

**REPORT TO: CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEE ON 2  
DECEMBER 2009**

**SUBJECT: SERVICES TO YOUNG CARERS IN MORAY**

**BY: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 This report is provided to apprise members of services currently being provided to young carers in Moray.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to exercising the functions of the Council as Social Work Authority under the Social Work (Scotland) Act.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 **It is recommended that Committee note the progress made in the delivery of services to young carers and challenges in relation to further progress.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Members of the Health and Social Services Committee meeting on the 23 September 2009 (para 13 refers) considered a report providing an update on developments in the provision of services to carers in Moray.
- 3.2 Questions were raised at that Committee about the nature and extent of service being provided to young carers.
- 3.3 Following review of service delivery the previous Carers Service Contract was found to be outdated in terms of delivering appropriate services to meet the needs of carers in Moray.
- 3.4 Through consultation with Service Providers, Service Managers and Carers, a new Carers Service Specification was created.
- 3.5 The service was put out for public tender and following a vigorous tender procedure, a new Service Provider (Quarriers) was awarded the contract.
- 3.6 The previous provider for the contracted service (Moray Carers Project) continues to provide a service to young carers in and through schools, on the basis of external funding from three separate sources, which will continue at least until the end of the current financial year.
- 3.7 Both providers report that they seek to operate in a complimentary way. The differences in focus and approach and the nature and potential of that complementarity are set out in **APPENDIX 1**.

- 3.8 The views and experience of service users are significant in determining the usefulness and effectiveness of all kinds of services, but perhaps particularly so for services to carers. Both providers in Moray seek to pay particular attention and respond to carers' views and both report that young carers in Moray and their parents are still adjusting to the fact of there being two providers, each with a somewhat different focus.
- 3.9 At present, young carers are able to choose between these providers, or to use both. The service provided by Moray Carers Project is vulnerable, however, being dependent on external funding commitments which may not be renewed, or replaced by alternative sources.

#### **4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

##### **(a) Single Outcome Agreement/Service Improvement Plan**

The Carers Project contributes in particular to National Outcome 5 in the Single Outcome Agreement – our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed.

##### **(b) Policy and Legal**

The appendix to this report sets the specification for the service commissioned by the local authority in the context of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995, specifically sections 22 and 23 of that Act, and the national programme Getting it Right for Every Child.

##### **(c) Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)**

The service commissioned by the local authority through Quarriers is set against a budget in the current year of £39,328.00. Premises are leased by the provider and all staff are employed by the provider. Risks to staff and service users are addressed by the provider in policies which were a condition of tender. There are no implications for council staff arising from this report.

##### **(d) Consultations**

The Acting Project Manager and Young Carers Support Worker, Quarriers, Schools Support Workers, Moray Carers Project, Rhonda Geddes-Stewart, Senior Personnel Adviser, Deborah Brands, Principal Accountant and Alistair Stobie, Acting Principal Solicitor (Litigation and Licensing) have been consulted in the preparation of this report and are in agreement with the content relating to their areas of responsibility.

#### **5. CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 **Both providers of services to young carers in Moray face challenges, but they are endeavouring to work in a complimentary way and in partnership with the local authority.**

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Background Papers: with author  
Ref: HB694177

## Services to Young Carers in Moray

### *Service Provided by Quarriers*

#### Specification

The Council's specification for the new service to young carers was linked specifically to the powers and responsibilities conferred on local authorities by the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and to the principles of Social Inclusion implicit in the Act. An additional influence on the specification were the values and principles of the national Getting it Right for Every Child programme, focusing on the ways in which all providers of services to children should collaborate in assessing, planning and working together to meet children's needs.

Section 22(1)a of the Act confers on local authorities a responsibility to *"safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area who are in need"*. Section 23(1) of the Act specifies that *"services provided by a local authority under that subsection shall be designed .....to minimise the effect on any child who is within that area and is affected adversely by the disability of any other person in his family and to give those children the opportunity to lead lives which are as normal as possible"*.

In accordance, the specification for the new service to young carers stipulated that *"the Service Provider should support and work with children and young people up to, and including, the age of 17 years to:*

- *Overcome the identified barriers to participation to normal aspects of daily life, i.e. education, employment, recreation, family life, social life.*
- *Reduce other negative effects that are identified as resulting from their caring role, i.e. tiredness, isolation."*

The specification described four different kinds of activity, with estimates of the anticipated level of demand, based substantially on the publicly reported experience of the previous provider -

- *"Advice/Information/Basic Support – This will be available to all registered Young Carers, of which the current Service Provider has approximately 250. However, attendance at Peer Support Groups, based on previous attendance at similar groups, would suggest that no more than 25% of Young Carers would make use of them.*
- *Brief Individual Support Sessions – There should be no more than 70 of these sessions per annum. Subsequent work as a result of a proportion of these sessions should be factored in to this area of work.*
- *Specialist Assessment – the Service Provider should be available to carry out a maximum of 40 Assessments/Reviews per annum.*
- *Specialist Support Service – As this Service is delivered as a result of an Integrated Assessment there will be a maximum number of users in line with the number of Assessments. This means that there will be a no more than 40 Young Carers in receipt of this Service per annum"*.

