

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee held on Monday, 12 November 2018 at 6.00pm in Meeting Room G3/4, Addenbrook House, Ironmasters Way, Telford, TF3 4NT

Present: Councillors A D McClements (Chair); S Barnes, M Boylan, J A Francis, E J Greenaway, J Jones and J A Pinter and co-optees S Fikeis and M Ward.

Also Present: K Rutter, Young Carers Service; J Tiernan, All Age Carers Commissioning Office; S Worthington, Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer - TWC.

CYPSC-06 Apologies for Absence

Councillors E A Clare, K R Guy; Co-optees C Healy, L Fowler and C Morgan

CYPSC-07 Declarations of Interest

None

CYPSC-08 Minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2018

The Minutes of the meeting were approved as an accurate record.

CYPSC-09 Overview of Young Carers Support in Telford & Wrekin: 2018

The Committee received the report in respect of the young carers service in Telford & Wrekin. It was noted that the 2012 census indicated that there were approximately 1530 young carers in Borough, of which around 600 were known to the young carers service. The young carers service was commissioned as part of the all ages carers service.

Members noted that young carers were children and young people between the ages of 5 and 24, who undertook a variety of tasks, such as practical household tasks, giving emotional support and personal care. There was an 'inbetweeners' group for young people aged between 16 and 24 to support with their transition to adult services.

There were three tiers of support for young carers and the levels of support for each tier were discussed. The service had strong links with schools and attended regularly for support sessions. Publicity leaflets had been developed in conjunction with the young carers to raise awareness. It was noted that a lot of the additional activities undertaken by the service, such as trips, were funded by public donations.

A discussion was held and members asked the following questions:

Where the assessments noted in the report an assessment of the carers needs?

The service looked at a whole family approach, including emotional and physical wellbeing of all family members. The assessment undertaken by the young carers service was in respect of the young person, the cared for would be entitled to a separate assessment in

their own right.

The census stated that there would be approximately 1530 young carers in the Borough, but 600 were registered. Are the service aware of other young people?

Carers still felt there was a stigma around their role and many young people did not want services to be involved. A lot of young carers do not identify themselves as carers and there was ongoing work to raise the profile of the service, for example, there were carers champions in all GP services in the Borough.

What was the area of biggest weakness for the service?

The stigma that remained was the largest barrier to people using the service. The service managed well with the funding received and a lot of work was being undertaken with the community to look into local connections.

It was noted that schools sometime did not know a young person was a carer.

Some schools had a question asking if the young person was a young carer on their enrolment form. Most secondary schools in the Borough held regularly drop in sessions and there were good links with the school nurses. It was noted that there was still some understanding of the role of young carers with some teachers but it was hoped that the recently developed leaflet may help with this.

What was the engagement like with minority groups?

This was a growing area and there were ongoing conversations with the Hadley Mosque and a local Polish group.

A suggestion was made that there could be a link governor in each school for young carers, similar to a link governor for looked after children.

A question was asked about the befriending service. Were befrienders the same age as the young carer?

It was noted that the befrienders were volunteers, as were the activity volunteers. There was a strict vetting and matching process for volunteers and they had won a Queens Award three years ago for their volunteering. Befrienders were adults but it was noted that there was good peer support in the groups, which often continued outside of the groups.

The Committee welcomed a young carer to the meeting to share her experience of being a young carer. She identified that she had been a young carer for her sister since she was nine years old and had not recognised that she was a young carer initially. She discussed how she had been isolated and the support she had received from the service. The young carer was now at college and had a part time job, in addition to her caring responsibilities. The young carer discussed her caring responsibilities.

Had the young carer been offered any counselling?

The young carer identified that she had 6 sessions of counselling but had not enjoyed

these. Members noted that it took time to build a relationship and this would be difficult to do in 6 sessions. Officers noted that often young people need to be in crisis before they are offered counselling. The importance of face to face discussion was noted and that the use of technology was not always the best solution. The young carer advised that her relationship with the workers was important, she could text them and ask for a chat. It was also important to have friends to talk about who understood the situation.

What support mechanisms were in place?

Officers advised that there were many, varied mechanisms in place. It was noted that work was done with young people on their acceptance of support as well.

Was there anything specifically the young carer would ask for, if she could?

The young carer noted that consistency in school was very important.

Was there any provision for respite services for young carers?

It was noted there was currently no provision for respite for people under 18. Officers agreed this could be an area for development. The service provides regular respite activities for the young people, however, there was not any respite care available to look after the cared for to give the young people a break.

Members thanked the young carer for sharing her story.

CYPSC-10 Chair's Update

The Chair advised that meeting on 12 February would consider the Education Attainment Report and the Annual Local Safeguarding Children's Board Report.

Members requested a report on unofficial exclusions.

The meeting ended: 7.40pm

Chairman:

Date: