

Ref Code	Organisation Name
2022-05-YC09	Powys Carers Centre (Credu)
Visit Date	Visited By
22 <sup>nd</sup> August 2022	Victoria Southwell
Overall aim of the funding	
To build and embed effective recognition, respect and support for young carers and young adult carers in education through peer mentoring, adult mentoring, and whole school systems.	
Background to Organisation and governance	
<p>Powys Carers Centre (Credu) is a registered charity that was established in 1997 and gained charitable status in 2003 as Powys Young Carers. They are a Carers Trust Network Partner. Credu employs 37 staff, 6 sessional workers and 1 freelance worker. They have 150 volunteers and have focused on growing their volunteer base as part of their community development approach. A board of 11 Trustees meet quarterly and have a range of skills including fundraising and communications, education, safeguarding, management consultancy, early years, and team building. A Trustee is a current young carer. Trustees also attend an annual away day with a focus on development. Additionally, there are three sub-committees – Finance, Quality, and People and Wellbeing. These groups meet a few weeks before the board meeting and then report back to the full board.</p> <p>A Strategic Plan is in place for 2017-22 setting out strategic aims for the organisation in three key outcome areas which they call their “triple mission” – Empowered carers and families that feel listened to, understood, able to make informed choices and able to move towards life enhancing outcomes; Connected caring communities that are supportive and enabling of carers and their families; and Carers have a strong voice in services that impact upon their lives. These link to their Theory of Change and key organisational functions such as quality assurance, resourcing work, responses to key national/local policies, governance, and carers being at the heart of the organisation.</p> <p>This strategy is currently being updated and a new one will be agreed by the end of the year. Trustees are deeply involved in its development alongside staff, key stakeholders, and carers.</p>	
Leadership and expertise	
<p>At the assessment I met with Jenny Jakeway (CEO), Marilyn Jarvis (Trustee and Chair) and Ann Williams (Trustee).</p> <p>Jen joined Credu in 2015 and has a background in community work and co-production. She strives to create a thinking environment across the organisation that is collaborative and promotes people feeling equal and listen to. She spoke a lot at the assessment about how she felt it was vital that people worked to purpose and principle. She has brought a collaborative communication approach to the organisation which now forms a vital part of their organisational culture at both staff and Trustee level.</p> <p>Marilyn has been a Trustee for ten years and Chair for the past five. She has a background in physical health which introduced her to unpaid carers as an issue. Ann’s background is in early years development and play, giving her good insight into the needs of young carers.</p>	

### **Aims and Activities**

Credu aims for all young and adult carers to enjoy a good quality of life and wellbeing as they define it, be recognised, and valued and have choices, voice, and influence.

Credu describes the offer it provides for carers as its 'triple mission' and all work undertaken and support offered promotes this. Mission 1 – empowered and listened to carers. Services offered with this focus include 1-2-1 support, specialist respite and advice and information. Mission 2 – connected caring communities. Work in this area involves raising awareness of young carers and adult carers within their own communities, providing training to schools, health settings and other organisations and empowering carers to take the lead on issues that matter to them in their community. Mission 3 – Carers have a strong voice – work in this area includes building and supporting local/country wide carer forums, supporting young carer/carer involvement in strategic partnerships, enabling carers to self-advocate, and supporting organisations in contact with carers to understand, respect and support them.

In 2020/21 Credu worked with 5,090 carers/young carers, supporting 1,918 families.

### **Safeguarding**

Credu has an impressive approach to safeguarding that is rooted in deep knowledge. All staff receive training upon joining the organisation and this is refreshed annually. All team leaders receive Level 3 safeguarding training. The CEO described their approach to safeguarding as being a human and relational way of supporting people. Their approach covers staff as well as carers and recognises the impact that these issues can have on workers. Listening spaces have been developed to ensure that staff have opportunities to both discuss concerns they have about individual young carers as well as to talk about the impact of safeguarding issues on themselves.

Alongside a comprehensive policy that has been developed from the Carers Trust framework, Credu produces a Safeguarding Code of Good Practice leaflet that all staff keep with them as a reference.

Safeguarding is an agenda item at every Trustee meeting, and this is referenced in the policy where the responsibilities of Trustees are clearly outlined. The CEO holds ultimately responsibility for Safeguarding and there is also a named Safeguarding and Child Protection Officer. This policy sits alongside a Safeguarding Adults policy. Trustees review the policy every two years.

### **Finances**

Audited financial statements for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 show income of £1,641,636 against expenditure of £1,393,446 resulting in a surplus of £248,190 for the year. Of this £153,930 was unrestricted.

The balance sheet shows net current assets of £797,079 of which £329,562 is unrestricted. The reserves policy states that Credu should aim to hold three months of expenditure in unrestricted reserves. This currently isn't being met and Trustees are due to review the reserves policy in line with levels of liability and look at ways to generate more unrestricted income.

Main funding comes from Welsh Government through their Integrated Care Fund, Powys County Council, PPC and a range of Trusts and Foundations. A clear funding pipeline is in place highlighting when current contracts and grants run out and identifying new opportunities. Contracts have been secured for beyond the length that this funding request would run over so Credu is financially secure. A new contract to

support young carers in Ceredigion was awarded in April 2022 which highlights the strong relationship Credu has with local commissioners and stakeholders.

