

# **Working Together to Support Young Carers**

**A Local Memorandum of Understanding between  
Strategic Directors for  
Children's and Young Peoples Services and  
Adult and Community Services**

**Bradford Metropolitan District Council**

**August 2017**

## **Joint Statement of Intent**

Young carers tell us that they value their caring roles and are often proud of the contribution they are able to make in their families. We are committed to working together locally to ensure that we address the Strategy for Carers (2008) clear and challenging vision for young carers.

***“Children and young people will be protected from inappropriate caring and have the support they need to learn, develop and thrive; to enjoy positive childhoods and to achieve their full potential and fulfils the duty to participate as laid out in the Raising Participation Age duty.”***

The vision’s priority remains to ensure that young carers are protected from excessive or inappropriate caring roles and parents and guardians are properly supported to undertake their role as parents. This vision was central to the preparation and content of the first joint Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2010

This updated memorandum reflects the joint working that currently takes place across Children’s Services and Adult and Community Services. It sets out our shared understanding of the issues facing young carers and our views on how we can deliver integrated support for families that will result in better protection from harm and improved outcomes for young carers.

It remains our joint intention to ensure that all children do not undertake inappropriate caring roles and that effective care and support is provided for siblings, parents and other family members who need it. We will strive to achieve this within the resources available to us and in line with national and local policies, priorities and guidance.

## **Key Aims and Outcomes**

Our main aim is to promote and improve the health and well-being of young carers and their families. We will achieve this by seeking to identify and protect children and young people from excessive and inappropriate caring roles and by preventing the continuation of this activity through working positively with children, young people and their families

Building on the following lead practice guidance ***Key Principles of Practice (Young Carers)*** and within the outcome frameworks provided by ***Putting People First (2013)***: Where a parent or another family member has care or welfare needs arising from physical or mental illness, substance misuse, or disability we will work together and with our partners in health and carers organisations to ensure that:

- There are no “wrong doors” and that young carers are identified, assessed and their families are supported in ways that prevent children and young people undertaking inappropriate levels of responsibility for care, regardless of which service or organisation is contacted in the first instance

- Risks to independence, safety and welfare are recognised and responded to in line with the national guidance ***“Working Together to Safeguard Children” (2015) and the principles agreed by Bradford Children’s Trust to underpin the Districts Families First programme.***
- Earlier, better integrated and effective responses to young carers and their families is actively promoted through the use of the ***“Whole family pathway”*** approach to assessment and support which will remain available to young people during the transition to adulthood.
- Children and young people are protected from undertaking excessive or inappropriate caring roles, further inappropriate caring is prevented, emotional support is available where needed, and parents, guardians and families feel supported in their parenting role
- No care or support package for a parent or sibling relies on excessive or inappropriate caring being undertaken by a young carer to make it sustainable
- Young carers have the same access to impartial careers information advice and guidance opportunities as their peers and can access a range of options that will help them to participate in educational and training to ensure they meet the duty to participate until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday and go forward to achieve their full potential in adult life.
- Recognition and participation of young carers and their families to inform and shape what we do and how we develop services that promote greater choice and control which will help prevent the emergence of inappropriate caring roles among children and young people.

### **Young Carers: A Shared Understanding**

The Children and Families Act 2014 states that: “young carer” means a person under 18 years of age who carries out caring tasks and assumes a level of responsibility for another person which would normally be carried out by an adult.’

Under the terms of our original Memorandum of Understanding, we continue to agree that the term “young carer” should be taken to include children and young people under 18 who provide regular and ongoing care and emotional support to a family member who is physically or mentally ill, disabled or misuses substances.

The term does not apply to the everyday and occasional help around the home that may often be expected of or given by children in families. We agree that the key features that may indicate inappropriate levels of caring by a child or young person are that the caring responsibilities persist over time and are important in maintaining the health, safety or day to day well-being of the person cared for and/or the wider family. We also recognise the need to take into account the age of the young carer and have regard for the extent

to which the young carer is participating in or wishes to participate in education, training or recreation, and the extent to which the young carer works or wishes to work.

