

The Highland Council

Education, Children and Adult Services Committee 27 August 2015

Agenda Item	12.
Report No	ECAS 58/15

Progress on Young Carers Strategy

Report by the Director of Care and Learning

Summary

This report provides an update to Committee on the progress thus far on the Young Carers Improvement Plan and Young Carers Strategy, which was presented to Committee in August 2014. An Improvement Plan was created to track the work undertaken within the Strategy, and this has been reviewed and regularly monitored by the Young Carers Improvement Group.

1 Background

- 1.1 Young Carers are children under the age of 18, who provide care, assistance or support to a parent, sibling, grandparent or other person who has a physical disability, learning disability, sensory impairment, physical or mental illness, drug or alcohol problem or other condition connected with a need for care, support or supervision.
- 1.2 The Young Carers Strategy was developed through partnership work to reflect the range of experiences of young carers in Highland. It is also reflective of the Young Carers Strategy for Scotland 2010 – 2015 and is consistent with the emerging views nationally and the anticipated national Carers legislation.
- 1.3 The Young Carers Strategy was created around several key aspects of work: Identification; Information; Support; Training; and Consultation. While work was being undertaken around each of these aspects, the evaluation work undertaken as part of the creation of the strategy found that much of the work was ad hoc and not embedded within a consistent framework of support for the young people themselves. 378 young carers were identified across Highland, but little was known about the real level of need as previous national data had suggested that there could be more than 1000 young carers in Highland, given the population.
- 1.4 Young Carer projects are highly valued in local communities and are a significant source of support for young carers. However, where there is no young carers project, the Strategy identified that access to information and support was limited.
- 1.5 Consultation is undertaken regularly by young carers groups, but the initial Strategy report indicated that this was not a sustained approach, and it recommended that a clearer focus be given to coproduction of services that would require greater levels of ongoing consultation following the principles of Equal Partners in Care (EPIC – see <http://www.knowledge.scot.nhs.uk/equalpartnersincare>).

- 1.6 It was therefore agreed within the Strategy to:
- Develop a consistent approach to signposting services, information and training
 - Create young carer aware training for other professionals and to support young carers themselves
 - Provide regular, consistent information to schools
 - Work in partnership with other services for children
 - Provide a single point of contact to assist with signposting information and collating information on the number of young carers
 - Collate data and undertake research to track caring duties over time and to develop a better picture of the overall needs of young carers in Highland
 - Develop the Young Carer Youth Ambassador Programme to support the coproduction of services
 - Gain clarity about the use and quality of child's plans for young carers

2 Young Carers Improvement Plan

- 2.1 The Young Carers Improvement Plan was therefore created with 4 overarching priorities (see **Appendix 1**):
1. Develop a public awareness campaign to ensure greater consistency in assessment, identification and support across Highland
 2. Develop a training plan for staff
 3. Develop consultation & engagement with young carers
 4. Improve the quality of young carers' child's plans
- 2.2 This plan is monitored and reviewed regularly by the Young Carers Improvement Group and is part of the work of *For Highlands Children 4*, the Highland Children's Services Plan.

3 Progress on the Strategy

- 3.1 During session 2014-15, significant progress has been made on the Young Carers Strategy, as reflected through the Young Carers Improvement Plan. All 4 young carers groups in Highland are represented on the Improvement Group and there is also representation from NHS Highland, Highland Children's Forum, Schools, Children's Services and strategic policy officers. The previous Children's Champion has also been a member of the group.
- 3.2 This wide representation has supported the links between services and provided opportunities for information sharing and organising training for a wide range of professional groups in Highland. A number of training resources and information leaflets have been produced, all supporting the EPIC principles, and have been used in schools across Highland to raise awareness of the needs of young carers. These resources are hosted on the Equality and Diversity pages on GLOW, to support access for school staff.
- 3.3 Many awareness raising sessions have also been delivered to pupils in secondary schools, either through Personal and Social Education Classes or through school assemblies. The young carers themselves have been central to the creation of these materials and have been involved in creating short film clips to use within

the resources. These have been well received and have given an opportunity for young carers to become aware of supports that are available to them. These materials are also on GLOW and can therefore be accessed when required by school staff. In total, awareness raising sessions have been delivered to well over 1000 pupils and staff across Highland.

