

## OFFICER DECISION RECORD 1 FORM

This form should be used to record Officer Decisions in Excess of £100k (but below the key decision threshold), or where required by Financial, Contract or other Procedure Rules or following formal delegation from Cabinet or a Cabinet Member or a Council Committee.

**Decision Reference No: 2223035**

**BOX 1**

**DIRECTORATE:** Learning, Opportunities, Skills, & Culture

**DATE:** 28/07/22

**Contact Name:** Denise Beevers

**Tel. No.:** [REDACTED]

**Subject Matter:** Recruitment of 1FTE Young Carers Practitioner (G7) for 3 years

**BOX 2****DECISION TAKEN**

The Children's Act 1989 and the Children and Families Act 2014 give local councils and their partners the duty to 'take reasonable steps' to identify young carers and assess their caring responsibilities. Within this scope, a young carer is a child or young person who provides regular and on-going care and emotional support to a family member with physical or mental health problems, a disability, or who misuses drugs or alcohol. This does not mean the everyday and occasional help around the home that many young people are often expected to give within families.

The key feature of being a 'young carer' is that the caring responsibilities continue over time and can make a young carer vulnerable when the level of care, and their responsibility to the person they look after, becomes excessive or inappropriate and risks impacting on emotional or physical wellbeing, educational achievement and life chances.

The current offer within the Council sits under the Family Hub umbrella with 4 FTE Young Carer Practitioners allocated across the four localities and one Family Hub Manager taking an operational lead for the service. Each member of staff is responsible for delivering:

1. One to one case work with young carers
2. Group sessions for young carers
3. Raising awareness sessions with young people and practitioners; helping young carers to access support and train practitioners to identify young carers

This offer is currently operating under increased pressure arising from both increased need after the pandemic and associated socio-economic pressures and from the successful efforts to increase the profile and level of access to support. This second element is evident through the Council's recent publication of a refreshed Early Help Strategy that identifies the need to support young carers. More directly, the publication of the 'All Age Carers strategy' and associated action plan seeks to improve and increase the offer of support available to young carers.

These factors have combined to form a need to increase capacity within the service to meet statutory obligations and strategic objectives around identifying and support young carers, in a targeted and holistic way. Proposed mitigation, advocated by young carers themselves and with the support of members of the Cabinet, is to recruit 1FTE member of staff for the life of the aforementioned strategies.

This three year post, including on-costs, will require £98,510 to be allocated from the Service Transformation Fund. This fund was established to target investment that will deliver future cost benefits, including savings, better value for money, increased income or reduced costs and cost pressures.

Officer decisions, in relation to the Service Transformation Fund, need to be approved by the relevant Director and the Chief Financial Officer in consultation with the Chief Executive.

### **BOX 3**

#### **REASON FOR THE DECISION**

This decision has been taken for the reasons set out above, relating to three overlapping considerations. The first is that the Council has a statutory duty to identify and support young carers within the borough.

The second is that through a mixture of socio-economic conditions and successful delivery, the current offer for support is running at capacity. From February 2022, 76 children and young people are receiving one-to-one support, 80 are attending group sessions and 16 are on the waiting list. This situation will continue to develop given the conservative assessment that there are at least 720 young carers in the borough. This puts pressure on statutory responsibilities and impacts on the ability to support young carers effectively. This has consequences across the system as young carers are at a higher risk of low emotional and physical wellbeing, missing school and poorer outcomes in adult life.

Thirdly, the council and its partners have committed at a strategic level to increase and improve support to young carers through provisions within the 'All Age Carers Strategy 2022-2025' and the 'Early Help Strategy 2022-2025'. To meet these commitments, endorsed by young carers themselves, there is a need to complete this recruitment.

## **Outcomes**

The number of young carers identified and contained within the young carers register has increased from 312 in quarter four to 358. Of these young carers 192 are being supported by the young carers' team. During quarter 4 (2021-2022) from these 192 young carers 702 contacts were made and 565 was direct work.

The key themes of the direct work are:

- Welfare and general information
- Assessment
- Emotional support
- Education

In a recent evaluation 96% of young carers said they felt supported by their young carers service and by their direct worker. 86% of young carers said they have been made aware of other support services.