We will continue to work together to develop a shared and more detailed understanding of the different types and levels of caring in our area. Our main focus, however, will be to ensure we develop better ways of identifying where caring by children is taking place, where risks are becoming excessive and/or the levels of care is inappropriate, and to ensure support is put into place that prevents this happening.

The primary issues for us are those of recognition, adverse impact and effective support, including emotional support. Our approach relies on the premise outlined in the 'whole family' approach.

***“a young carer becomes vulnerable when the level of care-giving and responsibility to the person in need of care becomes excessive or inappropriate for that child, risking impacting on his or her emotional or physical well being or educational achievement and life chances”***

### **Having a Multi-Agency Strategy**

We will work together to ensure that, within the overall framework of our Local Strategic Partnership and Children's Trust, the details within this MoU constitute a specific multi-agency strategy to meet the needs of young carers. We will ensure this strategy interfaces clearly with both current and future local Children and Young People's Plans and planning frameworks for Adult Social Care.

The strategy will be developed in collaboration with key partners in health and local support projects for carers and families including existing support programmes such as Families First and the Youth Contract. It will embrace the views of young carers and their families and reflect the vision that is part of the national strategy. The resulting local strategy will be kept under review and progress shared with local people, young carers, families and partners.

Programmes for learning and development will be put in place to raise awareness and understanding of young carers and their families. Training will be designed to support those undertaking young carers' assessments to have the necessary knowledge and skills. This should include ensuring that practitioners in the local authority and partner agencies are aware of the specific requirements concerning young carers of the Care Act and amendments to the Children Act and accompanying Guidance and Regulations

### **Promoting Early Identification**

It is our shared intention to review local practice and where appropriate to refine it to ensure that it:

- Promotes positive images of adults living with long term conditions or disabilities and encourage families to seek information and assistance and identify children with caring responsibilities.
- Provides appropriate and accessible information for families about services that support parenting capacity, independence and well being.
- Enables access to self directed support, including direct payments, to meet the needs of parents where appropriate.
- Reaches out to families to offer support that will reduce the risk of inappropriate forms of caring by children and young people from developing or continuing.
- Reflects principles of partnership working with communities and the need for sensitivity and consideration of different cultural perspectives.
- Supports schools in their key role of identifying children and enabling early intervention and the effective support of young carers by appropriate agencies where required.
- Supports local **NHS** and related health services in identifying young carers and, ensures that young carers have the same access to health provision as their peers.
- Recognises the existence of “hard to reach” groups or families and works with appropriate partners and agencies to identify and address any unmet needs.
- Recognises that care needs can vary significantly and understands local processes for offering emergency advice and support where usual care arrangements risk breaking down.
- Engages with local young carers’ projects to facilitate and promote early support and ‘whole family’ working.

The delivery of effective early support for the person requiring care takes into account the needs of dependent children within the family environment and should, in most cases, be sufficient to protect young carers. However, there will be some families whose support needs are not identified at an early enough stage and where the caring role of a child or young person may be deeply entrenched

In such cases, it is necessary to consider the unmet care or parental support needs of the person who is being cared for, **and** to determine what level of support for the young carer may be required immediately, as well as over the longer term, to improve their situation and to reduce the pressures on them.