- 3.4 Training for young carers themselves has been well received - eg Columba 1400 has created a bespoke leadership Programme to meet the needs of young carers and this has been piloted over the summer. The Young Carer Youth Ambassador Programme has supported the training of a group of young carers from across Highland and the intention is for this group to increase over time. The programme of training in Scottish Mental Health First Aid for Young People, delivered by the Primary Mental Health Worker Service, is due to begin in December 2015 and older young carers will be included in this training.
- 3.5 The Highland Young Carers Network has been re-established. This group involves a wide range of staff who work directly with young carers. In the coming session this group will be looking at a leaflet that can be used pan Highland to signpost services and to ensure consistency in the information being shared with schools, GP surgeries, children's services etc.
- 3.6 The awareness raising and training provided during session 2014-15 has resulted in an increase in the number of young carers coming forward for support and being identified by services. As an example, the East Sutherland Young Carers group based in Golspie has received around 12 referrals for service and support each year. Due to the awareness raising and training in schools that they provided during school session 2014-15, the number of requests for service to the group increased to 25 in 2014, and in the first two months of 2015, 10 new referrals were received.
- 3.7 A small scale research project has recently been carried out in Skye and Lochalsh and in Sutherland to identify the accuracy of identification and recording of young carers who attend school. This research also had a focus on child's plans for young carers.
- 3.8 This research found that not all children known to be young carers were recorded as such on SEEMiS (the pupil database), which makes it more difficult to plan strategically for this group of pupils, who by their nature would be considered to have additional support needs.
- 3.9 In relation to meeting needs, the research found that most young carers who were considered to require a child's plan, did have one. However, in considering the quality of Child's Plans, this was more variable and indicated that those young carers with the higher levels of need, where their own needs were also complex, had higher quality plans than those with lower levels of need.
- 3.10 As a result of this work Portree High School now have all of their young carers recorded on SEEMiS and further work on awareness raising and child's plans is being undertaken in the West. The improvement Group have widened this research and will continue to audit and monitor recording on SEEMiS and the

quality of plans for young carers.

- 3.11 Support for young carers includes: respite support, direct 1:1 support, and participation in activities etc. This year has seen an increase in the numbers of young carers participating in activities and receiving support, which would also indicate an increase in awareness and identification.
- 3.12 This year, 35 young carers took part in the Young Carers Festival, in comparison to 15 last year. There has been an increase in the number of young carers attending residential and one day activities and while this can be expensive to access from more rural parts, both locally based and centrally organised activities have shown a good spread of participation across Highland.
- 3.13 At the Young Carers Festival, the group from Highland had the opportunity to speak with the NHS Director of Adult Social Care. Their main concern was not being listened to and services not understanding their caring responsibilities. They raised particular issues in relation to access to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service and access to social work support. This mirrors the information provided to the Young Carers Improvement Group from other Young Carers via the support groups across Highland. Listening and responding to these views, will continue to be the main focus of the Improvement Group and the Improvement Plan.

4 Future Priorities

- 4.1 The Young Carers support groups have a commitment to continue to keep young carers central to the work they do and to support them and ensure their views are prioritised within any strategic decisions that are made within the Improvement Group. The emphasis on the coproduction of services and planning WITH young carers themselves is well embedded in practice.
- 4.2 Transition from young carer to young adult carer does create difficulties for young people, which is not always recognised by services. Some of the young carers groups in Highland now continue to provide support post 18 as this has been requested by the young carers themselves. The Young Carers Improvement Group will monitor destinations and qualifications for young carers as there is a concern that with interrupted education for some, their academic outcomes may be lower than that of their peers. Work has been funded by the Adult Carer Improvement Group which is looking at ways to support young carers at this time and Connecting Young Carers is acting as liaison between the various Highland groups for this aspect of their support and work.

5 Implications

5.1 Resources

- 5.1.1 The Highland Council provides Core Funding to Connecting Young Carers and to Young Carers groups in East Sutherland (Tykes) and Skye & Lochalsh. There are no additional implications for Council resources required at this stage.

