

## **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**MUNICIPAL YEAR 2017/18**

**CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE**

**10th January 2018**

**REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR,  
COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

**Agenda Item No: 5**

**RCT Young Carer's Service Annual  
Report 2016-17**

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### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

The purpose of the report is to update members on the RCT Young Carers Service and Annual Report 2016-17

### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Scrutiny Committee considers the attached report and the work undertaken by the Young Carers Service.

### **4. BACKGROUND**

The Young Carers Service sits within the wider Carers Support Project that focuses on adult carers and are increasingly working together to support carers of all ages.

As well as a more "all ages" integration in service provision that has developed over the past year, 2016 has also seen the launch of the Cwm Taf Carers Strategy creating a more collaborative responsive to the needs of carers across two Local Authorities.

The Young Carers Service works to the five key aims of the Strategy:

- Identifying Carers of all ages and recognising their contributions.

- Providing up to date, relevant timely information, advice & assistance to Carers of all ages.
- Providing support, services & training to meet the needs of carers of all ages.
- Giving Carers of all ages a voice, with more choice and control over their lives.
- Working together to make the most of our resources for the benefit of Carers of all ages.

The Young Carers Service sits within the Local Authority's responsibilities under the Social Service and Wellbeing Act Wales (2014) and this has seen practice develop within the service with new systems being embedded over 2015-16.

## **5. CURRENT POSITION**

The Young Carers Service is currently staffed with 3 posts and in addition commissions Action for Children to provide direct support. There are currently 293 young carers known to the service and receiving information and support.

2016-17 saw a 23% increase in referrals during the first 6 months, a number of which have been referrals for our newly developed sibling support for brothers and sisters of disabled children. The demand for this support is currently higher than this relatively small service can respond to but this is another example of where the whole team then work together to creatively maximise and prioritise resources as much as possible.

Links with schools and colleges across RCT have continued to develop with the successful roll out of the Schools Award.

With the support of a small additional grant from Welsh Government this year the Young Carers Service has been able to fund an extra residential trip for young carers, a provision that they have identified as being of the greatest benefit to them from the feedback they have given. The money has also been used to support whole family activities, as identified by parent carers, and has provided short breaks and time outs for young carers and parent carers alike.

The voice of young carers was very powerful in the 2016-17 Social Care Awards with the young carers themselves sharing their personal stories and experiences.

## **6. NEXT STEPS AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS**

During r 2016-17 the Cwm Taf Carers Partnership commissioned the Welsh Institute of Health and Social Care to consult with carers of all

ages and all agencies involved with the provision of carers services, with the aim of developing an integrated regional model of service delivery.

An all age service, as already being delivered in RCT, was agreed as the most appropriate model of service delivery across the region and the next few years will see carer services changing in line with the recommendations of this report led by the Cwm Taf Transformation Leadership Group and Regional Board.

The changes and the focus being given to Carer's Services will go a long way to improving the sustainability of the Young Carers Service and will provide a more consistent service for young carers across the two Local Authorities.

