<u>Report of the Cabinet Member</u> Children's Services and Schools

I have been asked to Report as follows for Full Council on 2 December 2021:

1. By Councillor Letch as follows:

What Devon County Council (DCC) Children's Services, or other DCC services, are doing to identify, assess and help child carers.

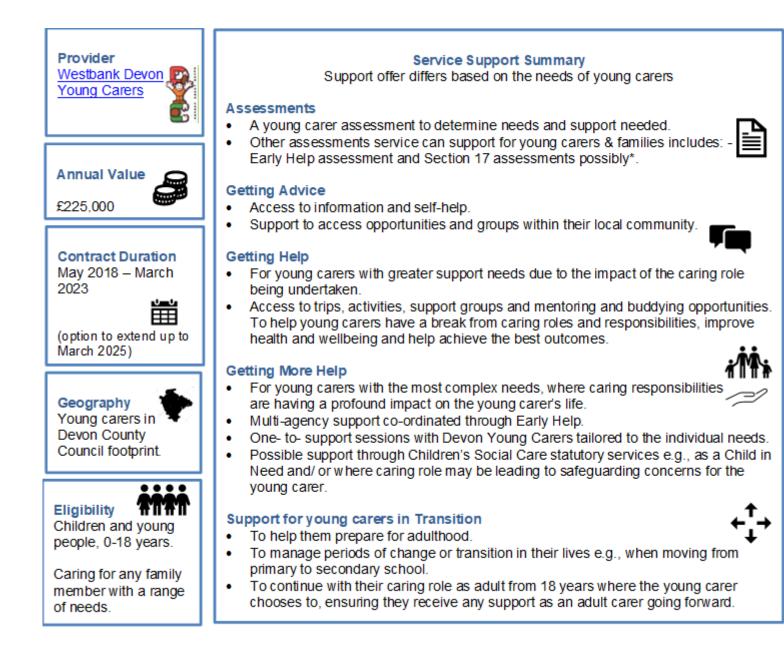
<u>Response</u>

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Section 96 of the Children & Families Act, (2014) defines a young carer as ""...a person under 18 years who provides or intends to provide care for another person (of any age, except where that care is provided for payment, pursuant to a contract or as voluntary work). This relates to care for any family member who is physically or mentally ill, frail elderly, disabled or misuses alcohol or substances".
- 1.2 Devon County Council (DCC) also applies the following definition "A Young Carer is defined as a person under 18 who provides practical support, personal care and/or emotional support to a family member or friend of the family".

2. Identification of Young Carers and the Young Carers Support Offer

- 2.1 Where a child or young person may be a young carer, professionals are encouraged to signpost young carers and their families to the commissioned Young Carers Support Service where a young carer assessment will be undertaken by Devon Young Carers to identify and confirm any young carer support needs. Professionals can, with the consent of a family, make a referral to the service on behalf of the family. Equally, families or young carers can make a self- referral.
- 2.2 An assessment of a young carer and their needs can also be identified and incorporated into other assessments for a child or whole family. For example, as part of an Early Help Assessment looking to provide multi-agency support around the whole family; or as part of an assessment as a 'Child in Need' under Section 17 of the Children Act (1989).
- 2.1 Westbank, Devon Young Carers, our commissioned provider offers a range of support services for young carers with identified needs in Devon and oversight and monitoring of the contract for takes place on a quarterly basis.
- 2.2 At the end of September 2021, 1880 young carers in Devon were known to and being supported by Westbank, Devon Young Carers.
- 2.5 An overview of the contract for support services for young carers has been summarised overleaf.



3. Awareness Raising of Young Carers.

- 3.1 Westbank, Devon Young Carers plays a key role acting as our champion for young carers across the system. They have a publicity and communications plan in place and have supported features with BBC Spotlight, Radio Devon and work in partnership with DCC communications to support communications for national events such as Young Carers Action Day.
- 3.2 Alongside promoting and raising awareness of young carers through commissioned services, there is a Devon Young Carers Multi-Agency Steering Group and Devon Carers Leads Group that also support raising the profile and awareness of young carers. For example, to support with during the national event Carers Rights Day, taking place on the 25th November 2021, the Steering Group are supporting with the production of a newsletter, launching a new logo which has been designed by young carers in Devon, as part of a competition. The newsletter shares best practice tips and examples to support practice across the partnership.

3.3 In addition, the majority of secondary schools in Devon have reported they have a 'Young Carer Champion' identified in their school. Many of the champions identified are in contact with Devon Young Carers. Building on this, next steps will include encouraging more primary schools and wider services to identify a champion building on the good practice being seen in secondary schools.

Andrew Leadbetter Cabinet Member Children's Services and Schools