



Neath Port Talbot Children and Young People Services

Draft Young Carers Strategy

2017 - 2020

1. Introduction

This is the draft Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council (NPTCBC) Young Carers Strategy which aims to improve the lives of young carers and their families in Neath Port Talbot.

In Neath Port Talbot (NPT) we are committed to working to improve the ways in which we provide support to our young carers. The NPT Young Carers Strategy has been drafted in response to the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWB), which came into force in April 2016.

The Act will transform the way in which social services in Wales are delivered. It promotes people's independence and gives them more choice and control in their lives. The SSWB Act provides the legal framework for improving the well-being of those people in need of care and support, including Carers who may require support. It gives Carers equivalent rights to those that they provide care to and applies to carers of all ages including; young carers, young adult carers and adult carers. The Act stipulates "If the carer is a child, the assessment must have regard to his or her developmental needs and the extent to which it is appropriate for the child to provide the care. If the carer is a young adult carer aged between 16 and 25 the assessment must include an assessment of any current or future transitions the carer is likely to make into further or higher education, employment or training and have due regard to what the young adult carer wishes to participate in."

The Act repeals the majority of existing Community Care legislation and consolidates all other carers legislation, including:

- The Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995
- The Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000
- The Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004
- The Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure 2010

In NPT, we want to ensure that every young carer achieves their full potential and has positive emotional and physical wellbeing. We want to identify and significantly reduce the numbers of children and young people who are undertaking inappropriate caring roles. We want to reduce the number of families who rely on the care of a young person for their unmet care needs.

The impact young carers have on the quality of life of the individuals they care for is immeasurable. We are aware that as the complexity of need and the numbers of people requiring care increases that it magnifies the potential consequences for the quality of life of these young carers.

It is therefore crucial that partner organisations in NPT work together to recognise, value and support our young carers. The purpose of this Strategy is to provide a framework for this work over the next three years. The Young Carers Strategy will build on the successes of the

Carers Strategy (Wales) Measure 2010 and the NPT Joint Carers Commissioning Strategy 2015 – 2018.

This Strategy is a working document and will be reviewed on a yearly basis to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and remains focussed on the needs of young carers living within NPT.

2. Purpose of the Strategy

The purpose of the NPT Young Carers Strategy is to improve the lives of young carers and their families in Neath Port Talbot.

We want to identify and reduce the numbers of children and young people who are undertaking inappropriate caring roles. We want to reduce the numbers of families who rely on the care of a young person for their unmet care needs because this impacts negatively on a young person's emotional and physical well-being. We want to ensure that every young carer in NPT has the resources and support necessary to achieve their full potential and lead a life away from their caring role.

The commitment of young carers to their cared-for person means that their own individual needs are sometimes neglected. They may find it difficult to socialise with their peers or to find people who understand the practical difficulties of their daily life. It is important to recognise the needs of young carers and their right to be young people as well as carers.

The strategy has been developed in line with the Carers Strategy (Wales) Measure 2010, the NPT Joint Carers Commissioning Strategy 2015 – 2018 and the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWB). It sets out the commitment, vision and principles in Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council to enable the commissioning of appropriate needs led services for young carers and their families.

3. Definition of a Young Carer

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 came into force in April 2016 and includes significant changes for carers. The Act has a new definition of a Carer;

‘a person who provides or intends to provide care for an adult or disabled child.’

This removes the previous requirement that a carer must be providing 'a substantial amount of care on a regular basis'.

The Act provides for new rights for Carers and places new duties on local authorities in Wales. Councils must now offer a Carer's Assessment to any carer where it appears that the carer has a need for support, irrespective of their age. This is an important change, as previously a carer could only request a carer's assessment.

For the purposes of this Strategy, the definition of a young carer is ‘a child or young person up to the age of 25, from any ethnic or social background, who provides or intends to provide care for an adult or disabled child.’ The person they provide care for may be a parent, a sibling, another family member, a friend or neighbour. The person they provide care for does not need to be residing in the same household as the young carer. The cared-for person may have a physical disability, mental ill health, learning disability, substance misuse issues, frailty or old age. The care they provide may be practical, physical and/or emotional.