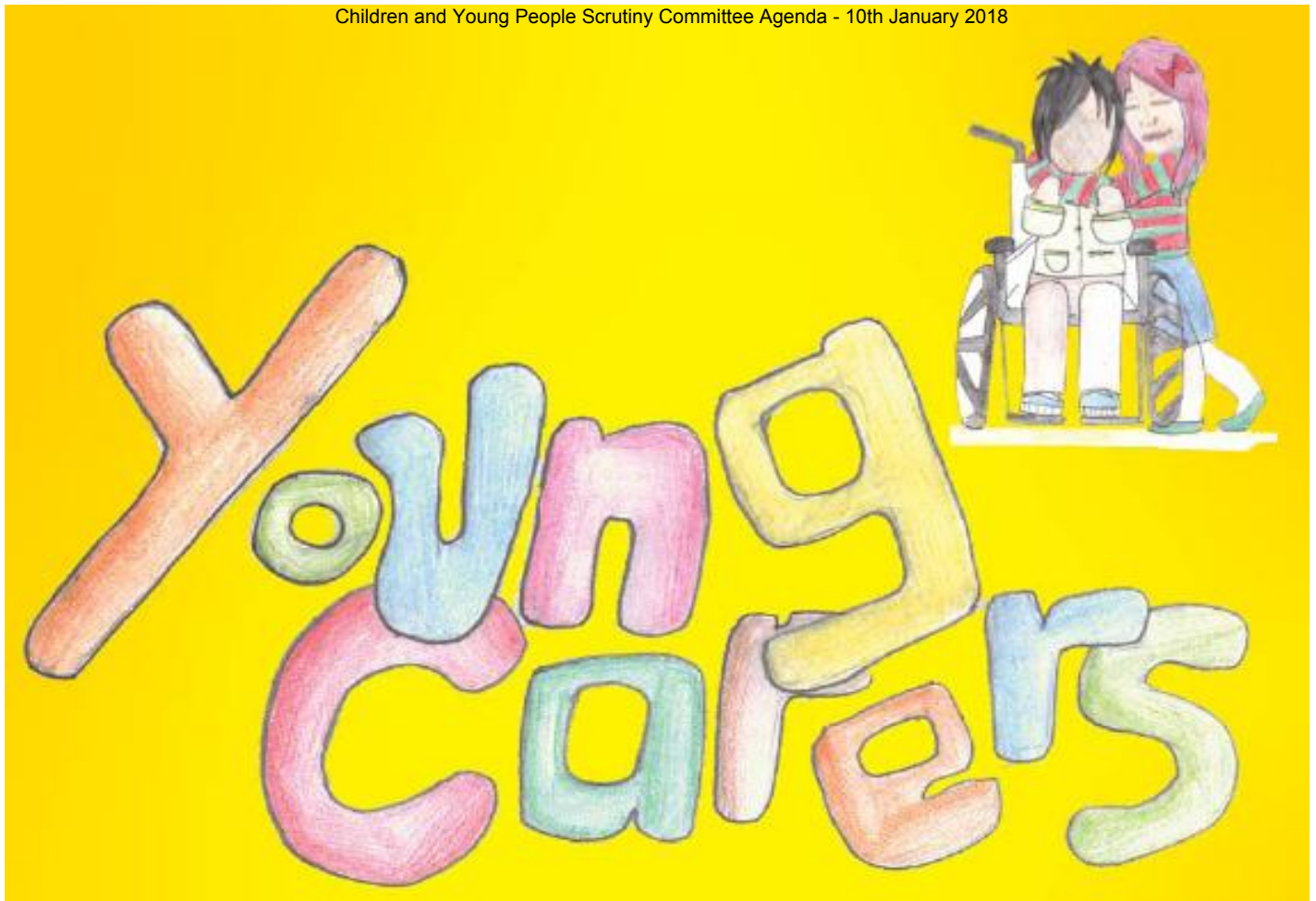
As detailed in the report, our key actions are very much focused on sustainability and growth with exciting new opportunities to develop the service and engage with other areas of the Council.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

2016-17 has seen a number of developments within the Young Carers Service and an ongoing increase in need for awareness raising, advice, assistance and support.

The team have worked together to achieve positive outcomes for young carers and their integrated approach will serve them well in taking forward the reshaping of carers services over the next few years.

The success of the first Young Carer's Recognition Evening last year has led to this becoming an annual event and we look forward to recognising and celebrating our young carers again at the end of the month.



# RCT Young Carer's Service

(Supporting carers aged 0-25 years)

## Annual Report 2016-17



**“A young carer takes responsibility for someone who is ill, disabled, elderly, experiencing mental distress or affected by substance use, or has *substantial* responsibility for caring for a sibling.**

A young carer could be from any family and is under 25. They may be providing all of the care or helping someone else provide care.

The care they provide is not only the things you see-like changing bandages, cooking, cleaning or helping someone to use the toilet or have a wash-but also things you can't see, such as how the young carer feels or thinks because of their caring role.”

**Our aim is to promote and improve the health and well-being of young carers and their families by**

- **Preventing and protecting young people from carrying out excessive and inappropriate caring roles *and***
- **Preventing the continuation of inappropriate caring**
- **Supporting young people in their caring roles**



The Young Carer's Service recognises that young carers have varied needs and aims to offer a range of support.

We do not wish to create dependency on our service; therefore we aim to support a young carer *through* our service, ensuring that individual aims and objectives have been met, so they can move on from the service and feel able to integrate into mainstream provision.