### **Assessment**

We are agreed that the key to ensuring better support and outcomes for young carers is the effective assessment of need. As Statutory Directors, we will ensure that when a referral is made about a parent/guardian with a disability, dependency or illness, agencies will consider whether there is a child or young person in the family who is providing personal care or practical help. Practitioners will be expected to use the ‘**whole family approach**’ in considering the impact of the disability or illness on each child or young person within the family and whether they are or could be providing some form of care. We expect action would be taken to assess: Further information and

practice guidance is available in “**The Care Act and Whole Family Approaches**”. This was published by ADASS March 2015 in association with several partners and was commissioned by the Department of Health. (See link to LGA website [Needs assessments and carers’ assessments](#) )

When carrying out a young carer’s needs assessment we will work to determine:

- the amount, nature and type of care which the young carer provides;
- the impact of the caring role on the young carer’s wellbeing, education and personal and emotional development;
- whether any of the caring tasks the young carer is performing are excessive or inappropriate having regard to all the circumstances
- whether a needs assessment of the cared for person (be they a child or adult) has been carried out, and if not, to request one;
- whether any of the young carer’s needs for support could be met by providing support or services to:
  - the person cared for [by the young carer]; or
  - another member of the young carer’s family.
- what the young carer’s needs for support would be likely to be if he or she were relieved of part or all of his or her caring role and whether the young carer has any remaining unmet needs.
- The additional services required to ensure care needs are met and to prevent a child or young person taking on or continuing to undertake inappropriate caring responsibilities.
- Whether the parent/guardian needs additional support to fulfil his or her parenting role or support in parenting capacity.
- What can be offered to help the whole family or to maximise the broader support which others in the family are able to provide.
- Whether the impact on the child indicates that it would be appropriate to undertake an assessment under the **Framework for Assessment of Children in Need and their Families** further investigation by Children’s Services about safeguarding concerns if there is a likelihood of significant harm to the child.
- Whether there are additional needs falling within **Early Help** and require a **Early Help Assessment**

When carrying out a young carer’s needs assessment, we will:

- ensure that the assessment is carried out in a manner which is appropriate and proportionate (in the light of the young carer’s age, needs and wishes and feelings);
- adopt a whole family approach;
- ensure that any person who is to carry out a young carer’s needs assessment has sufficient competence, knowledge, skills and training to be able to carry out that assessment and be an appropriate person to carry out the assessment in the light of the young carer’s age, sex and understanding

- where considered appropriate or necessary to do so, consult persons with expertise and knowledge relevant to the young carer; and also to consult any person the young carer or their parent wishes to involve
- ensure that the young carer, the person cared for and, if different, the parents of the young carer are informed about the assessment process, usually prior to the assessment, and are helped to be able to participate in the process as effectively as possible.
- We will provide young carer's, their parents and any person at the request of the young carer or their parent with a copy of the assessment with information about the actions to be taken including whether the young carer has been assessed as a “child in need” and confirming arrangements for review.

Where a young carer is a “child in need” needing protection and support or needs early help support, adult workers will discuss the case with the Children’s Services to decide if further action is needed. Further action might include:

- a referral to an independent Young Carers’ service;
- accessing preventative support through the “Early Help Network”

We expect appropriate use of relevant toolkits and protocols to support the ‘Whole Family Pathway’ approach and that practise reflects the priorities and principles outlined in the District’s Children and Young people’s Plan and all relevant Adult and Community Service Strategies. Where consistent with the aims of this Memorandum of Understanding, we will aim to ensure that:

- The primary responsibility for responding to the needs of young carers derives from the person in need of care and support. This means that whichever service identifies there is a young carer in the family, whether it is Children’s or Adults’ Services or a health partner agency, this service is responsible for assessing the needs of that young carer within the family context.
- Young carer's of disabled children are the responsibility of the Children’s Service which will also need to undertake carer's assessments for any young adult carer's who look after disabled children.
- Adult Services will identify children in the household / family network and ensure that young carers are not left with excessive and inappropriate levels of caring responsibilities that risks them becoming vulnerable. They will also need to undertake carers’ assessments for young adult carers. Adult Services will refer to Children’s services where the child is thought to be a child in need or to young carer’s services or Early Help where other preventative services are needed.

**(Note;** In each area a decision should be made concerning in which circumstances it would be reasonable for adult workers or voluntary sector partners to undertake young carers assessments and when, in more complex cases, to refer to Children’s Services. What is appropriate will vary based on local circumstances).