This specification is entirely consistent with guidance on working with young carers in the *"Manual for Measures of Caring Activities and Outcomes for Children and Young People"* published this year by The Princess Royal Trust for Carers, in association

with Young Carers International Research and Evaluation, based at The University of Nottingham.

### **Delivery**

Active delivery of the service commenced around the time of the official launch of the service in July of this year. Quarriers employ one part-time Support Worker for 19½ hours per week to work exclusively with young carers in Moray.

Of the young carers registered with Moray Carers Project who were offered the choice to have their contact details passed to Quarriers, 70 apparently chose to request this. The reported experience to date of the Quarriers Young Carers Support Worker making contact with them has been that, in most instances it was the parent who exercised this choice, signing the consent slip, rather than the young person. In many instances the views and wishes of young people and their parents regarding registration with the new service and receiving support do not coincide.

The difference in perception between parents and young people seems to be that the young people, although they have a sibling or parent who has a disability, do not believe they have a significant role and do not see themselves as being adversely affected; parents, however, do see the young person as being adversely affected, in that they – the parents – would be doing more to support social and recreational opportunities for the young person, were they less busy caring for the person with a disability.

Statistics provided by Quarriers show that during August and September, of 6 young carers visited, 4 wished to be registered with the new service and two wished to be removed from the database. Three support plans were completed and one formal assessment. Additionally one young carer not previously known was referred to the service by another agency and one young carer not previously known approached Quarriers directly, seeking support.

Many of the young carers whose details had been passed to Quarriers by Moray Carers Project have not wanted a visit from the Support Worker, or have yet to respond to contact made by the Quarriers worker with a view to arranging a visit.

### **Service Provided by Moray Carers Project**

Moray Carers Project is currently funded from three separate sources (The Robertson Trust, The Laidlaw Youth Trust and Children in Need) to work with young carers in schools.

The work is done partly through presentations, to staff in the context of their Continuing Professional Development and to pupils in PSE lessons and school assemblies, designed to raise awareness of the issues and challenges facing young carers and to help staff and pupils identify young carers who may need support.

A second, complementary approach is in holding drop-in sessions in schools during break times. These currently take place in seven of Moray's secondary schools, at varying frequencies, typically monthly. A small number of primary schools have expressed an interest in facilitating a similar arrangement. At these drop-in sessions a range of information is available about matters affecting young carers and services or opportunities on offer to them. The materials on offer include promotional leaflets from both service providers in Moray. Project staff are also available to talk with

young people who attend these drop-ins about any matter that they wish to discuss. It is also recognised that not all of those who attend these drop-ins are actually carers. Support to young carers includes advice, signposting and advocacy.

A group of 10 young carers also participates in recreational activities at Gordonstoun School, supported by staff from Moray Carers Project, who also fund-raise with young carers to cover transport costs for these activities.

Moray Carers Project continues to receive direct approaches from young people, parents and professional staff from various disciplines, but because of the constraints within which their funding sources hold them, they are not able to provide the same kind of service as previously.

There are currently 225 young people on the Moray Carers Project database. This includes those whose details were also passed to Quarriers, following consent. Project staff plan to review the database and expect that following the review that number will reduce significantly.

### **Complementarily and related issues**

Both providers appear to have been very careful not to tread on each other's toes, but to work in a complimentary way. Quarriers have not sought to establish an independent, competing presence in schools, promoting their service through youth cafes and other leisure and recreational sources. Moray Carers Project has carried information about both services and sought to promote awareness of both services.

It is possible that young people and parents are nevertheless taking a while to adjust to two fundamental changes in the services available to young carers.

Firstly, there are now two separate organisations offering support. Secondly, neither organisation is funded to maintain a similar focus on the provision of alternative social and recreational opportunities specifically for young carers. Funding sources for both – whether the local authority in relation to Quarriers, or the independent sources previously cited for Moray Carers Project – take an “inclusive” stance, requiring the provider to signpost and support participation in mainstream opportunities, rather than providing them separately for this specific group.

For the future, if Moray Carers Project succeeds in attracting further funding for comparable activities, the same challenges will remain, requiring a concerted partnership approach. If Moray Carers Project is not successful in attracting funds, different challenges and opportunities will emerge, that will still required focused attention from the provider and the Council.

In the meantime, given the differences in views and wishes previously noted between parents and young people, we see it as appropriate to maintain a broad approach to defining the target group for the service, in line with the Children (Scotland) Act – those “*affected adversely by the disability of any other person in his family*” – with a lesser emphasis on whether the young person sees themselves as having a specifically “caring role” or carrying “caring responsibilities”.