### **Census figures and local stats:**

According to the Census (2011) there has been a 15% increase in the number of young carers (aged 0-24) across RCT since the 2001 Census.

The Census (2011) identified **2509** carers aged 0 - 24 years in RCT. 13% of these are carrying out a staggering 50 hours or more unpaid care a week.

However, a recent BBC survey found that 1 in 12 school children have some caring responsibilities. If the survey reflects the UK as a whole, potentially there are 700,000 young carers in the UK and **over 4000 in RCT**.

Between February 2008 - March 2017, **953 referrals** have been received by the service.

Of those, **713** have received a Young Carers Assessment & support and **33** (age 18+) have received a Carers Assessment.

This data illustrates that there are still a huge number of Young & Young Adult Carers in RCT not receiving the support they are entitled to.

**The Rhondda Cynon Taf Young Carer's Service consists of:**

- **The Young Carers Assessment & Development Worker**  
(based within Children's services)

Responsible for strategic developments and reports relating to Young Carers/Young Adult Carers and carrying out Young Carers assessments

- **The Young Carers Support Worker**  
(based within Children's Services)

Responsible for developing the RCT Schools Award, carrying out young carers assessments and individual intensive support



- **The Young Adult Carer Development Worker**  
(based within Children's Services - funded via Families First)

Responsible for developing a service to support Young Adult Carers (18-25 yr olds) as they transition to Adult Carers

- **The RCT Young Carers Project** – Action For Children  
The Local Authority commissions the project to support Young Carers needing ongoing support and intervention. The project provides social opportunities for Young Carers as well as individual support and workshops on a range of issues and topics.

***This report will only make brief reference to the work of this project as they produce their own report***



**The new Cwm Taf Carers Strategy**

The Young Carers Service has developed over the last few years and now provides a service to young carers up to 25 years of age. The service also sits within the wider Carers Support Project (for adult carers) and we work together to support carers of all ages within RCT.

During this year, the new Cwm Taf Carers Strategy was launched in response to the SSWB (Wales) Act 2014 and the repeal of the Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure 2010. It also replaced the separate Carers Strategies that had previously been in place in the two Local Authorities and the Cwm Taf Information and Consultation Strategy. The 5 key aims are:

- Aim 1. Identifying Carers of all ages and recognising their contributions
- Aim 2. Providing up to date, relevant and timely information, advice & assistance to Carers of all ages
- Aim 3. Providing support, services & training to meet the needs of Carers of all ages
- Aim 4. Giving Carers of all ages a voice, with more choice & control over their lives
- Aim 5. Working together to make the most of our resources for the benefit of Carers of all ages

The following pages use these aims to illustrate the work of the service 2016/17

## Aim 1. Identifying Carers of all ages and recognising their contributions

By this we mean raising awareness amongst the public and with our staff about who Carers are, what they do and how important it is to identify them and understand their caring role. For our service this is split into two areas -

- Identifying and assessing Young Carers *and*
- Raising Awareness about Young Carers to enable their identification

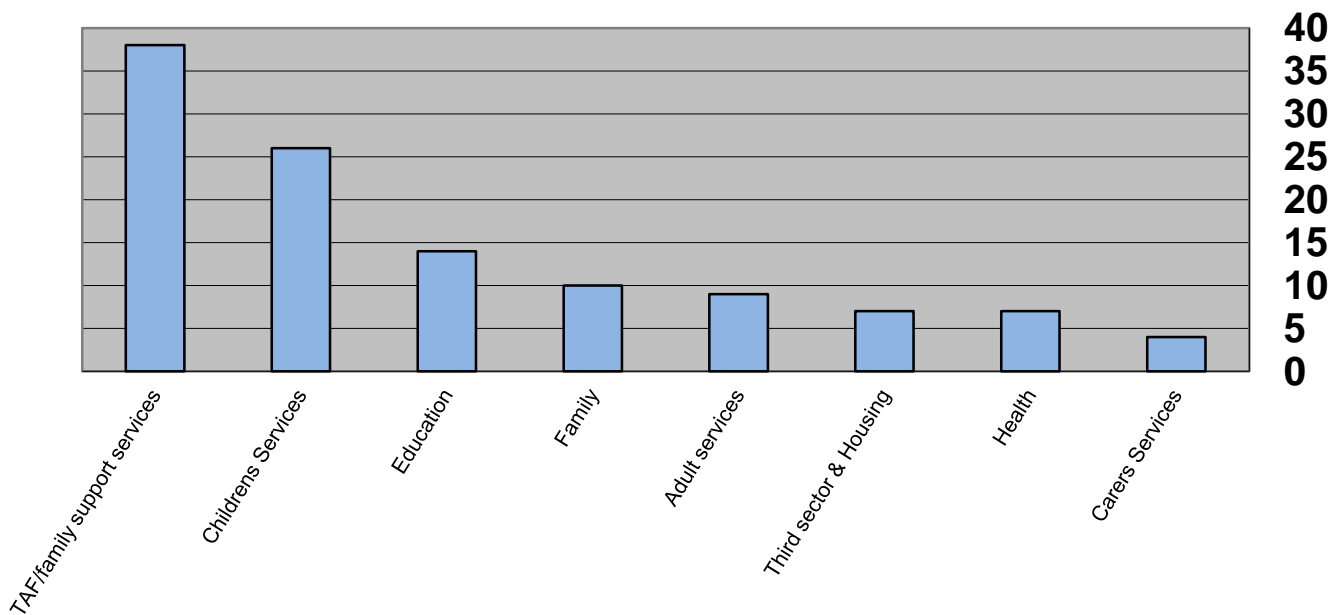
### Identifying and assessing Young Carers

