

Meeting of South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership	Strategic Planning Advisory Group		
Held on:	24th March 2026		
Agenda Item:	7		
Title:	Young Carers Strategy 2021 – 2026 Refresh		
Summary:			
<p>The purpose of this report is to broadly set out the direction of travel for the development of a new Young Carers Strategy for South Ayrshire during 2026.</p>			
Author:	Claire Flanagan – Young Carers Strategy Lead Officer		
Recommendations:			
<p>It is recommended that the Strategic Planning Advisory Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Agree the time is right to progress the Adult Carers Strategy development from January 2026; ii. Note draft timescales for strategy completion and; iii. Note regular progress reports will be brought to SPAG during 2026. 			
Route to meeting:			
<p>The existing Young Carers Strategy 2021-26 requires to be refreshed. There have been a number of previous conversations and thinking in relation to the development of this strategy through the Wee Carers Voice Group and Young Carers Voice Network. The implementation of the existing strategy has been monitored through the Performance and Audit Committee.</p>			
Directions:		Implications:	
1. No Directions Required	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Financial	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Directions to NHS Ayrshire & Arran	<input type="checkbox"/>	HR	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Directions to South Ayrshire Council	<input type="checkbox"/>	Legal	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Directions to both SAC & NHS	<input type="checkbox"/>	Equalities	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Sustainability	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>
		ICT	<input type="checkbox"/>

YOUNG CARERS STRATEGY REFRESH

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to broadly set out the direction of travel for the development of a new Young Carers Strategy for South Ayrshire during 2026.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the Strategic Planning Group:

- i. Agree the time is right to progress the Adult Carers Strategy development from January 2026;
- ii. Note draft timescales for strategy completion and;
- iii. Note regular progress reports will be brought to SPAG during 2026.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 sets out statutory requirements for Health Boards and Local Authorities to develop local carers and young carers strategies. The legal duties incorporated in the Act were subsequently delegated to Health and Social Care Partnerships across Scotland.

3.2 The Act came into effect on 1st April 2018 and is designed to support carers' health and wellbeing, helping to ensure their caring roles are sustainable, and to ensure they can live their own life alongside their caring responsibilities.

3.3 Key aspects of the Act include:

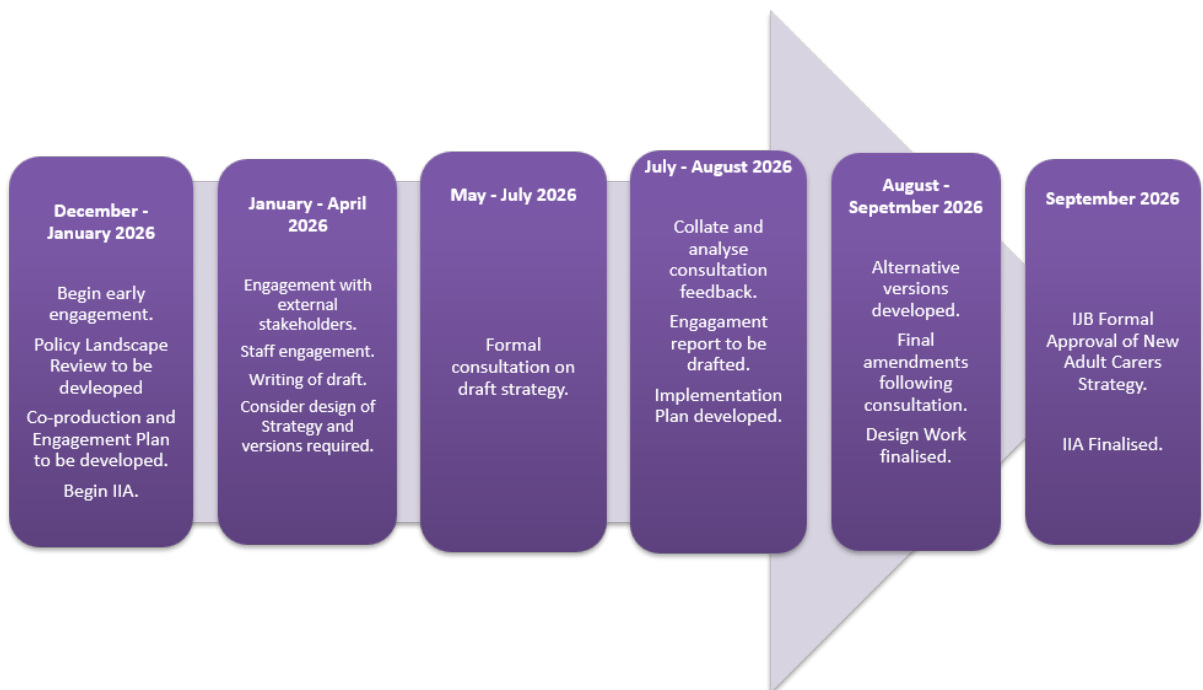
- A duty to develop and offer a Young Carer Statement to someone who is identified as a young carer.
- A duty to set out and publish local eligibility criteria including recognition that support will be provided if the eligible criteria are met.
- A duty to provide support to young carers.
- A duty to publish a Short Breaks Statement.
- A duty to provide young carers with information and advice services.
- A duty to have in place support for young carers at the point of hospital discharge.
- A duty to involve young carers in the planning of services; and
- A duty to develop and keep up to date a local young carer strategy.

