

Ref Code	Organisation Name
2022-05-YC08	Carers Trust Tyne & Wear
Visit Date	Visited By
6 th September 2022	Victoria Southwell (Zoom call)
Overall aim of the funding	
To address the impact of caring on education by providing a dedicated worker to develop partnerships with young carers and within education environments. This will build on existing services being offered, track record and expertise.	
Background to Organisation and governance	
<p>Carers Trust Tyne & Wear (CTTW) is a Registered Charity that was established in 1990 and for many years operated as Gateshead Crossroads. It is a network partner of Carers Trust. CTTW employs 48 staff and has 11 current volunteers. A board of 5 Trustees support the CEO and they meet six times a year. Trustees have a wide range of skills that include Local Authority commissioning, legal services, HR, business development and fundraising. 4 additional Trustees are in the process of being recruited and two will be joining the board imminently. A high percentage of Trustees have personal experience of being carers and one Trustee was a young carer who has been supported by CTTW. There are two sub-committees; a finance committee that meets every 6 months and an HR Sub Committee that meets as necessary.</p> <p>A detailed Strategic Business Plan is in place for 2020-23 that focuses on five key areas – growing services, profile raising, income generation and diversification, stakeholder engagement and service evaluation; staff, volunteer, and board development; and IT strategy. The strategy is being refreshed currently to reflect new challenges post the pandemic and progress already made in some of the areas. Trustees are closely involved in the development of the strategy and an upcoming away day with Trustees and senior staff will be focusing on this.</p>	
Leadership and expertise	
<p>On the call I spoke with Anthony Lea (Business Development Manager), Carol Watson (Young Carer Service Lead) and Bethany Dodgson (Trustee).</p> <p>Ant has worked at CTTW for 16 years and fulfilled a variety of roles in that time. He led the young carer work for many years and is now responsible for developing the organisation alongside the CEO. He has a huge amount of knowledge and strong local links with a range of key stakeholders. Carol joined CTTW 12 months ago and has a background in working with families.</p> <p>Beth has been a Trustee for eight months but has also been a young carer and was a beneficiary of CTTW. She started receiving support from them when she was eight and now works in the hospitality sector. She regularly uses her contacts in the sector and her links to and knowledge about young carers to identify new partnerships and opportunities.</p>	
Aims and Activities	
Carers Trust Tyne & Wear aims to support carers to have a life alongside caring and to improve their mental health, reduce isolation and support carers to maintain their caring role.	

The main activities undertaken are carer relief services to provide carers with respite and support in their direct caring roles and a commissioned young carer service that includes undertaking young carer assessments. Alongside this a wide range of young carer support is offered that includes; activities, groups and 1-2-1 support. CTTW also run a small individual grants programme that provides support for items such as IT equipment, fares to interviews and purchasing smart clothes.

Annually CTTW works with approximately 440 young carers. In the past year 103 new referrals were received for the young carers service.

Safeguarding

CTTW has a robust approach to safeguarding. A clear policy is in place, and this is adapted from the Carers Trust suggested template. The CEO is the named Safeguarding Lead and every activity that takes place has a named Safeguarding Officer who undertakes a full risk assessment. All staff receive Risk Assessment training alongside Level 2 Safeguarding training which is refreshed annually. The Young Carer Service Lead is trained up to Level 5 and is about to implement all staff being trained up to Level 3. The Business and Development Manager is also hugely experienced in safeguarding issues and is a Local Authority CAF trainer for Gateshead Multi-Agency Workforce.

Weekly meetings are held with the team and safeguarding is a standing agenda item where non-urgent concerns are discussed. More urgent concerns are either escalated immediately with the relevant external agency or raised through the local multi-agency framework which provides a forum for raising safeguarding concerns. CTTW demonstrated a good understanding of safeguarding with clear processes.

Finances

Audited accounts for the year ending 31st March 2021 show income of £910,729 against expenditure of £892,649 resulting in a surplus of £18,080 for the year.

The balance sheet shows net current assets of £432,890 and a reserve figure of £444,363 of which £261,275 is unrestricted. The reserves policy states that a minimum level of unrestricted reserves should be equivalent to two month's operating costs which is currently being met. This policy is reviewed annually.

Budgets and funding predictions for 2022/23 and 23/24 are due to increase slightly to fund service expansion. CTTW is currently in the 4th year of a five-year funding agreement with the Local Authority. They are a key partner in writing the local young carers strategy and are confident that they will win a further contract when it is retendered. The Commissioner has already approached them about whether they would be interested in developing support for young adult carers – a service that isn't currently funded by the LA.

Other funding comes from Children in Need, Community Foundation, Julia and Hans Rausing Trust and Carers Trust. As with most Trusts and Foundations funding these grants are a mix of time limited funding and ongoing relationships. Whilst some are coming to an end there is a good pipeline in place to replace grants that will end and not be renewed.

Robust financial systems are in place and there is strong oversight from the Board via the Finance subcommittee. A Finance Manager oversees the production of management accounts and has support from a Finance Assistant to manage day to day financial activity. Monthly Senior Manager Meetings review budgets and cashflow.

Current Situation and need

Gateshead is a large mostly rural and semi-rural borough, that experiences high levels of deprivation. It is in the top 50 English local authorities in the overall Index of Multiple Deprivation. 22% of residents are disabled which implies a high proportion of young and adult carers.