All contacts and enquiries for the service are received by the Assessment & Development worker, apart from referrals for 18-25 year olds which go directly to the Young adult carer worker.

### Young Carers

**Data to illustrate contacts and assessments for Young Carers (0-18 years) received for 2016-17**

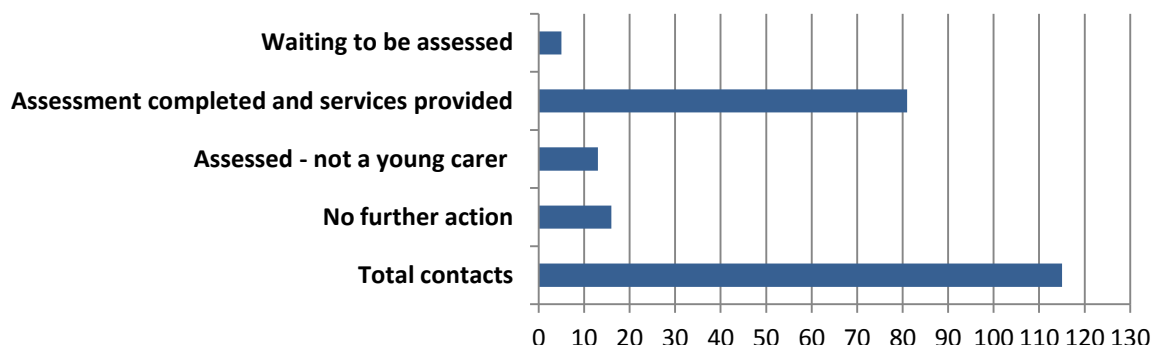
**Source of contacts 2016-17 TOTAL = 115**



- ✓ 58% increase in referrals from TAF and family support services that is likely due to the fact that we began a small sibling support project
- ✓ Number of referrals received direct from families has decreased - likely due to the increase in referrals from the TAF workers

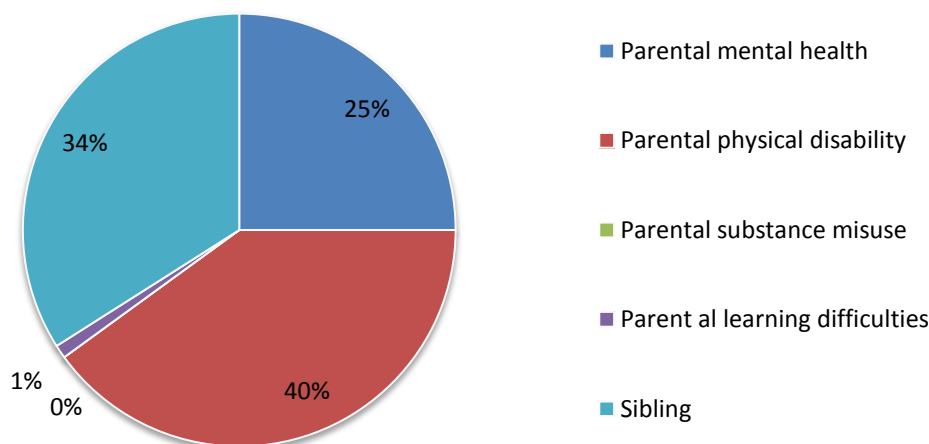
Notably, for the first 6 months of 2017-18, there have already been 71 referrals for an assessment. If this rate continues then **there will be a 23% increase** in referrals compared to 2016-17.