- Practitioners will seek advice and support where necessary from colleagues in Children's or Adults' Services or a partner agency, to ensure the efficient discharge of our joint and separate responsibilities towards young carers and their families.
- Practitioners will be aware of the prejudices and stereotypes that may exist around cultures, and disability, adults who misuse drugs/alcohol or have mental health needs, particularly as this relates to perceptions around parenting capacity and competence.
- Practitioners will reach their conclusions on the basis of the evidence of their observations of parents/guardians and children; including any young carers.
- Joint assessment will be expected to be undertaken where this is appropriate. We also expect that relevant staff from local agencies will be available to provide specialist advice and support as needed (there is provision in the Care Act Guidance and in Section 17 of the Children Act to combine a young carer's assessment with that of the adult); or

Finally, we are clear that staff should never ignore any aspect of a situation that indicates there are concerns about a child or young person's safety and the requirement to ensure they are protected from harm.

## **Safeguarding**

Early sharing of information is key if there are emerging concerns. No professional should assume that someone else will pass information on that they think maybe critical to the safety or wellbeing of any child or adult. If a professional has concern about a child's or adult's welfare and believes they are suffering or likely to suffer harm or neglect then they should share the information with the local authority and, or, the police if they believe or suspect a crime has been committed. Information sharing should be in line with local agreements and Caldicott principles.

We accept a joint responsibility to work in partnership with others to identify and respond to any young carers who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm and to protect them from this harm. We will ensure discharge of our responsibilities through prioritising working together, early intervention and prevention that reflects practice guidance. We will work to ensure that we do not stigmatize families or risk increasing the number of hidden young carers. We will ensure that we do not discourage young carers and their families from seeking information and advice, or requesting an assessment and provision of services. In order to meet these needs we will:

- Clearly state that it is the responsibility of all staff under local safeguarding children procedures to make referrals where children are considered to be

suffering or likely to suffer significant harm and emphasise the principle that safeguarding is everyone's business.

- Ensure staff members in all agencies have undertaken appropriate training in recognising harm, reporting concerns about a child's welfare and safety and confirming referrals they have made to Children's Social Care within 48 hours.
- Ensure staff members in relevant roles within all agencies have undertaken appropriate training in relation to mental health and substance misuse issues.
- Make sure our arrangements for young carers and their families reflect any requirements of local multi-agency and single agency policies for safeguarding children and actively seek inclusion as necessary.
- Ensure appropriate levels of awareness about policy and practice for safeguarding adults; the ability to recognise and respond to safeguarding adults' concerns; and promote confidence and consistency in using local multi-agency procedures by staff in across all agencies.

### **Local Safeguarding Boards**

Local Safeguarding Children and Adults Boards will be made aware of issues surrounding young carers and of this Memorandum of Understanding. This is to ensure consistency with local multi-agency policies and procedures. This will also raise awareness of the way in which safeguarding work forms part of a continuum of person-centred and proportionate risk-based responses. We can all use these to ensure that those adults and children at risk of harm are kept safe and their welfare is promoted.

### **Supporting Young Carers to Learn**

*'Your child, your schools, our future'* (2009) emphasised the importance of schools in ensuring the success of early intervention strategies for children and young people with additional support needs. More recently, the Department for Education's ***'Careers guidance and inspiration for schools'*** (April 2014) makes clear that schools and local authorities should work together to identify pupils that may need targeted support or are at risk of not participating post-16.

We recognise that young carers often need additional support to participate in learning opportunities that will enable them achieve their full potential in adult life. We will work in partnership with schools and their governing bodies, and with Further Education and training providers, to develop effective, age-appropriate support for young carers which may include:

- Identifying a named staff member with lead responsibility for young carers and recognising this role in continuing professional development arrangements.