5.2 Legal and Equalities

- 5.2.1 Schools and Local Authorities have a legal duty within the ASL Legislation to make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of pupils with additional support needs. Being a young carer is a recognised additional support need and as such all should be recorded on the pupil database to support strategic planning. Work is on-going to support this recording process by schools. Some young carers will also require support and differentiation within schools, to balance their caring duties with their right to an education as specified within legislation and the UN Convention.
- 5.2.2 The Young Carers Strategy is aimed at reducing inequalities for this vulnerable group of children. The funding provided to young carer groups recognises the particular challenges faced by young carers in very rural communities, who may not easily have access to other services.
- 5.2.3 The Young Carers Improvement Group is aware of the Carers legislation proposed by the Scottish Government and will adapt the strategy and planning for young carers to take account of changes in legislation as and when required.

5.3 Climate Change/Carbon Clever

- 5.3.1 There are no implications for climate change/carbon clever.

5.4 Risk

- 5.4.1 There are no additional risks to note at this time.

5.5 Gaelic

- 5.5.1 There are no specific implications, although young carers who are Gaelic speakers are equally supported by young carers groups and by schools if identified with this additional need.

5.6 Rural

- 5.6.1 Dedicated young carers groups are funded in two rural areas, recognising the general scarcity of other services in these communities.

<h2>6 Recommendation</h2>

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| <p>6.1 Committee is asked to note the progress made to date and the ongoing work in relation to the Young Carers Strategy.</p> |
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Designation: Director of Care and Learning

Date: 3 August 2015

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For Highlands Children 4 Outcomes

(Appendix 1)

1. Children are protected from abuse, neglect or harm at home, at school and in the community.
2. Children are well-equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to keep themselves safe.
3. Young people and families live in increasingly safer communities where anti-social and harmful behaviour is reducing.
4. Children and young people experience healthy growth and development.
5. Children and young people make well-informed choices about healthy and safe lifestyles.
6. Children and young people are equipped with the skills, confidence and self-esteem to progress successfully in their learning and development.
7. Children and young people are supported to achieve their potential in all areas of development.
8. Children and young people thrive as a result of nurturing relationships and stable environments.
9. Families receive support, advice and guidance which is well-matched to their needs and available in ways which helps them to prepare for the various developmental stages.
10. Children and young people are physically active.
11. Children and young people know their rights and are confident in exercising these. They are able to express their views and be involved meaningfully in decisions which affect them.
12. Families are valued as important contributors and work as equal partners to ensure positive outcomes for their children and young people.
13. Children, young people and their families are supported well to develop the strengths and resilience needed to overcome any inequalities they experience.
14. Children, young people and families are enabled to tell us what they think about services and the community in which they live, and improvement is determined with their involvement and by understanding their views, wishes, and expectations

Young Carers Improvement Group

Date of Plan – June 2015

BRAG Key:
 On time - **Green**
 Significantly delayed - **Red**
 Not yet started - **White**
 A little behind time - **Amber**
 Completed - **Blue**

FHC4 Outcome 13

Children, young people and their families are supported well to develop the strengths and resilience needed to overcome any inequalities they experience.

Improvement priority:

5. Develop a Public Awareness campaign to ensure Greater consistency in assessment, identification and support across Highland.

Actions	Measures / evaluation	Timescale	Lead	BRAG
Improve the awareness of Elected Members by providing an update on the current strategy and information from the evaluations of the Young Carers Groups in Highland.	Completion of paper and presentation to Committee	August 2015	Head of Additional Support Services	GREEN
Improve the understanding of staff, families and society through a wider awareness raising campaign: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a leaflet to use across Highland, raising awareness of Young Carers. 	Leaflet being used across Highland in public places eg schools, GP surgeries, service points etc.	May 2015	Young Carers Network	AMBER

Progress since last Plan

- YCs involved in MFR radio campaign

FHC4 Outcome 9

Families receive support, advice and guidance which is well-matched to their needs and available in ways which helps them to prepare for the various developmental stages.

