**Brief 5: Support to Young Carers**

1. **Introduction:** 
   1. Commissioning practice within Education & Children Services is aligned to Fife Council’s Monitoring & Evaluation Framework. The Framework is clear that any organisation in receipt of a recurring grant in excess of £10K must make a fresh application every three years. The current commissioning cycle is due to conclude in April 2024, at which point a new cycle shall begin.
   2. Commissioning priorities for 2024-27 have emerged from a high-level Strategic Needs Analysis (SNA), which reaffirms existing commitments to support families to remain safely living together through the provision of early intervention supports at the additional stage of the Child’s Wellbeing Pathway and targeted supports at the Intensive stage.   The SNA comprised three distinct elements (1) Policy Mapping & Analysis (2) Population Needs Assessment (3) Resource Analysis.
   3. Combined, these activities have helped to establish that poverty in the early years, unsupported caring responsibilities, disability, domestic abuse, mental health and substance use are the main vulnerabilities which cause suffering and distress within the family unit, lead to family breakdown and fresh experiences of trauma and loss. The work detailed within the SNA establishes that recovery is best supported through models of support which are family inclusive, rights- based, and which focus upon and promote the ‘wellbeing’ of the whole family unit.
   4. This brief sets out Commissioning priorities in regard to support for Young Carers.

**2. National & Local Drivers, Legislation, Best Practice …**

2.1 UNCRC:

The Convention contains 54 articles which set out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights that all children everywhere are entitled to. The Convention recognises the family unit as the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and especially children. The Convention provides clear parameters about the responsibilities member states have to protect and support the well-being of children within the family unit, and the measures that must be taken to promote their voice within all decisions which affect them.

Core Articles which are relevant to this brief include, one, three, five, six, seven, nine, twelve, eighteen, nineteen, twenty, twenty-three, twenty-five, twenty-seven, thirty-three, thirty-four and thirty-nine.

2.2 The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016:

The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 ensures better and more consistent support for carers and young carers, it requires Local Authorities to …

* Provide support to carers based in carers identified need within local eligibility criteria
* Prepare young carer statements (YVS) to identify needs and personal outcomes
* Provide information and advice services for carers to help with a range of need including emergency and future care, advocacy, income maximisation and carers rights
* Consider whether support should be provided in the form of planned breaks
* Prioritise supports to people who are caring for someone with a terminal illness.

2.3 Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC):

GIRFEC is The Scottish Government’s National Practice Framework designed to support the ‘wellbeing’ of children and young people within the family unit.  GIRFEC contains a definition of Well-Being as Shared, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included.  The Framework provides services and practitioners with a shared language for assessing, promoting and safeguarding the wellbeing of children & young people against these eight indicators.

2.4 The Promise:

The Promise articulates the findings from the Independent Care Review. It describes the vulnerabilities which drive children, young people and families into the care system in the first instance and the ensuing trauma, loss and adversity they often experience whilst in receipt of services. The Promise is clear that more must be done to support children to remain within the family unit through the provision of family inclusive, rights- based supports which focus upon and promote the ‘wellbeing’ of the whole family unit.

2.5 Carers Strategy for Fife 2023-2026:

Fife Health & Social Care Partnership recently launched a refreshed Carers Strategy with a high-level vision of *Ensuring unpaid carers are fully supported to have a life alongside caring, and to protect their health and well being and better sustain their caring role.* The strategy sets out high level priorities which apply to all carers groups alongside outcomes targeted toward young carers only. The Priorities are …

1. Carers will have access to information where and when they want, that helps them to manage their caring role.
2. Carers will have support to coordinate their caring role, including help to navigate the complex health and social care systems as they start their caring role.
3. We will help carers to take a break from caring when, where and how they want to, so they are rested and able to continue in their caring role
4. Developing the skills of practitioners and professionals to identify and support carers at the earliest possible point in time
5. Ensuring young carers in Fife feel they have the right support at the right time in the right place to balance their life as a child/teenager alongside their caring role

Feedback from Young Carers in regard to outcome number 5 noted above included …

1. Young Carers need more opportunities to have time away from their caring role including quality time with parents and friends.
2. Young Carers need more opportunities to talk to someone about their caring role, its impact and support to develop individual coping strategies to help their own mental health.

The strategy also sets out standards for engagement with Young Carers based upon their level of need and risk, which are

1. Carer of person with a terminal illness = Response from provider within 5 days
2. Critical/Intensive Need/Risk = Response from provider within 1 week
3. Moderate/Additional Need/Risk = Response from provider within 4 weeks
4. Low Need/Risk = Response from provider within 8 weeks
5. **Service Model**

3.1 The service model should be cognisant of legislation, policy, evidence and research based on improving outcomes and minimising the impact for children and young people defined as a carer. The intentions is that the delivery model will improve outcomes for young carers.

3.2 This service is focussed on support for a child or young person who is undertaking caring responsibilities which impact on their well being and could lead to increased vulnerability or disadvantage.

