

BARNET YOUNG CARERS - 2012-15 PLAN AND MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

1. Summary and Purpose

1.1. Barnet Children's Trust Board had asked for an update on Barnet Young Carers Strategy 2009 – 2012. The Youth Support Service has developed a new plan for young carers following a period of consultation which is being presented.

1.2. The new plan takes into account updated local information on young carers and their families and national strategies and guidance.

1.3. As part of national developments, Barnet is also adopting a Memorandum of Understanding between Adults and Children's services: 'Working Together to Support Young Carers and Their Families' which will act as a framework and guidance for practitioners to use a '*whole family*' model when working with young carers, and with adults requiring care services.

1.4. The memorandum also supports Barnet's focus on Early Intervention, encouraging and guiding practitioners to consider the potential needs of vulnerable families with young carers, at an early stage, in order to prevent needs escalating.

2. Details

2.1. 'Young Carers are Everyone's Business'; the new Young Carers Strategy was produced after consultation with young carers, key managers in the children's services, local adult drug/alcohol services and Barnet Young Carers and Siblings project, based at Barnet Carers Centre. A one day consultation event was held, and several consultations with young carers.

2.2. The strategy notes that research suggests we have a much higher number of young carers in Barnet than previously suggested. The 2001 Census identified approximately 1,000 young carers while the new research points to a figure of more than 4,000.

2.3. It notes national guidance which promotes the adoption of a 'whole family' approach to support young caring, encouraging practitioners to consider the needs of the parent/adult/sibling in the family who requires caring, as much as the needs of the young person. In this way it aims to reduce any inappropriate caring that takes place, as well as supporting respite needs of the young person. Multi-agency trainings will be offered in 2013 on the needs and issues arising from working with young carers.

2.4. As part of national developments, the Association of Directors of Children's Services and the Association of Directors of Adult Services produced a template model Memorandum of Understanding between adults and children's services 'Working together to Support Young Carers and Their Families', which they updated in 2012 to encourage local authorities and their partners to adopt.

2.5. Following this, Barnet Adults and Children's Service senior leadership team adopted a Barnet Memorandum of Understanding on November 19th 2012.

2.6. A group consisting of the Youth Support Service, Children's Social Care, Adults Care Commissioning, Adult Mental Health Services, and the CAF Multi-Agency team will work on the memorandum to add a shared pathway between adults and children's services, and update the shared protocol.

2.7. As part of their work, they will produce 'Good Practice' case studies that will be used to promote the memorandum amongst practitioners across both services through lunchtime briefings, and in the multi-agency training programme.

3. Recommendations and Input requested.

3.1. The Children's Trust Board are asked to comment on and approve the new **Barnet Young Carers Plan 2012-2015**, and the *Memorandum of Understanding between Adults and Children's Services: '**Working Together to Support Young Carers and Their Families**'*.

4. Contact Details for further information

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