It is estimated that there would be around 2,000 young carers under the age of 18 in the borough, however only 440 are currently registered with CTTW. In the past 12 months 103 new young carers joined the service, highlighting the fact that the needs of young carers are an issue that has been exacerbated by the impact of the pandemic. During their needs assessment with CTTW the challenges they faced in education were explored and it highlighted the huge gaps in support that existed with 30% reporting issues such as not attending school regularly, being regularly late, not being able to concentrate and being unable to do homework. This reflects national research that suggested that 27% of young carers aged 11-15 miss school or experience educational difficulties.

CTTW feels that this issue is compounded by a lack of service referrals from schools. Many referrals to the organisation are made by GPs or statutory services once a family reaches crisis point. Out of the 103 that were referred during the previous 12 months only 13 were referred by their school and of these only 3 were from secondary schools. Given that OFSTED estimates as many as 1 in 12 secondary school pupils could be a young carer, this rate of school referral is worryingly low and implies that schools are either unaware of young carers or unsure of what support they can offer.

CTTW also run a small grants programme to support young carers well-being and education. Of those granted in the last 12 months 20% were to purchase IT equipment to support education, implying that many young carers don't possess IT resources for study. A small number also requested headphones or other equipment to make their bedrooms better for doing homework as they did not have a quiet space suitable for study.

Alongside this CTTW provides Transition Assessments to young carers approaching 18, to explore ongoing challenges in adulthood and support applications to university/college and pastoral support in helping them to prepare for this life change. Out of 28 offered only two young carers accepted but each led to a significant improvement in their circumstances. This suggests that if more young carers could be encouraged to accept a Transition Assessment this could become a valuable tool securing additional support.

To address this CTTW wants to employ a Project Worker who will work with local schools to increase their awareness of the impact of caring on pupils. This will not only lead to an increase in referrals to the service but also enable better support to be embedded within the schools, that recognises and accommodates the needs of young carers. The worker will also develop an existing relationship with Gateshead College and support more young carers there to access Transition Assessments to support their future opportunities and decision making. Gateshead College will also be used as a venue for running study groups to help young carers who are either struggling with their learning or need a quiet space to study. The project will work across primary and secondary schools – assemblies and class sessions will take place in primary schools and assemblies and drop ins at secondary schools. Teaching staff will be engaged through resources, training and the identifying of key team members who will become young carer champions. The project will build on historical links with schools and a current wave of interest from schools that is coming through to CTTW.

Expected Key Achievements in Year 1
EKA 1
Young carers will report improved education attainment.
EKA 2
Increased awareness of the impact of caring on individual young carers amongst schools and colleges.
EKA 3
Increased take up of Transition Assessments amongst 17-year-old young carers.
Request and Budget
CTTW is requesting £58,610 over 2 years to recruit a part time Project Worker and associated project costs.
£29,305 in year 1 - £16,904 (salary and associated costs), £4,500 (overheads), £3,00 (resource pack), £1,600 (Expert Panel travel and meeting costs), £1,100 (postage), £855 (sessional staff), £540 (printing), £500 (worker travel) and £306 (mobile phone).
£29,305 in year 2 - £16,904 (salary and associated costs), £4,500 (overheads), £3,00 (resource pack), £1,600 (Expert Panel travel and meeting costs), £1,100 (postage), £855 (sessional staff), £540 (printing), £500 (worker travel) and £306 (mobile phone).
Conclusion
<p>CTTW has a long track record of delivering high quality support to young carers. The team who attended the assessment meeting clearly showed the passion and commitment that they apply to the work that they do. The numbers of young carers who have been referred in the past year shows the huge need that exists in Gateshead</p> <p>This is a well-run organisation that is well placed to deliver this project. Their understanding of young carers and expertise working in this area was evident in the work done to date and the knowledge that was demonstrated during the assessment.</p> <p>The proposed project will meet a huge need. Even though CTTW haven't been able to have a significant presence in schools for some time it doesn't feel like picking this back up again will be a difficult task. In fact, the Young Carer Service Lead talked at length about the current requests that they are receiving from schools and how they are currently unable to meet the demand. This alongside the stats that CTTW have collected around the small number of referrals currently received from schools shows that there is a real gap in provision within education settings. CTTW's profile will clearly pave the way for much of this work to be developed and their understanding of what works will help to deliver a strong offer to schools.</p> <p>The partnership with Gateshead College will be a significant asset in helping the work with 16–18-year-olds move forward. Those existing strong links provide a strong basis to build on and the success already seen with those who have engaged to date shows that support at this point is a vital element of a young carer moving forwards with their life. Being able to have a dedicated resource to take forward the Transition Assessments will undoubtedly make a huge impact and provide some strong and positive outcomes for the project.</p> <p>Gateshead experiences some unique challenges which can increase the pressures on young carers. The above average number of people with disabilities who live locally has shone a spotlight on the large number of young carers in the area who are either not known or who are not visible to the agencies they engage with. The pandemic has made picking up education difficult for many of them and magnified many of the gaps that already existed. This project will go a long way in helping to address this and close</p>

some of these gaps and the expected key achievements that have been identified by CTTW are realistic and clear.

CTTW has an Expert Panel in place made up of 11 young carers aged between 10 and 18. This group is key in helping with the design and development of services and will continue to play in role in this project in ensuring that the voices and needs of young carers are at the core of not only this project but the whole organisation.

Recommended Priority Rating

Risk = Low	Difference to organisation = High	Priority = High
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