## Result of Contacts



- **293 young carers are currently known to the young carers service and receive information/support**

## Category of person cared for from 81 assessments completed 2016-17:



### ***Of the 81 young carers assessed during 2016-17,***

- *46 were then referred onto the Young Carers Project (Action For Children).  
41 are actively engaged  
5 didn't engage or moved out of area*
- *27 are now accessing the new sibling support groups within our service*
- *The remaining 8 received individual or family support from our service and either then decided they didn't need ongoing support or were referred on to other appropriate services*

- As previously illustrated, **81 Young Carers** have received an **assessment of their needs** this year. The assessment is a chance for the young people and their families to talk about their situation, what they enjoy about it and what they find difficult. The assessment looks at the needs of the whole family and covers issues such as dealing



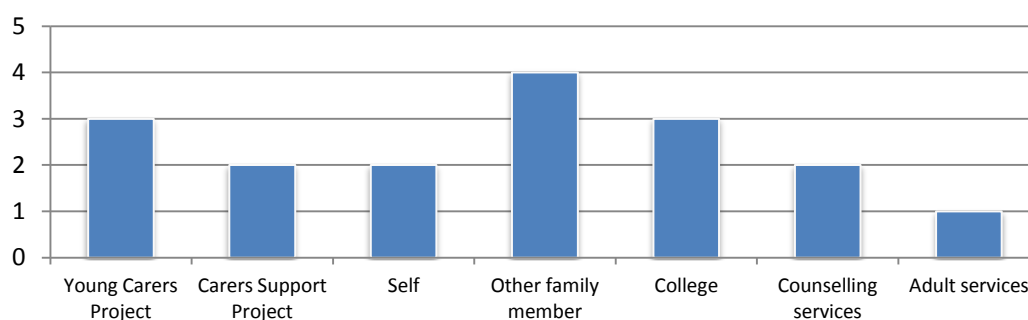
with medication, manual handling, and coping with parent's fluctuating mental health. It is also a time for the young people to consider their wishes in relation to employment, training, education and leisure opportunities and to discuss the barriers they feel they are facing. Some assessments can take a number of visits and 1-1 time to complete as it takes time to build a relationship with the young person.

- Following the assessment a Support Plan is put together with the young person and other family members, if the Carer has eligible needs for support, to plan how the Carer will achieve their identified outcomes.
- The follow-up work often involves a lot of joint working with teams in adult services as well as other support organisations to ensure the young carer isn't carrying out inappropriate levels of care and has a choice about the care they want to continue to provide.

### Young Adult Carers

Data to illustrate referrals and assessments for Young Adult Carers (18-25 years) received for 2016-17

#### Source of referrals



- 17 Referrals received for YACs (**Notably, 17 new referrals have already been received for the first 6 months of 2017-18**)
- The YAC development worker is actively supporting 53 Young Adult Carers
- 130 referrals for Young Adult Carers have been received by the service to date

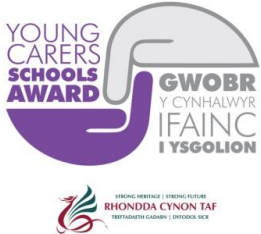
✓ **New systems were successfully established to bring the service in line with the SSWB Act**

**So What Next?** Plans for 2017-18:

- **To sustain the increased resilience of the service, funding for the YAC post needs to be secured post March 2018**
- **Evaluate the support worker post to include carrying out assessments as part of the job description to keep up with the increasing demand**
- **Aim to reduce the number of NEET Young adult carers by identifying training and employment opportunities and working with the Communities For Work and SEET service**

## Raising Awareness about Young Carers to enable their identification

The key aspects of this part of the aim are raising awareness of young carers/young adult carers among professionals and the public and promoting their needs and rights as carers.