While the Strategy takes into account carers up until the age of 25 it is important to note that there is disparity between those carers from 0-18 years of age and carers who are aged 18 -25. Notably carers under the age of 18 are considered to be children under the law while 18-25 young carers are legally considered to be adults. Both groups will have similar needs however they will be a marked difference in areas such as higher education and employment for young adult carers.

4. Vision and Principles

The new Act places an increasing emphasis on Local Authorities to provide support to people in ways that will enable them to live independently within their own communities, maximise their choice and independence and give them greater control over the services they receive. In line with NPT’s Family Support Strategy (2015 - 2018) and Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy (2014 - 2017) the Council has made a commitment to promote and improve the health and wellbeing of the children and families that it works with by providing needs led and outcome focussed services.

Many of our children, young people and families will require the support of a carer to enable them to live more independently. This Strategy sets out what we need to do over the next 3 years to support our young carers to achieve this including; understanding and addressing their needs as well as those of the cared-for person.

In line with this, we have identified the following principles, which will underpin our approach to service delivery and shape the outcomes for our young carers;

Identification

Young carers can be very difficult to identify as they often don’t recognise that they are providing care, particularly if the cared-for person is a family member. There can be stigma attached to the label of a young carer, which many will not want to identify with as it can set them apart from their peers and bring unwanted attention. We need to work with partner organisations to identify young carers and their unique needs so that we can ensure that they receive appropriate support.

Access to information

Section 17 of the new Act places a duty on Local Authorities to establish an Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) service. In NPT, we are currently developing our Family Information Service to meet this statutory obligation. We need to ensure that young carers know who to contact in respect of IAA and that there is adequate information and sign posting facilities in place to ensure that young carers know what services are available to them and know how to access those services.

Decision Making

Young carers should have a choice in the services that they can receive support from. The new Act places a duty on Local Authorities to offer a Carer's Assessment to any carer where it appears that the carer has a need for support, irrespective of their age. We need to develop a holistic approach to assessment specifically for young carers, which takes into account their unique needs, their personal circumstance, their caring role and identifies the resources and services required to support them. Further to this, we need to link the young carers assessment to the cared-for person's assessment, as this will lead to better identification of young carers.

Service Integration

While young carers themselves will have needs as a result of their caring role so too will the cared-for person. It is vital that we recognise the needs of the both the carer and the person they care for so that appropriate services and resources can be put in place to meet their needs. This can only be achieved by working with partner agencies such as Health and Education to ensure that young carers needs are met in schools, colleges and health centres etc.

Inclusion

Young carers often become isolated from their peers through the nature of their caring role. For example, they may not be able to socialise outside of school if they have caring duties in the evening. If the cared-for person requires more immediate support they may be unable to school or college. We need to ensure that appropriate support services such as respite for the cared-for person and suitable transport are in place to enable the young carer to lead a life independent of their caring role.

5. Strategic Context

The NPT Young Carers Strategy fits in with the requirements of local and national policy and plans. The SSWB Act came into force in April 2016 and places a new emphasis on how Local Authorities and partner agencies should work together to deliver integrated services. It highlights the need for earlier intervention and an increase in the need for community based preventative services to enable people to maintain their independence. It provides the legal framework for improving the well-being of people in need of care and support, including Carers who may require support.

The Act gives Carers equivalent rights to those that they provide care to and applies to carers of all ages including; young carers, young adult carers and adult carers. The Act repeals the majority of existing Community Care legislation and consolidates all existing carers legislation, including:

- The Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995
- The Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000
- The Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004
- The Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure 2010

The Act provides a set of standards, regulations and a code of practice, which this Strategy takes into account. In particular, it now gives carers the same entitlement to a support assessment as the person they provide care for.

The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 brings strategic relevance to how Local Authorities and public bodies make decisions. It places an emphasis on Local Authorities and other public bodies to work together in a more sustainable and cohesive approach. The Act means that public bodies need to be look at preventative solutions when making decisions for people and communities and that it needs to involve the people living in local communities when planning for the future.