Improvement priority:**6. Develop a training plan for staff**

Actions	Measures / evaluation	Timescale	Lead	BRAG
The Carers' Network will be re-established. This is open to all managers and young carer workers. Meetings will be arranged for the week before the YC Improvement Group meetings.	Network will meet regularly	Establish the Network by Feb 2015	CC Young Carers' worker	GREEN
The Network will consider additional educational resources, so that there is a range of materials available for teachers. These will be based on EPIC principles – Equal Partners In Care and available to school staff on GLOW.	A range of materials will be available on Glow and used by school staff	Initial materials on Glow by Dec 2014, with further materials added by May 2015	YC Network	BLUE
Training will be delivered to schools in each Area	Training/awareness raising will be provided to Head Teachers in each Area	By December 2015	Local YC Groups	GREEN
Mental Health First Aid Training - training for trainers will be delivered locally, with trainers then available to deliver this training locally to staff, young carers etc. This training covers caring for someone with drug, alcohol and mental health issues.	A training plan will ensure that an increasing number of Young Carers and adults working to support them, will participate in MH First Aid Training	Training for Trainers delivered by December 2015 and the first courses delivered in Highland by March 2016	Public Health Practitioners and PMHWs	GREEN
Awareness Raising Training will be provided to the Family Teams, ASN staff and Family Teams.	Training provided to reps. from all Family Teams.	By August 2015	Local YC Groups	GREEN

Progress since last Plan

- Children's Services Managers contacted to discuss training for family teams.
- The Network meetings have now been re-established
- Dates have now been agreed for the PMHW training in MH First Aid in the Autumn.

FHC4 Outcome 14

Children, young people and families are enabled to tell us what they think about services and the community in which they live, and improvement is determined with their involvement and by understanding their views, wishes, and expectations

Improvement priority:**7. Develop consultation & engagement with young carers**

Actions	Measures / evaluation	Timescale	Lead	BRAG
Host a Highland Young Carers event every 2 years to support meaningful engagement to understand their views wishes and aspirations	The events take place. A clear summary of views are gathered and used to prioritise future planning	Spring 2014 and 2016	Head of Additional Support Services	GREEN
Develop a range of processes for consultation and engagement with Young Carers, to ensure they have an opportunity to lead on developments that affect them.	All actions relating to support for Young Carers in Highland will be lead and guided by the views of YCs. This will be seen in annual evaluations + ch plans.	Annual evaluation reports. Annual review of child's plans	YC Support Groups	GREEN
	Track the data on transitions to monitor the leaving age and outcomes for those young people known to the YC Groups in Highland.	August 2015 and then annual thereafter	YC Support Groups	
Develop the Youth Ambassador Programme and support them through a training for trainers programme, with representation from young carers across Highland.	The Youth Ambassadors will be representative of all areas in Highland and will be involved in the steering and development of the YC strategy.	Completion of the training for trainers programme by June 2015	CC Young Carers worker	GREEN
Promote the involvement and participation of young carers in youth voice	Young Carers representation in youth voice	February 2015	Ch.planning manager	BLUE

Progress since last plan

- Agreed to track the outcomes and destinations for young carers that leave school – do they leave earlier and do they have less positive destinations?

FHC4 Outcome 13

Children, young people and their families are supported well to develop the strengths and resilience needed to overcome any inequalities they experience.

Improvement priority:**4. Improve the quality of young carers child's plans**

Actions	Measures / evaluation	Timescale	Lead	BRAG
Identify how many Young Carers known to services have a child's plan.	A baseline determined which shows how many children from the known cohort have plans	December 2014	Local YC Groups	BLUE
Identify why Young Carers do not have a child's plan through a conversation with YC workers who know the YC. Identify further actions to take in relation to Named Person training to support the development of Child's Plans for YCs.	Information collated and fed back to the Practice Model Improvement Group	April 2015	Head of Additional Support Services	BLUE
Using the Child's Plan evaluation tool, identify strengths and areas for improvement to better support outcomes for Young Carers who have an existing child's plan.	Strengths and improvements identified through evaluation. Collate evidence from child's plans demonstrating that the views of young carers have been sought and acted upon	April 2015	Local YC Groups Head of Additional Support Services	BLUE

Progress since last plan

- YC Groups on Skye and in Sutherland have audited the plans for YC in their areas and further analysis has been undertaken and reported in a paper that has been shared with the HPM IG
- Connecting Carers will do a similar exercise with the young people they are aware of.
- There are 30 young carers known to the YC group in Caithness.
- Further measures will be added to this section to support further development on child's plans for Young Carers.