Following the success of the pilot scheme initiative in 5 comprehensive schools last year, the Young carers support worker developed the **RCT Young Carers Schools Award** and aimed to roll it out across all comprehensive schools in RCT.

The Schools Award aims to create a uniformed approach across RCT and will ensure that good practice is taking place in all schools in relation to young carers and their needs. By the end of the year, 10 Comprehensive schools had signed up to the award and identified a carers champion to take it forward and Bryncelynog had even achieved the Silver level. Feedback from the Award has been so positive that Coleg Morgannwg decided that they wanted to take part and so the award was adapted for the college campuses. Rhondda & Aberdare campuses are actively taking part and are involving the students who are young carers themselves.



## YOUNG CARERS COUNT!

Following the success of last year's inaugural Young Carer's Recognition Evening, we held a second event to celebrate Carers Right's Day, which was attended by over 150 young carers, young adult carers & their special guests. All the young carers and young adult carers were presented with medals to recognise their caring roles and special awards were given out during the night to young people who had been nominated by their family or a professional who had been working with them.

A number of young people were also brave enough to perform during the night and the young carers choir 'Young Carers Aloud' entertained everyone with their beautiful Christmas songs.



Working with the wider Carers Support Project we have:

- Attended events and open days including the Big Welsh Bite, RCT Homes fun day and Freshers Days at the 3 college campuses
- Updated the RCT Carers webpages and written pieces for 'Carers News'
- Ensured that Young Carers and Young Adult Carers were included in all training sessions for Carers Champions and other professionals. This included using young carers situations as case studies, showing their digital stories and inviting them to speak/perform to share their stories
- Taken part in the Young Carers Awareness Day in January, organised by Carers Trust

- ✓ We have continued to see an increase in the identification of Young Carers and the number of referrals for an assessment. If the current rate continues, there will be a 25% increase in referrals received for 2017-18
- ✓ We are seeing more referrals from schools and colleges and are working more closely with key staff within the schools to ensure young carers are receiving the support they need.
- ✓ Young carers report that they feel staff are more aware and can help them more appropriately from being involved with the Award.

**So What Next?** Plans for 2017-18:

- **Continue to roll out the Schools Award to all remaining Comprehensive Schools in RCT and pilot a version with a couple of Primary Schools**
- **Work with Carers Trust to ensure all schools involved can gain recognition using their school's toolkit**
- **Support the 3 College campuses to achieve the College Award**

### Aim 3. Providing support, services & training to meet the needs of Carers of all ages (including aim 2, providing information to Carers)

Following the success of last year's residential, we organised a **'Taking Care of Me Part 3' training residential**, thanks to funding from RCT Social Care Workforce Development Partnership via the Welsh Government training grant. 35 Young Carers & Young Adult Carers attended the 2-night residential and enjoyed a mix of workshops, training and positive well-being sessions including emergency first aid, safe use of social media, volunteering and wood art.



The Young Adult Carers have access to their own private Facebook group which the Development Worker updates regularly. The YACs are able to **access up to date information** on employment opportunities, training courses and other relevant information, in a format that they choose to use

The Young Adult Carer Development Worker has facilitated opportunities for the YACs to meet together and **develop their own support networks**. She also facilitates small group sessions for those YACs who are more isolated as well as individual sessions to address any barriers for the YACs.

We have recognised for a while that we haven't been able to offer appropriate support to the many **sibling carers** living in RCT. So this year we expanded the Parent Carer Officer role and have started to develop a programme of support for young people who help to care for their sibling. This will be developed further over the next year.

**Information** is sent to each new young carer and young adult carer when registered and they then receive a copy of the Carers Newsletter a few times a year that includes pages of information dedicated to young carers and young adult carers. Information is posted onto the Carers facebook page and important information is sent out when needed. Young carers and young adult carers regularly ask for information about other services that might be available for them in RCT and can be signposted to other relevant advice agencies.

As part of the wider Carers Project, we have listened to feedback from parent carers especially, but also feedback from carers of all ages and have organised events and workshops that the **Carers can come along to with the person that they care for and sometimes as a family**. They feel that this provides opportunities for them to do things together that they wouldn't otherwise feel able to do. Some of the events have included family fun days that are fully inclusive, events held on weekends so working carers and children can attend and respite opportunities organised to places that are accessible for all ages and abilities.