6. Young Carers in NPT

Neath Port Talbot County Borough has a population of over 137,000 and has an above average level of deprivation. 31% of our local areas are amongst the top 20% deprived areas of Wales, with 33% of people reporting they have a limiting long term illness compared to 27% across Wales. In addition, there is more people claiming severe disability allowance than the average across all other Welsh authorities.

Young carers in NPT are a diverse group. Care may be provided on a long or short term basis depending on the nature of the needs of the cared-for person e.g. care needed as a result of a car accident versus the care needed to support someone with a debilitating illness. Young carers may be providing care for a parent, a sibling or other family member. They may not necessarily be residing in the same household as the person that they provide care for. Some may be the primary care giver whilst others may share the responsibility with other family members, particularly in the case of sibling carers.

The 2011 Census showed that there are 370, 230 carers in Wales, of this 28,657 have been identified as young carers under the age of 25. Further to this, Wales has the highest percentage of young carers under the age of 18 UK wide.

There has been an increase in the numbers of young people up the age of 18 providing unpaid care in Wales between 2001 and 2011. In comparison to the UK average Wales shows the

highest proportion of young carers (2.6%) under 18 years providing unpaid care. In 2001 this figure was 10,741 and the 2011 Census saw this increase to 11,555.

The table below shows the profile of young carers in NPT, including projections to 2015:

	2011	2015
Children aged 0-15 providing 1-19 hours of unpaid care	296	308
Young people aged 16-24 providing 1-19 hours of unpaid care	832	743
Children aged 0-15 providing 20-49 hours of unpaid care	50	51
Young people aged 16-24 providing 20-49 hours of unpaid care	199	178
Children aged 0-15 providing 50+ hours of unpaid care	51	53
Young people aged 16-24 providing 50+ hours of unpaid care	158	141
Total population aged 0 to 24 providing unpaid care	1,586	1,474

Figures are taken from the Census 2011 reference LC3304EW 'Provision of unpaid care by age'. This dataset provides estimates that classify usual residents of England and Wales by provision of unpaid care and by age. The estimates are as at census day, 27 March 2011.

Young carers under the age of 18 are particularly vulnerable as under the law they are legally classed as children. They will have needs unique to their age in terms of peer socialisation and education opportunities. Young adult carers (18 – 25) will have different needs particularly around transition to adulthood, access to higher education and employment opportunities. This Strategy takes into account the varying needs of young carers and has developed measures to identify and meet these needs.

The role of caring can impact negatively on the lives of children and young people. Young carers will be more likely to disengage with education and employment opportunities. They will have limited time for social and leisure activities, which can alienate them from their peers. Young carers may feel isolated by the stigma of their caring role. The negative impact of caring means that young carers are more likely to experience ill health and emotional difficulties. In NPT, we want to work effectively with our young carers and partner organisations to develop the necessary supports to increase life opportunities outside of the caring responsibilities.

7. Outcomes for Young Carers

In line with the requirements of the SSWB Act NPT are currently reviewing our services for young carers. The currently commissioned service has been designed to provide targeted support to build the resilience of young carers. It is focussed on providing support at an early stage and aims to prevent and reduce escalation of need.

We have identified the following outcomes that need to be developed to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our young carers:

- 1) Identification
- 2) Access to information
- 3) Decision making
- 4) Service integration
- 5) Inclusion

The following provides an outline of what we have achieved so far and what we need to do. Once the Young Carers Strategy has been consulted on, we will develop an Action Plan detailing accountability, timescales and resources required to implement any further changes.

Identification

We want to ensure that young carers are identified and that the role they undertake is recognised and valued by professionals and partner agencies. Further to this, we want to identify what is important to our young carers and what services and resources they need to lead a more fulfilled life. In order to achieve this we need to raise the profile of young carers and work with other organisations to identify and understand their unique needs.

