

**Report of the Cabinet Member
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.

Response

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.

Provider
Westbank Devon Young Carers



Annual Value
£225,000



Contract Duration

May 2018 – March 2023



(option to extend up to March 2025)

Geography
Young carers in Devon County Council footprint



Eligibility

Children and young people, 0-18 years.



Caring for any family member with a range of needs.

Service Support Summary

Support offer differs based on the needs of young carers



Assessments

- A young carer assessment to determine needs and support needed.
- Other assessments service can support for young carers & families includes: - Early Help assessment and Section 17 assessments possibly*.

Getting Advice

- Access to information and self-help.
- Support to access opportunities and groups within their local community.



Getting Help

- For young carers with greater support needs due to the impact of the caring role being undertaken.
- Access to trips, activities, support groups and mentoring and buddying opportunities. To help young carers have a break from caring roles and responsibilities, improve health and wellbeing and help achieve the best outcomes.



Getting More Help

- For young carers with the most complex needs, where caring responsibilities are having a profound impact on the young carer's life.
- Multi-agency support co-ordinated through Early Help.
- One-to-one support sessions with Devon Young Carers tailored to the individual needs.
- Possible support through Children's Social Care statutory services e.g., as a Child in Need and/or where caring role may be leading to safeguarding concerns for the young carer.



Support for young carers in Transition

- To help them prepare for adulthood.
- To manage periods of change or transition in their lives e.g., when moving from primary to secondary school.
- To continue with their caring role as adult from 18 years where the young carer chooses to, ensuring they receive any support as an adult carer going forward.



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 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