- Ensuring that policies and procedures encourage practices that identify and support young carers in the learning environment (these could include flexibility around timetabling, access to personal tutors, opportunities for private discussions and knowing how to access to local young carers' projects, etc.)
- Where young people appear to be having difficulties, promote open communication with families that supports parenting capacity and encourages the sharing of information to determine needs.
- Raising awareness about young carers within the learning environment and promoting understanding of caring issues and support options.
- Ensuring that school policies on enrolment, attendance, bullying, behaviour and staying safe include provisions to support young carers.
- Ensuring that Data Protection Act and Caldicott principles on confidentiality and information sharing are understood and followed
- Providing personalised curriculum/enrichment activities that incorporate awareness, inclusion, understanding and support for young carers in order to raise aspirations and help young carers reach their full learning potential.
- Utilising individual pupil plans to recognise and support the positive aspects of the young carer's role and to identify any necessary support that will enable young carers to attend and enjoy school.
- Including positive messages and images about people with disabilities; including mental health issues, within the wider curriculum.
- Considering and where reasonably practicable taking action to remove barriers to physical access, provide relevant communication aids and promote inclusion.
- Being aware of and sensitive to cultural and religious issues that may affect some young carers.
- Using guidance and support in relation to young carers (available in 2014 through the Children's Society's Supporting Young Carers webpage.)
- Using the CAF process as appropriate.
- Being mindful that young people identified as 'young carers' are considered vulnerable due to the often significant barriers to participation in learning that they face. (Where data is available it shows that young carers have a higher risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment and Training)).
- Planning for transition into post 16 educational options for all young carers, taking into account any additional support needs. Smooth transitions can help to safeguard against 'drop out' and non-participation among young carers aged 16 and over.
- Supporting young carers in their 'duty' to participate. Under the Raising Participation Age (RPA) legislation, from the academic year 2014-2015 young people will be required to participate in education or training until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. (This does not mean that a young person has to remain in a school setting; they may choose to participate in education or training, take up an apprenticeship, or to combine full time employment (or voluntary work) with accredited part time learning.) Transition planning across the post-16 sector should be recognised as one of the main sources of supporting young people to participate.

- Encouraging schools to provide targeted Careers Information, Advice and Guidance (CIAG) for young carers (in line with current Ofsted guidance) and to develop and maintain robust reporting mechanisms that will enable schools to respond to the introduction of new performance indicators (such as 'destination measures') that may be particularly impacted by young carers and other young people that face barriers to participation in learning.

### **Health of Young Carers**

In line with the responsibilities under the ***National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services***, we will continue to work in partnership with our health colleagues to:

- Promote and sustain healthy cooking, eating and fluid intakes
- Encourage regular exercise and doing about 60 minutes of physical activity each day
- Ensure good oral health
- Raise awareness and reduce risks of substance misuse (alcohol, volatile substances and illicit drugs) and smoking and support young carers interested in giving up
- Raise awareness of personal stress and how this may be managed
- Highlight the role of doctors and other health professional in identifying or supporting young carers in primary healthcare settings and as part of hospital discharge processes
- Ensure child and adolescent mental health services support the emotional well being of young carers who are seriously troubled by their caring role
- Provide breaks and activities to enhance mental health and social networks
- Enable young people to assess risks about lifting and handling and provide information, advice and support to remove or reduce risk of injury as necessary
- Ensure safe procedures exist for the holding and control of medication at all times

### **Information, Advice & Advocacy**

We will continue to work with partners to improve and develop a range of services for young carers and their families that enable them to access relevant sources of:

- Information
- Advice and Guidance
- Advocacy
- Representation
- Support, including peer support through local young carers' projects.
- We will work with partners in the local community to ensure that information and advice for young carers is available in a range of appropriate settings and formats that are accessible by children and young people

We will encourage local use of the following core principles, which were developed originally by the Department of Health, for use when people act as advocates for young carers:

- Advocates should be the young carer's person of choice and can be informal, peer as well as professional advocates.
- Advocates should work for the best interests of the young carer.
- Advocates should value and respect young carers as individuals and challenge all types of unlawful discrimination.
- Advocates should work to make sure that young carers understand what is happening to them, can make their views known and, where possible exercise appropriate choices when decisions are being made.
- Advocates should help young carers to raise issues and concerns about things they are unhappy about. This includes making complaints under the Children Act 1989.
- Advocates should be familiar with requirements regarding the safeguarding of children and know what to do if they become aware of abuse or neglect or risk of it occurring.