- ✓ Feedback following the residential was extremely positive with 88% of participants reporting increased confidence and 100% feeling they had a break from caring at home.
- ✓ 100% said they found some or all of the workshops useful and interesting
- ✓ YACs are consistently feeding back how much they value the peer support from the service and how they feel less isolated since getting involved.
- ✓ 346 YCs & YACs receive information throughout the year via the Carers Newsletter and additional information about family friendly events organised by the project

**So What Next?** Plans for 2017-18:

- **Further develop a programme of training & respite opportunities appropriate for sibling carers**
- **Investigate possibility of organising a rolling programme of training about specific conditions and issues for young carers e.g. Epilepsy, MS**
- **Work with other local partners to provide training opportunities for carers aged 16+**
- **Look into possibility of counselling and peer support sessions specifically for young carers.**
- **Develop and implement a 'Volunteers Policy' to ensure sustainability of the service**
- **Explore potential of an ID card for Young/Young Adult Carers working with Carers Trust**

#### **Aim 4. Giving Carers of all ages a voice, with more choice & control over their lives**

Funding was secured from the Cwm Taf Carers Partnership for us to facilitate and produce a **short film** highlighting the difficulties that Carers face day-to-day. We worked with a local film company to engage carers of all ages to tell



their stories and put together a script, music and visuals that brought together the stories of a range of different aspects of caring. The resulting film also contained a documentary about the services available to carers and will now be used in a range of training and raising awareness events.

Young carers who attend the schools taking part in the **RCT Young Carers Schools award** are involved in evaluating whether their school has done enough to achieve a certain level of award and what improvements need to be made to support young carers.



Following on from last years song development, the young carers and young adult carers worked with cultural services to develop a **Young Carers Musical** that was written and performed by the young people. It illustrated the difficulties and positive experiences that young carers go through on their journey and was performed in front of family and friends at the Coliseum, Aberdare. This was an amazing experience for all involved and it would be great if the musical could be performed to schools across the county to raise awareness in an innovative way.



### CASE

The Young Adult Carer Worker has been supporting a dedicated group of Young Adult Carers, known as **CASE**, to come together to make decisions about the service they receive. They have their own bank account and organise events to raise funds for social activities. The main event of the year was a trip to London which was mostly funded by the young people's fundraising efforts.



- ✓ Young and Young Adult Carers are actively involved in the development and evaluation of new service initiatives and wider policy consultations.
- ✓ YACs are taking responsibility for fundraising to support their own social activities.
- ✓ Young carers and YACs are involved in innovative ways of getting their voice heard and raising awareness about their lives.

**So What Next?** Plans for 2017-18:

- **Involve more Young and Young Adult Carers when rolling out and evaluating the Schools and College Award**
- **Support a young carer to speak at the Social care awards ceremony and other events**
- **Encourage and support young carers and YACs to become part of the Carers Trust council**
- **Support reps to sit on the Cwm Taf carers partnership group**

## **Aim 5. Working together to make the most of our resources for the benefit of Carers of all ages**

- We have been continuing our excellent joint working initiative with the **STARS programme** within Leisure Services and last year provided 7 days of activities for Young Carers (through the Young Carers Project) and Young Adult Carers with activities ranging from Horse Riding to an activity-filled residential. The activities enabled the carers to try new physical activities whilst helping to build confidence and self-esteem.
- We have also worked with leisure services to offer young carers and YACs very discounted rates to use the leisure centre facilities by signing them up to **STARS cards**. This has proved really successful.
- In response to requests from parents and siblings of children with additional needs, we organised another 'Autism Friendly' cinema day and tickets to a relaxed performance of a show in partnership with **Cultural Services**
- Working with the **Youth Engagement & Participation Service**, we have started to address some of the barriers that young carers face when accessing extra-curricular activities in their school and community. Funding has been used to pay for transport and staff time to ensure young carers can take part in social events and activities

- ✓ Through effective partnership working, Young and Young Adult Carers in RCT have been able to access a range of events, activities and services, with other carers, their families and within their wider communities.

### **So What Next? Plans for 2017-18:**

- **Work with leisure department to launch a new initiative of free and reduced cost swimming lessons for young carers & YACs and free gym inductions**
- **Discuss options for a young carer's taster day with the University of Glamorgan**

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