3.3 The components of the services delivery model should be aligned to GIRFEC national practice model and also to the National Principles Framework for Holistic Whole Family Supports. Other important features include:

* a person centred, relationship-based approach to identify and respond to wellbeing needs and risks
* adaptive model available including at evenings and weekends as standard normal office hours including adviceline offering support and information
* available at times of crisis
* available throughout the year, including during school holidays
* evidence-based interventions including direct support
* a range of short break opportunities informed by children and young people
* group work opportunities informed by young people
* campaigning and awareness raising activities across the partnership and in communities
* a single point of contact to children and young people
* practical support within the home and assisting with access to other relevant services
* supports engagement with key services including education, health, social work, training and employment
* income maximisation advice and signposting
* increases service capacity through a volunteer workforce
* develops peer support networks
* ability to influence at a local and strategic level raising the profile of young carers, meeting statutory requirements
* delivers training to key groups of professionals
* develops material based on good practice nationally and disseminates across the partnership

3.5Fife Council has commissioned Fife Voluntary Action to lead on a review of existing children and families support which is aimed at establishing the conditions where the views and experiences of children, young people and families are central to system transformation and funding of future children’s services in Fife so that in turn children and families in Fife experience better outcomes and are able to thrive.

3.6This work is being undertaken using a co-production approach with the involvement of children, young people, and families alongside both third sector and statutory sector providers. The project is in its early stages but is expected to produce recommendations in March 2024. Commissioned Services will be expected to align their own models to the findings from this work as it emerges and adopt recommendations aimed at informing the future planning, design, delivery and commissioning of family support services in Fife.

1. **Outcomes** 
   1. To deliver this brief the service will require an outcomes/performance framework with tools to evidence the progress of children, young people on the impact of interventions. The Outcomes for this service are …

**Outcomes for Children and Young People**

* Improvement in young carers’ wellbeing (wellbeing indicators)
* Improvement in young carers’ engagement and access to services
* Improvement in young carers’ home environment
* Improvement in young carers’ rights and opportunities

**Outcomes for Service Improvement**

* Improvement in awareness of young carers’ statutory rights across the children services partnership
* Improvement in the number of Young Carers Statements
* Improvement in outcomes achieved within Young Carers Statements
* Improvement in data and performance management to ensure all required management information is readily available and reported in a timely manner as required (and amended) by Scottish Government.

**5. Eligibility & Referral Criteria**

5.1 The service will be provided to families, children and young people throughout Fife within the features outlined in section 3

**6.Scale & Cost**

6.1 Drawing upon service levels established for the current commissioning cycle (2021-24) and routine monitoring data, it is anticipated that the service will provide (i) 180-220 respite group sessions per annum (ii) 480-580 one to one support sessions (iii) work with between 250-350 young carers per annum.

6.2 The budget envelope established for the delivery of the Brief is £157,402

**7. Networking & Communication**

7.1 Collaborative working to improve outcomes is a key requirement and the service should have a proven track record of working effectively on a multi-agency basis building strong relationships with a range of statutory and non-statutory services

7.2 The service should be visible and have a community presence across the 7 localities in Fife, contributing to local networks, sharing good practice and influencing service delivery and development both at a local and strategic level.

7.3 The service should provide detailed information on the service model and interventions raising awareness of provision and the ability to work in a flexible and agile way.

**8. Continuity of Care**

8.1 The service provider will be expected to provide consistency of staffing both in levels and personnel for children, young people and families, particularly through periods of absence, sickness and holidays. The service will share their organisation’s comprehensive recruitment, induction and workforce development programme for staff members of this service. This should evidence capacity building with the staff team to use effective evidenced based interventions for the specified groups.

**9. Risk Management**

9.1 For each service user, identify all situations which involve elements of risk to themselves or others, and evidence the planned response which attempts to reduce and control the risk/s.

9.2 To manage risks effectively the service must have policies and procedures on the following:

* Operational policy reflecting equalities legislation
* Staff absence and management policy
* Recruitment policies and procedures
* Procedure for lone working and working in service users’ homes
* Use of volunteers
* Risk assessment and management
* Dealing with accidents and incidents
* Responding to distress related behaviours
* Protection of vulnerable groups including both an Adult and Child Protection Policy
* Confidentiality Policy
* Training and staff development
* Job description and details of duties
* References and enhanced disclosure check for staff
* Procedures for the supervision, appraisal and disciplinary of staff
* Whistleblowing policy

**10. Recording & Monitoring**

10.1 The service must have a record management system in place compliant with GDPR guidelines with a workforce who are knowledgeable and competent to record accurately in respect to direct contact and reports for all groups.

10.2 Information regarding the overall service provided may be requested by Fife Council at any time for example, how many hours have been worked, the type of contact that took place, the work involved, changes to service plans/interventions, complaints, successful/unsuccessful outcomes and the reasons for these.

10.3 Records kept should ensure that information on the outcomes for the service can be collected for evaluation and analytical purposes

10.4 An Agreement Monitoring Meeting will be held every quarter and a report submitted to the meeting by the service.

10.5 The grant will be monitored via Fife Councils Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, a Link Officer will be appointed to work closely with the service. The Link Worker will be supported by the Social Work Service Monitoring Officer

**11. Complaints**

11.1For each quarterly Agreement Monitoring Meeting the service provider must provide a report detailing the following information:

* The number of complaints the service provider has had during the previous quarter, by type of complaint
* The number of complaints in respect of service provision funded by Fife Council
* The outcome of the service providers investigation
* The number of complaints which were upheld and details on complainants who were satisfied/unsatisfied with the outcome
* General changes to the service providers policies and procedures as a result of complaints and progress with implementing any changes
* The service provider will be required to co-operate in any investigation of a complaint as requested by Fife Council and to remedy any concerns that Fife Council has regarding the provision of the service