This service is clearly effective and making a positive impact on the lives of young carers. As referenced above, young carers are at greater risk of requiring additional support so having access to this wider support network targeted at the key themes, and a positive relationship with their direct worker to help navigate this, will only benefit the wider early help system and reduce demand on high-need supportive and intervention services.

With this investment we can achieve;

- An increased case holding capacity of approximately 36 young carers within the service (16 in one-to-one sessions and 20 in group settings)
- An eradication of the current waiting list of young carers looking to access the service

Furthermore;

- In line with current service performance, approximately 35 of the 36 newly supported young carers will benefit from the support and approximately 30 of these young carers will know how to access further support
- All of this will support the Council's drive to decrease demand on high pressure, late intervention services and positively contribute to our drive towards sustainability within the early help system post-covid

## **Exit Strategy**

This three year post is proposed for two key reasons. The first is its alignment with key strategies and the second is the impact of the pandemic.

As referenced above, the post will contribute to the successful implementation of key objectives within both the Early Help Strategy and All-Age Carers Strategy. Both of these strategies run until 2025 and both outline commitments to ensuring a sustainable model for providing support vulnerable people before their level of need reaches the threshold for acute intervention.

Furthermore, the impact of covid-19 on both the Young Carers Service delivery and the increased need and vulnerability in our communities will continue to be felt in the coming months and years. This three year post will enable the service to bridge the gap and deliver extra capacity whilst the impact of this is mitigated.

The future sustainability of this post will be influenced by the stabilisation of the pandemic impact and the success of the implementation of the associated strategies. At the end of this three year post, the functions will be absorbed within the Family Hub offer and the current Young Carers Service.

## **BOX 4**

### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

The only other alternative is to deliver against strategic priorities within pre-existing resources but, given there is already pressure on capacity within the service, this would limit the positive impact of the council's approach and reduce the potential number of young carers who would benefit from it.

**BOX 5****LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

S112 of the Local Government Act 1972 allows a local authority to appoint such officers as are necessary for the proper discharge of its functions, on such reasonable terms and conditions as it thinks fit. Salary grade should be determined by job evaluation.

It is advisable to set up a temporary contract for a fixed term. In order for liability in relation to unfair dismissal, to be limited there must be a legitimate reason for a fixed term contract and the employee must be made aware of this reason and of the anticipated length of the contract at the commencement of the contract. After the 4th year of renewal the employee may be entitled to the position on a permanent basis.

If the length of the contract exceeds 1 year upon termination the employee may be entitled to be placed on the redeployment register and after 2 years may be entitled to a redundancy payment.

The Fixed Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002 confirm that employees should not be treated less favourably on the ground they are fixed term unless this is objectively justified. Less favourable treatment means, but is not limited to pay and terms and conditions.

It is important that sight is not lost of the Council's recruitment, retention, and vacancy management policies, which should be followed.

Name: Chloe Davies Signature:  Date: 01/08/22

Signature of Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services (or representative)

**BOX 6****FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The cost of this decision, based on the current 2022/23 pay grades including on costs and appointment at the bottom scale point of the grade, is as detailed in the table below:

Post Title	Grade/Basis	Cost £ 2022/23	Cost £ 2023/24	Cost £ 2024/25	Cost £ 2025/26
1.0 FTE x Young Carers Practitioner	Grade 7 – 3 year fixed term – assumed 1 <sup>st</sup> Oct 2022 start date	13,920	27,840	27,840	13,920

The total cost above of £83,520, plus any Pay Awards and increments, for the 1.0 FTE fixed term post for three years is to be funded from an £99,000 allocation for Young Carers from the Service Transformation Fund (STF).

The STF was established to target investment that will deliver future cost benefits, be it savings, better value for money, increased income or reduced costs and cost pressures. There is a finite resource available and therefore the fund needs to be prioritised and should be only accessed as a last resort after

considering other options, starting with the effective use of staff resources.

Officer decisions in relation to the STF need to be approved by the relevant Director and the Chief Financial Officer in consultation with the Chief Executive.

