

Agenda Item	<b>6</b>
Report No	HCW/19/23

## THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

**Committee:** Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Committee

**Date:** 15 November 2023

**Report Title:** Young Carers Update

**Report By:** Executive Chief Officer – Health and Social Care

### 1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the work being undertaken by The Highland Council to fulfil our statutory duties and strengthen the support offered to young carers and their families.
- 1.2 The report provides a background to the statutory duties on all local authorities in relation to supporting Young Carers.

### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
  - i. **NOTE** the content of the background information in relation to the statutory duties for The Highland Council in relation to Young Carers
  - ii. **NOTE** and comment on the progress being made in ensuring that Young Carers and their families receive appropriate support.

### 3. Implications

- 3.1 **Resource** – Resource implications regarding the increased provision of Young Carers Statements to all Young Carers.
- 3.2 **Legal** – The legal provisions are outlined at 4 of this report.
- 3.3 **Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island)** – The inequality of the provision of the offer of Young Carers Statements across the Highland area requires to be addressed as integral to the improvement activity outlined within this report.

- 3.4 **Climate Change / Carbon Clever** – No implications identified.
- 3.5 **Risk** – The risk to Young Carers of not having their rights met are rehearsed within this report.
- 3.6 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)**
- 3.7 **Gaelic** - No implications identified.

#### **4. Background**

- 4.1 The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 places a number of statutory duties on all local authorities.
- 4.2 The definition of a young carer within the Act is ‘an individual who provides or intends to provide care for another individual (the “cared for person”). The carer is not doing paid or voluntary work with the “cared-for”. A young carer is under 18 years old or has attained the age of 18 years while a pupil at a school.
- 4.3 Young adult carers are young people aged 16 to 25 years old who provide unpaid care for someone else with an illness, disability, mental health, alcohol or drug misuse issues.
- 4.4 Being a young carer is a big role for any young person to take on. They risk becoming vulnerable if the level of care they are required to give and the responsibility they have for the cared for person becomes excessive or inappropriate for their age and stage.
- 4.5 Caring for others is not always a negative experience. However, there is a need to ensure the lives of children and young people are not restricted, and their experiences and opportunities are not limited as they grow up. The Scottish Government understand that children and young people should enjoy the same range of experiences as others of their age.

#### **5. Young Carers statement**

- 5.1 The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 places a number of responsibilities on all Scottish local authorities and health and social care partnerships to support unpaid adult and young carers in a different way. Duties included in the Act are the provision of a Young Carer Statement.
- 5.2 The Scottish Government have replaced Carer Assessments with Adult Carer Support Plans and Young Carer Statements.
- 5.3 The Young Carer Statement must be offered to all young carers, but they can choose to decline this.
- 5.4 The Young Carer Statement must combine the identification of the young carer’s personal outcomes and an assessment of their needs. It should also identify the help needed to achieve the personal outcomes.

- 5.5 This process incorporates Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) and the eight wellbeing indicators (Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included).
- 5.6 The Highland Council has a duty to prepare Young Carer Statements, even if the young carer is not deemed eligible for support. In these circumstances, the Young Carer Statement should include signposting and access to any relevant supports, for example universal or community-based services.
- 5.7 A Young Carer Statement is a support plan that contains information about how much caring a young carer is doing and if they are able and willing to do it. It details what sort of care is undertaken and whether it is appropriate for them to do it. It details the help and support needed to make sure that young carers are healthy, safe and happy.
- 5.8 It is usually the school who offers and prepares the young carer statement. Some young carers may only need a short simple plan whereas others might have a more detailed plan.

## **6. Update**

- 6.1 Since February 2023, officers from both the Education and Learning and Health and Social Care services have been working alongside the Carers Policy Unit within the Scottish Government. This has provided officers with the opportunity to participate in the national Carer Leads network of local authority and HSCP lead officials for carer support. This network meets quarterly to discuss current issues and share good practice.
- 6.2 Whilst Health and Social Care officers have a role in supporting young carers, it is recognised that the majority of young carers and their families are supported within universal services. Therefore, it has been agreed with colleagues from within the Education and Learning Service that they will take leadership responsibility for developing young carers support and provision within the Highland Council. This undertaking includes responsibility for commissioning the services of a number of young carers groups who currently work to support young carers and their families.
- 6.3 Through this enhanced networking there is now greater clarity regarding Carers Act funding provided within the local government block grant. Whilst this funding is currently passed on to NHS Highland who provide wider support to carers across our systems, it is imperative that we retain an agreed proportion of these monies to provide greater resource in meeting the needs of young carers and their families and meeting our statutory function of providing young carers statements. Budget negotiations are currently ongoing with regard this.
- 6.4 Most recently, we have reached out to the Education Officer at Carers Trust. The trust delivers Young Carer Awareness training for those who work in Education. The Education officer works closely with several Local authorities and Young Carer services across Scotland and has offered to provide support as we consider our delivery model for young carer statements.

Designation: Executive Chief Officer – Health and Social Care

Date: 03 November 2023

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