay Council and the Young Carers Service want to ensure that all children have a right to thrive, to enjoy their childhood and succeed in education or in any area of interest and importance to them. We want children to have the opportunity to become healthy, successful and happy adults, and feel able to contribute to their community
- 2.2 The reasons for the proposal and need for the decision are to improve the overall impact of the Young Carers Service for young carers and their families by investing in their wellness and offering opportunities for them to develop supportive networks and grow in confidence, have access to, and develop relationships with others outside of the family home.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

1. That members of the Children's Overview and Scrutiny Board support the development of a financial business case to seek investment in the Young Carers Service to ensure that it remains sustainable for the Young Carers within Torbay. 2.

Appendices

Appendix 1: No Wrong Door – Memorandum of Understanding signed commitment

Background Documents

[Young Carers Service - Torbay Council](#) Young Carers Service webpage on Torbay Council website

[Final Young Carers Under 25 Strategy and Action Plan 2022-25.pdf \(torbay.gov.uk\)](#) The U25 Strategy and Action Plan.

[Strategy, policy and quality - Torbay Carers Service \(torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk\)](#) Torbay Carers Strategy

[no6UjxZkmN \(dpt.nhs.uk\)](#) Devon Partnership Trust Carers Strategy 2024-2027 – DPT are a partner of the U25 strategy group.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Young Carers Service is made up of five part-time staff and a part-time service manager. Two staff members focus on secondary school age children, two focus on primary school age children and one member of the team focuses on Electively Home Educated and longer-term non-attenders of school. This allows us to ensure that all children and young people have a designated contact.
- 1.2 The statutory requirement of the service is to ensure that all children and young people identified as young carers are given an assessment to determine their caring role, and the impact this has on them, to undertake transition reviews where young carers are transitioning to adulthood, and to raise awareness and improve early identification of young carers.
- 1.3 As such there will be provision for an assessment of needs to support for all young carers under the age of 18 on request from them or their parent or on the identification of need. This will be available regardless of who they care for, what type of care they provide or how often they provide it. Young carers, the person cared for and, if different, the parents of the young carer will be informed about the assessment process, and we will ensure they are able to participate in the process as effectively as possible.
- 1.4 The primary responsibility for responding to the needs of young carers and young adult carers and ensuring an appropriate assessment rests with the service responsible for assessing the person they support, rather than the age of the carer. This means that:
 - Young carers of disabled children are the responsibility of the Children's Service which will also need to undertake carers' assessments for any young adult carers who look after disabled children.
 - Adult Services will identify children in the household / family network and ensure that young carers are not left with excessive and inappropriate levels of caring responsibilities that risks them becoming vulnerable. They will also need to undertake carers' assessments for young adult carers. Adult Services will refer to Children's services where the child is thought to be a child in need or to young carers services or Early Help where other preventative services are needed.
- 1.5 Torbay Council sets out its vision for Torbay's young carers in its agreed 'Torbay and young carers under 25 strategy and Action Plan 2022 – 2025' as: 'to enable Torbay's Young Carers and Young Adult Carers to be protected from inappropriate caring, and to be able to have access to any additional support they may need to ensure they are safe, healthy, aspiring and achieving. We will achieve this through effective partnership working and the delivery of timely and high-quality services'

- 1.6 There is a detailed action plan contained within the 2022 – 2025 strategy which links to the 4 agreed key priority areas for young carers as follows:
1. Identification of Young Carers Under 25 at the First Opportunity
 2. Information, Advice and Support Services available to Young Carers Under 25
 3. Young Carers Under 25 Assessments Proportionate to Need, including Whole Family Approach
 4. Involvement of Young Carers Under 25 in service delivery, evaluation and commissioning.
- 1.7 Further to this in February 2021, the Directors of Torbay Children’s Services, Torbay Adult’s Services and The Youth Trust committed to the refreshed Memorandum of Understanding ‘No Wrong Doors: working together to support Young Carers and their families’, an important document which emphasises the benefits of a joined-up approach.
- 1.8 To support the above the Young Carers Service team run a range of activities such as lunch clubs in schools, a monthly group for 8–12-year-olds, a monthly group for 12–17-year-olds, regular holiday activities for young carers, and family activities during holiday and half-terms. Whilst these activities are not a ‘statutory requirement’, it is recognised that young carers benefit from spending time with other young carers and outside of the family home or away from their caring responsibilities.
- 1.8 Whilst the Young Carers Service ensures that many opportunities are available for young carers there are some barriers to this including limited resources (staff and budget) as well as additional costs associated with transportation. Many parents and guardians are not able to provide transport to young carers to attend activities outside of the young carers service, therefore the Council provides taxis, at a sizeable cost.