Day to day finances are managed by the Finance Manager who is supported by a Finance and Administration Worker. Clear financial systems are in place and there is strong oversight from the Board via the Finance sub-committee. Clear financial reports and budgets are regularly produced which the Senior Leadership Team review and the CEO meets regularly with the Treasurer, who has a finance background.

### **Current Situation and need**

Credu works across a wide geographical area that present many challenges for young carers. These are on top of the known issues that young carers experience such as lower educational attainment than their peers (on average achieving 9 grades lower in their GCSE results overall), and time missed from school. Whilst missed learning can impact on grades significantly, falling behind also impacts the confidence of a young carer which can result in them missing more school and ending up in a downward spiral if not supported.

Many of the young carers Credu support report feeling isolated and lonely and want to connect with others in the same situation as them. They also have emotional needs that require support that are linked to worries about the person they care for and increased anxiety about having to juggle with education and other aspects of their life. This can be especially true when a young carer is supporting someone with a terminal illness or an illness that impacts on behaviour such as mental health or addiction. There are also numbers of young carers that Credu support who live in fear due to the nature of the conditions that they support. This might be fear of being removed from their family due to child protection issues or the unpredictable behaviour of the person they care for. Others can be impacted by a lack of care and nurturing because of the needs of the cared for person, especially if the young carer is on their own with only one parent. In the worst cases this has led to developmental delays in the young carer due to lack of interactions and being bullied at school and within the community.

Credu holds regular Young Carers Focus Groups and have achieved a number of successes, including the development of a Young Carers ID Card. These Focus Groups are used as regular opportunities to understand the needs of young carers and feed them into ongoing service design and delivery. At every meeting the need for young carers to be understood, recognised, and supported in school has emerged as a key theme. A small amount of work has been taking place forming key relationships with LEA's to co-design Young Carer policies with schools and develop models of support for Young Carers in education. A Peer Mentoring project was also piloted, and it was recognised that this benefited both the mentee and the mentor.

Credu wants to build on this foundation and employ an Involvement Coordinator who will work with their three area teams – Wrexham, Conwy and Denbighshire, Powys, and Ceredigion – and support them to co-produce resources with young carers and schools in those areas. This will enable the support and resources to be bespoke for the particular region but also be joined up and sit within one framework. The resources will cover key stage 1-4 to ensure that all stages of education are covered. The Involvement Coordinator will also work with the Volunteer Coordinator to recruit and train Peer Mentors to provide support within their schools and Community Mentors who will offer support within the community the young carer lives in.

### **Expected Key Achievements in Year 1**

EKA 1

Recruit and train 30 Peer Mentors who will provide informal and light touch support.

EKA 2		
Establish a community mentor and school-based champions network.		
EKA 3		
Increase awareness of young carer issues in 12 schools through co-producing resources for key stages 1-4.		
<b>Request and Budget</b>		
Credu is requesting <b>£59,895</b> over 2 years to employ an Involvement Coordinator (0.8FTE) and associated project costs.		
<b>£29,948 in year 1</b> - £23,635 (salary & associated costs), £2,723 (overheads), £1,000 (travel), £1,400 (IT & printing), £950 (mentoring packs) and £240 (mobile phone).		
<b>£29,947 in year 1</b> - £23,635 (salary & associated costs), £2,722 (overheads), £1,000 (travel), £1,400 (IT & printing), £950 (mentoring packs) and £240 (mobile phone).		
<b>Conclusion</b>		
<p>Credu is an exceptional organisation, in no small part due to Jen the CEO. The way they work with carers is innovative and engaging and the whole culture of the organisation is forward thinking, insightful, reflective and collaborative.</p> <p>This is one of the most interesting and fascinating organisations I have come across and it would make a valuable addition to the portfolio. The direction of travel of Credu feels genuinely exciting and there is a huge amount that other organisations could learn from them. That said, Credu is also very clearly a learning organisation and will relish the opportunity to be in an environment with others doing similar work to them.</p> <p>The project being proposed has real potential to make a significant difference to both young carers directly but also within the structures and environments that they learn in. By embedding resources and knowledge in schools the project will retain a legacy that will have long lasting effects. Due to Credu's long and successful track record of co-producing accessible and engaging resources, I am confident the work they plan to do will be effective and produce materials that will be relevant and well used.</p> <p>I met with a number of young carers and project staff during the course of the assessment visit, and all impressed me with their ability to articulate the needs that were being addressed and their clear commitment to the organisation.</p> <p>This application provides an opportunity to fund a project in an extremely challenging geography where we haven't made other grants. Whilst we have funded a young carers project in south Wales, the context of the need in this area is entirely different.</p> <p>A grant to Credu will add huge value to the work they currently do with young carers and will also add significant value to the overall portfolio. Additionally, the support they have identified needing from Cranfield Trust will make for a really interesting piece of work and help them take their approach and philosophy forward.</p> <p>The project is well planned and meets a real need and if we were only able to fund one project out of all the applications we are considering I would strongly advocate it be this one. Therefore, I would recommend support with a grant as requested.</p>		
<b>Recommended Priority Rating</b>		
Risk = Low	Difference to organisation = High	Priority = High