

Report to: Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

Date: 31st January 2008

Report of: Margaret Asquith
Director of Children's Services

Report No: 13

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Report Title: **Barnardo's Action with Young Carers Service**

**Confidential /
Non Confidential:**

(**Non-Confidential**) This report does **not** contain information which warrants its consideration in the absence of the press or members of the public

Purpose:

To highlight to the Scrutiny Committee how the Barnardos Action with Young Carers service in Bolton can become more embedded within the strategic objectives and plans of the Council.

Recommendations:

The Committee are asked to note the report.

Decision:

Background Doc(s):

None

Signed:

Leader / Executive Member

Monitoring Officer

Date:

Summary:

A report was prepared for Scrutiny Committee in August 2007. At the Committee a further report was requested, highlighting how Barnardos Action with Young Carers (AWYC) service in Bolton can become more embedded within the strategic objectives and plans of the Council and also information relating to the security of funding streams for the project.

1. Background Information

- 1.1** There is a general and widespread issue surrounding the problematic identification of young carers as the majority still remain hidden. The current targets for the service in Bolton are to work directly with 60 young carers at any one time; between 100-120 in a 12 month period.

In addition to direct support services with young carers and their families, the project engages in influencing work with partner agencies in relation to a number of important issues.

There are still a number of key issues that need to be targeted in order to help services address the needs of young carers and their families, which broadly include:-

- how can health services identify young carers early and ensure the health and wellbeing of young carers is promoted?
- how can Adult Services help parents keep their children safe and support parents with their parenting tasks?
- how can Adults and Children's Services jointly work together to ensure smooth transition for young carers into adult carers?
- how can schools best identify and support young carers, and support disabled parents to ensure educational attainment of their children, including within Further Education establishments?
- how can local Voluntary Agencies work with Council providers to ensure young carers can access and enjoy activities that are responsive to young carers needs?

- 1.2** Extrapolation from current national estimates suggests an unidentified cohort of approximately 1190 young carers in Bolton with a range of different support needs. To address this in Bolton, Barnardos and Bolton Council in partnership plan to:-

- Review the AWYC Service's Strategy Group membership to ensure representation from all key stakeholders so that young carers, their parents and families are included in all key strategies relating to vulnerable groups. This will need leadership and endorsement at a senior level across organisations.
- Consider young carers in any re-fresh of the Bolton Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) in 2008 as a particularly vulnerable group for whom the Every Child Matters outcomes can be difficult to achieve without prioritisation from all services.
- Consider the inclusion of young carers in the Anti-Bullying Strategy 2007-2009 (recent work in Liverpool showed 70% of young carers surveyed had been bullied at some time due to their caring situation).
- Include young carers and their parents' needs in the Council's Parenting Strategy which is currently out for consultation.
- Inclusion of young carers needs in the local CAMHS Strategy. Key meetings are arranged for January 2008 to discuss further.
- Consider the inclusion of young carers as a discreet group of carers, with specific needs requiring specific approaches, within the Primary Care Trust portfolio.
- Include young carers as a discreet group of carers with specific needs, requiring specific approaches, within the Council's Supporting Carers Strategy.

- An AWYC representative has become a participant on Bolton Council Carers Impact Group which started in November 2007.
- Strengthen links with the Adults Services Department to ensure that adult carers' support is available and positive for young adult carers aged 18+.
- Include young carers in the work relating to the 14-19 Strategy. A Personal Advisor (PA) in Connexions has an additional responsibility for young carers.
- Work to establish clear pathways for young carers into local Health Services. A consultation event for young carers regarding their health needs is planned.
- Youth Service involvement and commitment to young carers to be further considered.
- Consideration of Children's Fund 2008-2011 opportunities for funding for AWYC.

2. Schools

All schools have to improve and maintain levels of attendance and attainment and this is often difficult in relation to young carers. Many young carers are hidden, given that the pressures and changing demands of being a carer means that education is not always the first priority. Ways to address this must include the recognition and identification of young carers, and schools will need help in this process. Proposals to support this are:-

- Awareness raising and training for Safeguarding leads, pastoral care leads, Education Social Workers and other relevant staff by AWYC
- Links to Extended Services provision and Learning Networks. The service will make the appropriate links with the Every Child Matters Partnerships and ensure young carers are on the agenda.

3. Adult Services

There continues to be a considerable gap in the identification of young carers and in ensuring that their needs are considered in Community Care service planning. The Supporting People Safeguarding Children agenda/plan, will consider the How, Who and What in relation to considering the needs of parents and their parenting, as well as the needs of the children who may be carers.

Dates are set for discussion with the Adult Disability teams in the New Year.

4. Barnardos

Actions include:

- Transition worker specifically employed to improve and develop pathways for young carers reaching adulthood and needing to access different services and support.
- Continuous review and improvement of the AWYC project including collating and analysing better referral information, performance monitoring, evidencing soft and hard outcomes.
- Ensure that the service is working efficiently with a through-put of young carers and families. The exploration of using sessional staff to support part of this work is being considered.

5. Multi-agency Working

To achieve change and improved outcomes for young carers and their families, Bolton already has many of the essential ingredients. There is a great commitment to improve operational and strategic levels across Children's Services and together Bolton Council and Barnardos need to look at developing innovative arrangements between services to help ensure better access to support for impacted families. A shift in policy emphasis is suggested, however, and ideas such as 'whole family approaches' and joint-work between Adult and Children's Services which are finding expression in emerging policy (Cabinet Office June 2007) need to translate at a local level. The Supporting People Safeguarding Children Agenda is a key forum for this and work has already started between Adults and Children's departments.

In order to bring about enduring change, the identification of 'Young Carers Champions' who are actively committed to changing things for the better for affected families are key. These Champions need to be the people who are engaged in implementing improvements to services, working at all levels, and across sectors. It is hoped that there will be an increased level of ownership and participation that can be maintained through the inclusion of young carers and families throughout Bolton's strategic plans. The aim in Bolton has to be to ensure that local families receive services which are effective, non-stigmatising, and which emphasise recovery, resilience and social inclusion.

6. Funding Issues

- 6.1** The AWYC project is jointly funded by Bolton Council and Barnardos. Bolton Council monies that support the AWYC project is made up of Children's Services mainstream funding, Carers Grant and Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP) monies.

6.2 Breakdown of funding for 2007/08 is

Bolton Council - Children's Services mainstream funding - £45,524.64
- Carers Grant Funding - £50,925
- PAYP monies - £6,000

Barnardos Funding - £80,000

Additional funding acquired via Comic Relief to fund transitions work - £25,000

- 6.3** Bolton Council is committed to improving the outcomes for children and young people who are young carers and contributes to more than half of the core funding of the project. The project also expect an increase in the amount of PAYP monies available in 2008/09. However the Carers Grant as it stands is due to end in March 2008 which raised initial concern considering its importance and contribution to some of the funding of the AWYC project. In September 2007 the Department of Health Comprehensive Spending Review (where the Carers Grant comes from) stated that an increased allocation for social care and support services for carers will increase gradually up to 2010. It is therefore expected that funding similar to the Carers Grant will continue to be provided to Bolton Council and can be used to contribute to funding AWYC if desired.

- 6.4** AWYC is undertaking work with the:

- Carers Strategy & Development Manager to look at the new Emergency Funding Stream (Government monies) for carers coming into Bolton to ensure that young carers benefit and are part of this.
- Extended Services/Schools. It is a key priority to link with the ECM clusters to ensure young carers needs are understood.

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