**Name:** Aaron Bathgate **Signature:**  **Date:** 02/08/2022

Signature of Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Director of Finance (or representative)

#### **BOX 7**

##### **OTHER RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no further relevant implications that have not been covered within other sections of this document.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Assistant Director (or representative)

**ANY IMPLICATIONS SENT TO DEPARTMENTS SHOULD GENERALLY BE SUBMITTED AT LEAST 5 WORKING DAYS IN ADVANCE TO ENSURE THESE CAN BE GIVEN THE RELEVANT CONSIDERATION.**

#### **BOX 8**

##### **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:**

Our aim, as a Council, is to improve the quality of life for everyone who lives, visits, or works in Doncaster, through promoting inclusion and diversity, tackling inequalities and removing barriers which may prevent people from fulfilling their true potential.

As set out above, young carers face more barriers than most in terms of accessing support and fulfilling their true potential. As such, the Young Carers Service, and the extra capacity this post will provide for three years, will support the council fulfil its responsibilities around equality and inclusion.

#### **BOX 9**

##### **RISK IMPLICATIONS:**

There are two key risks associated with not adopting this proposal; one strategic and one operational.

##### **Strategic Risk:**

Without this additional capacity, the partnership will struggle to deliver the transformative agenda targeted at young carers within the All-Age Carers Strategy and the Early Help Strategy. This will limit our ability to create sustainability within early intervention and prevention systems and reduce our ability to improve outcomes of young carers.

##### **Operational Risk:**

Without this additional capacity, the Young Carers Service will continue to see their waiting list grow in the wake of the socio-economic impact of the pandemic. This will impede the ability of the service to support young carers at the earliest opportunity and lead to more families requiring more intensive long term support.

**Mitigation:**


In both instances, the extra capacity that this post will provide will ensure the service and the system have the capacity, knowledge, and expertise it needs to overcome these risks and deliver against our operational and strategic targets.

**BOX 10  
CONSULTATION**

The two strategies that will influence the role were consulted on in various ways within the partnership and with residents who experience caring responsibilities. Furthermore, young carers themselves have made it clear their desire to have a more accessible Young Carers Service.

**BOX 11  
INFORMATION NOT FOR PUBLICATION**

It is in the public's interest to be aware of this decision record under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, therefore this decision will be published in full redacting signatures only.

**Name:** Stephanie Douglas **Signature**  **Date:** 30/06/2022

Signature of FOI Lead Officer for service area where ODR originates

**BOX 12  
BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Please confirm if any Background Papers are included with this ODR YES/~~NO~~

This decision is related to the recently published All Age Carer Strategy 2022-2025 and our refreshed Early Help Strategy 2022-2025.



Appendix A -  
Doncaster Early Help



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1 - Doncaster All Ag

**BOX 13  
AUTHORISATION**

Name: Damian Allen Signature:  Date: 05/08/22

Chief Executive/Director/Assistant Director of \_\_\_\_\_

**Does this decision require authorisation by the Chief Financial Officer or other Officer**

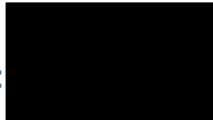
**YES**

**If yes please authorise below:**

Name: Matthew Smith Signature:  Date: 09/08/2022

Head of Financial Management (signing in the absence of the Assistant Director of Finance).

**Consultation with Relevant Member(s)**

Name: Cllr Rachel Blake Signature:  Date: 10/08/2022

Designation Cabinet Member

(e.g. Mayor, Cabinet Member or Committee Chair/Vice-Chair)

**Declaration of Interest** YES/NO

**If YES please give details below:**

**PLEASE NOTE THIS FORM WILL BE PUBLISHED ON THE COUNCIL'S WEBSITE IN FULL UNLESS IT CONTAINS EXEMPT OR CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.**

Once completed a PDF copy of this form and any relevant background papers should be forwarded to Governance Services at [Ladem@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:Ladem@doncaster.gov.uk) who will arrange publication.

It is the responsibility of the decision taker to clearly identify any information that is confidential or exempt and should be redacted before publication.