What has been achieved so far:

- Our commissioned services have created an awareness and identification training tool which they have delivered to Adult Social Care and Children and Young People Services staff
- Our commissioned service has developed promotional literature on its services and distributed same to statutory and non-statutory organisations, with a particular emphasis on education and health services such as schools and GP's
- A Population Needs Assessment has been completed by Western Bay, which provides a more robust account of the Local data set.

What we need to achieve:

- To roll out identification and awareness training to relevant staff in statutory and non-statutory organisations
- Work more closely with our education and health colleagues to identify young carers in their respective services, particularly teachers, health visitors and GP's

- Work with our Adult Social Care and Children and Young People Services social workers to identify young carers at the point when they are undertaking assessments of need of the cared-for person
- Raise the profile of the young carers service among community organisations and youth services
- Children and Young People Services has recently developed a Pilot Young Carers Assessment, which takes into account the views of the young person and gives them more say in what services are provided to them

Access to information

Under the SSWB Act Local Authorities are required to establish an Information, Advice and Assistance service. We want to ensure that young carers have access to information that is relevant to their needs and that the IAA service is equipped with the knowledge of services and resources available locally so that they can inform, advise and signpost to appropriate services.

What has been achieved so far:

- The ABMU Carers Partnership Board (ABMU CPB) developed ‘Valuing Carers - ABMU Carers Partnership Carers Information and Consultation Strategy 2013 – 2016’. The purpose of which is to ensure ABMU Health Board, Local Authorities and non-statutory partners work together to inform and consult with Carers when accessing their respective services
- Following on from the Valuing Carers Strategy ABMU CPB have developed a Transition Plan from April 2016 – March 2017 to lead into the implementation of the new SSWB Act
- The ABMU CPB has established a Young Carers Subgroup to support the implementation of the transition plan
- NPTCBC is in the process of developing its Family Information Service to meet the requirements of the IAA service
- Partner agencies are currently on the requirements of the NPT Population Needs Assessment as required by the SSWB Act. This will ensure that we have the appropriate population and service data to effectively plan for future services and identify any gaps in provision

What we need to achieve:

- We need to continue to work collaboratively with health, education and non-statutory organisations to continue and build on the successful work of the ABMU CPB and Young Carers Subgroup
- We need to work towards achieving the outcomes of the Transition Plan to ensure successful implementation of the recommendations of the new Act
- We need to work with and develop our Family Information Service so that it has the resources required to provide information and signposting facilities for young carers

- We need to continually review our Population Needs Assessment so that it reflects current and future need
- To regularly consult with all stakeholders on any decision making and long term service planning for young carers
- To continually update all stakeholders with any new developments in resources and/or services for young carers
- To develop a young person version of the Strategy with the assistance and consultation of Young Carers.
- To achieve more young person friendly marketing material surrounding Young Carer services which encourages Young People to be aware of what is available to individuals who are Young Carers or unidentified Young Carers.

Decision Making

We want to ensure that young carers have a say in how services are developed to meet their needs. We want to give young carers more control over their lives and we want them to feel listened to. To achieve this we will need to include young carers in the planning of services and resources. We will need to capture their needs and identify a range of support services and resources to meet these needs.

What has been achieved so far:

- In 2012, NPTCBC engaged an external consulting group to undertake a local vulnerable family's needs mapping exercise. The data from this exercise was used to commission a range of family support services, including a specific young carers service.
- The commissioned service is monitored on a quarterly basis and has set KPI's with measurable outcomes for young carers
- The commissioned service monitor and record equality and diversity information on all young carers who access the service, which is used to inform service delivery
- The commissioned service capture feedback from every young carer that accesses their service which is used to improve services and resources

What we need to achieve:

- To work with statutory and non-statutory organisations and communities to identify local resources that our young carers can avail of
- All services need to work together to continually update the information required for NPT's Population Needs Assessment so that information captured is always relevant to need
- To regularly consult with all stakeholders on any decision making and long term service planning for young carers

Service Integration

We want to work together with our young carers, the cared-for person, families and other organisations to ensure that our services can be developed and delivered in a holistic approach. We want to maximise our current pool of resources and plan effectively together for future need.