2. Options under consideration

- 2.1 The service has been back within Children’s Services for just over a year and we now feel able to raise the profile of young carers and their considerable contribution to their families and the health service. However, as stated above resources within the service are limited and as such consideration now needs to be given as to how additional investment can be secured.

- 2.2 As mentioned above, a barrier for young carers accessing activities outside of the home is access to affordable transport. We would like to better understand whether discounted public transport or additional funding towards transport could be considered.
- 2.3 As such, it is recommended that a financial business case is developed setting out the available options to ensure that the service remains sustainable moving forwards, for the young carers in Torbay.

3. Financial Opportunities and Implications

- 3.1 As above – it is recommended that a financial business case is now developed to set out the options available to provide a sustainable service and raise the profile of young carers. This financial business case will detail the opportunities and implications if additional funding cannot be found.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 Please see above – in summary:

The Children and Families Act (2014) required local authorities to take reasonable steps to identify Young Carers in their area, provide assessments for Young Carers under the age of 18, and identify whether caring responsibilities are appropriate. The Care Act (2014) introduced new obligations to Young Carers in transition to adulthood, including the requirement on adult services to provide transition planning for Young Carers who are likely to need support after becoming 18 years old.

5. Engagement and Consultation

- 5.1 We have spoken to the parents/guardians of young carers to better understand their needs and the benefits and impact of the activities organised by the Young Carers Service. The consensus was that they appreciate the opportunity for their children to have their own space, spend time with other children and to have these activities organised by the service, so they do not have to try to manage this around the competing needs of the family.
- 5.2 We have spoken to the young carers accessing the service to better understand the impact on them when engaging with the service, what they would like to do and what they feel the

barriers are. The young carers have enjoyed the activities and have said that they would like to do more such as 'away days', 'overnight trips' etc.

- 5.3 To develop the business case we will speak with Children and young people and their families to ask for feedback on any options proposed.

6. Procurement Implications

- 6.1 N/A at this time.

7. Protecting our naturally inspiring Bay and tackling Climate Change

- 7.1 N/A

8. Associated Risks

- 8.1 If additional funding for the service is not secured then this would potentially limit the number/frequency and offer of activities for young carers and would therefore mean that some of that activities within the associated young carers strategy action plan are not able to be delivered.

9. Equality Impact Assessment

| Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability | Data and insight | Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts) | Mitigation activities | Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities |
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| Age | <p>18 per cent of Torbay residents are under 18 years old.</p> <p>55 per cent of Torbay residents are aged between 18 to 64 years old.</p> <p>27 per cent of Torbay residents are aged 65 and older.</p> | <p>The main focus is on young people under 18 as this is the age group that the Young Carers Service serves, however parents/guardians and older siblings can also be impacted by the welfare of the young carers in the household.</p> | <p>Ensure whole-family engagement and communication is considered.</p> | <p>Children's Services – ongoing commitment.</p> |
| Carers | <p>At the time of the 2021 census there were 14,900 unpaid carers in Torbay. 5,185 of these provided 50 hours or more of care.</p> | <p>The Young Carers Service works with young carers and often families who also share caring responsibilities.</p> | <p>We work closely with the Young Adult Carer and Torbay Carers Services to ensure transition between is smooth, that other family members are registered, and health professionals are engaged where required.</p> | <p>Children's Services and partners – ongoing.</p> |
| Disability | <p>In the 2021 Census, 23.8% of Torbay residents answered that their day-to-day activities</p> | <p>The Young Carers Service will work with young carers who may care of a family</p> | <p>We make amendments to ow assessments are undertaken to mee their</p> | <p>Children's Services and</p> |