As Statutory Directors we accept there are challenges inherent in this commitment. We recognise that from time to time tensions may arise between young carers and those whom they support. We will work to find ways of resolving them. We will commit to meet with young carers not less than once a year to find out what has gone well, what has not gone well and what might make a difference in future.

Opportunities for Elected Member involvement will be identified. We will explore the scope for having a designated Elected Member[s] who would champion the interests and concerns of young carers, and meet with them at regular intervals consistent with the constitutional arrangements of our Council.

### **Equalities & Diversity**

This Memorandum is subject to the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

This Memorandum of Understanding applies in all situations irrespective of age, disability, gender, race, cultural or religious beliefs and sexual orientation. It is an underpinning principle within the protocol that, as with abuse or neglect, inappropriate caring responsibilities cannot be condoned on religious or cultural grounds. We will ensure that appropriate people are readily available to provide advice on such matters.

### **Language Barriers**

We will consult with families and young people when deciding who might best fulfil the role of translator to meet their needs. Where possible bi-lingual advocates will be used and we will endeavour where possible and appropriate to respond to cultural, religious or other factors that might require consideration and sensitivity when utilising translation services. We are agreed that it is not good practice to expect young carers to interpret for their families, particularly when this involves someone with an illness, and we will discourage this practice and make clear that we expect interpreters to be used.

### **Information Sharing**

We are agreed that effective and timely information sharing between our own agencies and with our health partners is critical to the provision of early intervention and preventative work, to support transitions, and for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young carers.

Our aim is to ensure specific recognition of young carers within the framework of existing local information sharing protocols. Local arrangements will be consistent with national guidance. We will expect practitioners to act in accordance with legislation while understanding and applying the following principles:

- Why the Data Protection legislation is not a barrier to sharing appropriate information.
- Being open and honest in all professional conduct.
- Seeking advice whenever necessary.
- Sharing with consent where appropriate.
- Considering the child's safety and welfare at all times.
- Gathering and storing information that is necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure.
- Recording when and in what circumstances information is shared.

### **Young Carers: Related Themes and Issues**

There are a number of other issues that may apply to the circumstances of some young carers. We will ensure these inform the need for joint working and shared understandings and processes between Adult Social Care, Children's Services and partners within health. These are:

#### **Transitions to adulthood**

We will assess the needs of young carer's as they approach adulthood wherever it appears that there may be 'significant benefit' to the individual in doing so. Young adult carers often find their education; training and employment prospects are challenged by their caring role. We will therefore consider how to support young carer's to prepare for adulthood and to raise and fulfill their aspirations. This is regardless of whether the young carer currently receives any services and includes young carer's whose parents

have needs below the local authority's eligibility threshold.<sup>1</sup>

Where young carer's are not eligible for services, the transition assessment will be followed up with good information and advice about support in the community.

We recognise that the power to join up assessments can be important at transition and where appropriate we will consider combining any existing Education Health and Care plans with transition plans and plans for the adult carer. When assessments are combined, we will as appropriate designate a named person to coordinate transition assessment and planning across agencies.

- Parents with mental health needs.
- Parents who misuse substances (alcohol, prescribed or illicit drugs).
- Parents with a learning disability.
- Young Carers who are refugees.