What has been achieved so far:

- The ABMU CPB has established a Young Carers Subgroup to support the implementation of the transition plan to meet the requirements of the new Act
- Work is currently being undertaken with all partner agencies to ensure that there is adequate provision of services and support to meet the legislative requirements of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2015
- NPT is currently working with partner agencies and Third Sector colleagues to fulfil the requirements of the Population Needs Assessment. This will determine current need and local service provision which will underpin our long term commissioning framework
- The Think Family Partnership is a multi-agency group whose purpose is to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families. It promotes joined up working, which informs collaborative commissioning processes

What we need to achieve:

- To work collaboratively across the ABMU region to ensure that services are developed in line with the new Act, with a particular emphasis on Part 9 of the Act which calls for partnership working and more integration of care and support services
- To develop an integrated approach to the commissioning and planning of services and resources, including working with Welsh Government funded programmes such as Families First and with health and education services
- To develop a more cohesive working relationship between Adult Social Care services and Children and Young People Services to ensure that service provision is joined up, with particular regard to respite services
- To monitor the needs and resources captured in the Young Carers Assessment's to inform future commissioning priorities, including identifying gaps in provision
- To continue to review service provision to ensure that it can meet the needs of our young carers and that it meets the requirements of local and national legislation and plans

Inclusion

We want to ensure that young carers do not become isolated from their peers through the nature of their caring role. We want them to be able to access education and employment

opportunities. We want to provide young carers with the opportunity to socialise and retain their hobbies and interests. We want to provide support to aid the transition of young carers from childhood to adulthood.

What has been achieved so far:

- In 2015-16, our commissioned service provided support services to 41 young carers in NPT. From April to September 2016 they have worked with a further 26 young carers.
- Our commissioned service has completed 65 young carers assessments since April 2015. These assessments inform the service needs of young carers such as group activities, 1-1 issue based sessions, overnight residential breaks, youth clubs and social activities. They also signpost to other services where there is an identified need
- Our commissioned service are working collaboratively with education, health and social services to highlight the needs of the young carers who they assess so that support can be put in place to help young carers achieve their potential

What we need to achieve:

- We need to monitor the information gathered through the Young Carers Assessment so that it informs service planning
- We need to work holistically with health and education agencies so that there is a multi-agency response to the resources and services developed for young carers
- Where possible we need to provide services within young carers communities so that they can access them more frequently
- Social care services need to work in a more streamlined manner to ensure that there is adequate respite services in places for the cared-for person, so that the young carer can have a break from their caring responsibilities
- We need to work with local employment and training agencies to develop service delivery so that young carers can access the same education and work opportunities as their peers
- To map out existing services and service demand within rural areas of Neath Port Talbot where inclusion for Young Carers is difficult and therefore develop services to meet demand.

8. Implementation and Monitoring

The delivery of this Young Carers Strategy will require partnership working between statutory and non-statutory organisations in Neath Port Talbot.

Children and Young People Services will facilitate a Young Carer Leadership Group, with key partners to implement an operational and Strategic action plan against the 5 outcomes set out in this Strategy, which will include priorities of need, accountability, resources,

timescales and success criteria. Performance indicators will be developed, which we will use to monitor the progress and outcomes of the Strategy.

A Young Carer Stakeholder Group will be established, which will set a platform for Young carers to be at the forefront of the implementation of this strategy and to communicate their voice surrounding the outcomes identified. This Young Carer Stakeholder group will consist of Young Carers being able to inform awareness raising, marketing and profile of identified and unidentified Young Carers within the Neath Port Talbot Borough.

The active involvement of young carers, families and partner agencies in the monitoring, evaluation and review of this Strategy and the Action Plan will be integral to its success. We will regularly consult with stakeholders to ensure that the Strategy and its Action Plan is relevant to local need.

Neath Port Talbot Children and Young People Services will be responsible for the monitoring of the Young Carers Strategy and Action Plan. The Strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis and an update report will be provided to the NPT Social Care, Health and Wellbeing Cabinet Board.