3.4 The decision in South Ayrshire was to develop separate Adult and Young Carers Strategies while recognising the need for significant linkage. South Ayrshire Integration Joint Board separately approved the previous Young Carers Strategy in 2021.

- 3.5 We are now in a position to develop a new Young Carers Strategy for South Ayrshire. Development began with early conversations as to how we will progress the new strategy and what our approach will be.
- 3.6 A conclusion report for the existing Young Carers Strategy 2021-26 was taken to the Performance and Audit Committee on 4th November 2025 by Claire Flanagan. This report provided an update on any remaining actions held within the action plan of the existing strategy and concluded the Young Carers Strategy 2021-26 delivery in keeping with the IJB’s agreement to remit monitoring of delivery to the Performance and Audit Committee.

4. REPORT

- 4.1 A new South Ayrshire Young Carers Strategy will be developed during 2026.
- 4.2 A draft timeline is set out below. This will be regularly reviewed, and a more detailed timeline produced by the strategy development group in due course.



- 4.3 It is proposed that the drafting process for each strategy follows a series of steps, broadly set out below:

Engagement

- The Carers Strategic Group will provide oversight to the strategy development. This group will meet monthly throughout the period of developing the strategy.
- Having a development time of approx. nine months will allow us to implement good practice in engagement e.g., more than one phase of

engagement, employing a range of engagement methods to reach as many people as possible.

- A range of methods will be used to engage with people, and a full range of citizens, partners and stakeholders will be encouraged to participate.

Governance

- The Strategic group purpose will be to: develop and agree on the scope and vision of the strategy; oversee the development of the strategy document; develop arrangements for the implementation and review of the strategy and oversee the communications strategy.
- A writing group consisting of the Strategic Leads for young carers and the Planning and Performance Team has been assembled to write the draft.
- Regular oversight and input will be provided by the IJB's Strategic Planning Advisory Group.

Communications

- A communications plan will be developed to make sure all stakeholders are aware that a strategy is being developed and are aware of the part they can play in its development. We have good learning from previous strategy development to guide our actions.

Review, Plan and Monitor

- We will undertake a strategic review of the implementation of the current strategy and what the current landscape looks like in South Ayrshire.
- After assessing the evidence of the current position, the next stage will be to plan activities and services that will help move towards the strategic outcomes and vision for young carers in South Ayrshire.
- Throughout the process, we will engage with people with lived/living experience - not only people's experiences, but views about solutions and the kind of support that would be most useful.
- It will be important to know how well the implementation of the plan is progressing. Therefore, the implementation plan should include detail on measurable performance indicators and outcomes, agreed responsibilities with timescales, a clear reporting process, a feedback loop process that ensures the HSCP learns along the way and enables it to change course when needed, and a plan for services and other stakeholders to continue to influence the plan.

Next Steps

- The Steering Group and Strategy Writing Groups will continue to meet, and early engagement and consultation will continue following Purdah.
- During the writing process, regular reports will be brought to the Strategic Planning Advisory Group until the strategy is agreed by the IJB.

4.4 The new strategy will be developed and in operation by the end of 2026.

5. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

5.1 The Young Carers Strategy supports the Partnership's Strategic Objectives, namely:

- We focus on prevention and tackling inequality
- We nurture and are part of communities that care for each other
- We work together to give the right care in the right place
- We help to build communities where people are safe
- We are an ambitious and effective Partnership
- We are transparent and listen to you
- We make a positive impact beyond the services we deliver

6. IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial Implications

6.1.1 There are no financial implications in considering this report.

6.2 Human Resource Implications

6.2.1 There are no staffing implications in considering this report.

6.3 Legal Implications

6.3.1 There are no Legal Implications in considering this report.

6.3.2 For reference, The Carers (Scotland) Act (2016) sets out statutory duties in relation to young carers that have been delegated by both parent bodies for the IJB to address. This report reflects areas of these legal duties and how they are met through their various bodies of work.

6.4 Equalities implications

6.4.1 A full equality impact assessment will be commenced as we move forward with the development of a new carer's strategy.

6.5 Sustainability implications

6.5.1 There are no environmental sustainability implications arising from the consideration of this report.

6.6 Clinical/professional assessment

6.6.1 There is no requirement for a Clinical/Professional assessment for consideration of this report.

7. CONSULTATION AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

7.1 This report has been prepared in consultation with the relevant officers.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT

8.1. There are no immediate risks associated with the approval of this report.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Young Carers Strategy 2021 - 2026

REPORT AUTHOR AND PERSON TO CONTACT

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10th March 2026