We accept that this listing is not definitive. We will continue to work together on these and other identified issues as these arise. Our local arrangements will ensure these and any other relevant issues are identified and recognised across all partners are kept under review and that up-to-date information is available to all relevant staff. This may include the preparation and dissemination of new information to support joint and separate effective action and good practice. We will ensure that any additions are consistent with all national guidance and best practice materials that are available.

### **Audit and Assurance**

We expect the adoption and operation of the memorandum to be consistent with the ***Good Governance in Local Government Framework***. To this end, we will assist any periodic audit and actively enable the provision of reasonable assurance to the Council, partners, young carers, their families and the local community on any funding arrangements related to this Memorandum in specific areas or as a whole.

These audit arrangements will be located within wider Council processes for the management of risk and the provision of reasonable assurance. The information arising from these audits will be used to inform performance priorities for development and delivery of the key processes and outcomes that the memorandum has been designed to secure.

### **Funding responsibilities**

The internal allocations of funding by the Council should not become a barrier to timely and appropriate support for Young Carers. We recognise that disputes about where funding responsibility lies can be deeply damaging to families. We will act to ensure that staff members have a clear understanding of their joint and separate responsibilities to

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<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 16.18 Care and Support Statutory Guidance; Issued under the Care Act. DH 2014

support parenting roles, to respond to needs and to reduce the need for inappropriate caring by young carers. The following general principles apply to the '**Whole Family**' approach to meeting the needs of Young Carers:

- Adult Social Care is responsible for commissioning care and support services for adults to reduce or prevent inappropriate caring responsibilities by young carers.
- Children's Social Care is responsible for commissioning services to respond to the specific needs of the child or young person.
- In some circumstances shared responsibility exists for commissioning services that support or sustain adults in their parenting role.

### **Resolving Disagreements**

Young carers have identified that a lack of joint working by Adult and Children's Social Care services are a source of concern. We believe that when the holistic, family centred approach to support is followed, significant disagreements between Adult and Children's services should be the exception.

Almost inevitably there may be occasions when professionals encounter difficulties in relation to assessment, service provision or funding responsibilities. Two potential areas are:

- Disagreements about whether the need relates to the Young Carer or the adult or sibling who is being supported by the Young Carer.
- Disagreements about respective responsibilities or eligibility thresholds for adults or children.

We intend to continue to reduce the risk of disagreements by:

- Ensuring that staff are appropriately trained and supported in understanding and in the exercise of joint and separate responsibilities towards young carers and those whom they support.
- Being clear about our joint and separate responsibilities.
- Ensuring young carers and parents have access to information and advocacy services to support them to exercise their rights.
- Ensuring that effective arrangements for consultation, communication and feedback to young carers and those they support are available and acted upon.

We accept that how local issues are resolved is a matter for us, as Statutory Directors, to determine within the context of our corporate responsibilities within the Council.

The following principles will inform action and decision-making should disputes arise:

- Disagreements about funding responsibilities must not become barriers to responding in a timely manner to situations where it is evident that inappropriate caring responsibilities are being undertaken by a child or young people.

- Disagreements about funding responsibilities must not leave the needs of family members unmet because they are perceived as falling between internal administrative boundaries.
- Dispute resolution procedures relating to the joint and separate responsibilities of Statutory Directors for young carers and the people they support are in place.
- Statutory Directors have final operational responsibility for ensuring that any disagreements about funding are resolved in a reasoned, timely and appropriate manner.

### **Commencement, Publication, Variation and Review**

The commencement date for the original Memorandum of Understanding was **01 April 2010**. The memorandum was reviewed in March/April in order to respond to legislative changes brought about by 'Raising the Participation Age' from 2014-15 and Part 5 (Welfare of Children) of the Children and Families Act (September 2014). The period of review is three years from the last review date or as agreed between the Statutory Directors. Variations may be agreed to reflect changing legislation, national policy and local requirements and in light of new evidence about what works best for young carers.

This document falls within the Council's Publication Scheme. It will be placed on the Council's website and shared with partners as part of our commitment to working together to serve all our communities.

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