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| | were limited a little or a lot by a physical or mental health condition or illness. | member with a disability or themselves have a disability. | needs and ensure that partner agencies who are or need to be involved are engaged. | partners – ongoing. |
| Gender reassignment | In the 2021 Census, 0.4% of Torbay’s community answered that their gender identity was not the same as their sex registered at birth. This proportion is similar to the Southwest and is lower than England. | We may have young carers who identify as a different gender to their assigned gender at birth. | There is no change to our service offer and we work closely with schools, families and agencies such as Proud2Be to ensure appropriate support is in place. | Children’s Service and partners – ongoing. |
| Marriage and civil partnership | Of those Torbay residents aged 16 and over at the time of 2021 Census, 44.2% of people were married or in a registered civil partnership. | N/A | | |
| Pregnancy and maternity | Over the period 2010 to 2021, the rate of live births (as a proportion of females aged 15 to 44) has been slightly but significantly higher in Torbay (average of 63.7 per 1,000) than England (60.2) and the Southwest (58.4). There has been a notable fall in the numbers of live births since the middle of the last decade across all geographical areas. | N/A | | |
| Race | In the 2021 Census, 96.1% of Torbay residents described their ethnicity as white. This is a higher proportion than the | The proportion of young carers from a black, Asian or minority ethnic background is very small. | The service offer does not change, however and we link in with Imagine Torbay | Children’s Services and partners – ongoing. |

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| | Southwest and England. Black, Asian and minority ethnic individuals are more likely to live in areas of Torbay classified as being amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England. | | Multicultural Group or other partners where support is required. | |
| Religion and belief | 64.8% of Torbay residents who stated that they have a religion in the 2021 census. | N/A | The service offer does not change, we are however mindful of the food served at and the timings of activities we organise. | |
| Sex | 51.3% of Torbay's population are female and 48.7% are male | N/A | | |
| Sexual orientation | In the 2021 Census, 3.4% of those in Torbay aged over 16 identified their sexuality as either Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or, used another term to describe their sexual orientation. | We may work with young people who identify are part of the LGBTQIA+ community. | There is no change to our service offer and we work closely with schools, families and agencies such as Proud2Be or the LGBTQIA+ Participation worker in the Youth Service to ensure appropriate support is in place. | |
| Veterans | In 2021, 3.8% of residents in England reported that they had previously served in the UK armed forces. In Torbay, 5.9 per cent of the population | N/A | | |

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| | have previously serviced in the UK armed forces. | | | |
| Additional considerations | | | | |
| Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation) | | Many of the families of young carers experience financial hardship as their caring responsibilities impact on their ability or prevent them from working. | We try to support families with transport costs and access to activities that they aren't able to afford to benefit the young carers. | Children's Services – ongoing. |
| Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay) | | We know that young carers are impacted by the additional responsibilities they hold or where they are often not the focus of their parents/guardians because of the needs of siblings or parental substance abuse or mental health needs. | As a service, offer opportunities for young carers to talk about the pressures, their mental health and seek additional support where required. | Children's Services and partners – ongoing. |
| Human Rights impacts | | The rights of Young Carers are key to the Torbay Young Carers Service. | We campaign for the rights of the young carers to be heard and actively take part in Carers Rights Day every year. | Children's Services – ongoing. |
| Child Friendly | Torbay Council is a Child Friendly Council, and all staff and Councillors are Corporate Parents and have a responsibility towards cared for and care experienced children and young people. | We work predominantly with children and young people. | We ensure that children and young people take active ownership of the service they receive from us and make decisions about what the service offers. | Children's Services – ongoing. |

10. Cumulative Council Impact

10.1 None

11. Cumulative Community Impacts

11.1 Increased demand of mental health intervention required for young carers should they not receive preventative support from the Young Carers Service.