**APPG for Young Carers and Young Adult Carers – Inaugural meeting
Tuesday 29th October 2024, 1pm to 2pm**

**Attendees**

Alex, Young Carer
Alison Bennett MP
Andy McGowan, Carers Trust
Baroness Keeley
Charlotte Cane MP
Chris Vince MP
Daniel Francis MP
Dominic Carter, Carers Trust
Elizabeth Mistry
Gill Furniss MP
Holly, a young adult carer
Ian Solom MP
John Slinger MP
Lee Dillon MP
Lewis, young adult carer
Liz Twist MP
Lord Young of Cookham
Oliver, young carer
Oliver’s mum
Ruby, Young Car

1. **Election of officers
Chair**
* Chris Vince MP has submitted a nomination to be the chair.
* Baroness Keeley proposed Chris Vince as the chair
* Lord Young seconded this proposal
* Chris Vince MP was unanimously elected as chair of the APPG
 **Vice-Chairs**
* Alison Bennett MP, Baroness Keeley and Lord Young have submitted nominations to be vice-chair.
* Chris Vince MP proposed the three as vice-chairs
* Charlotte Cane MP seconded
* Alison Bennett, Baroness Keeley and Lord Young were all elected as vice-chairs
* Chris Vince put on record his thanks to them for taking on officer roles in this very important APPG
* The meeting then began with all attendees introducing themselves
1. **Name and purpose**

The below was agreed to continue as the name/purpose for the group:
**Name:** APPG for Young Carers and Young Adult Carers
**Purpose:** A forum for key issues affecting young carers and young adult carers, championing their involvement and voice, to be addressed collaboratively by parliamentarians. To encourage improved support, services and recognition. Other key stakeholders such as the public and third sectors will also be brought together.

1. **Appointment of Secretariat**
* Carers Trust have put themselves forward to continue providing the secretariat.
* Chris Vince proposed that Carers Trust continue as the secretariat
* Lord Young seconded this proposal and stated his thanks for the work that Carers Trust had done so far.
* Carers Trust were unanimously appointed
1. **Confirmation that the APPG has a minimum of 20 members**
* Chris Vince explained how the new rules require the APPG to have a minimum of 20 members supporting it.
* There are currently 40 Parliamentarians on the members list. The list will be published on the APPG’s webpage following the meeting
1. **Young Carers and education**
* Holly (a young adult carer) and Alex (a young carer) provided a presentation on their experiences of balancing caring with education, and the findings of the new Carers Trust report, ‘Caring and Classes’
* Holly highlighted how the report shows worrying statistics around young carers and absenteeism and lateness.
* Many schools still don’t know who their young carers are.
* Holly argued that young carers should be recognised as a group needing support.
* On average there are 2 young carers providing support in every class.
* Young carers should be able to be free to be children; our aspirations and opportunities shouldn’t be determined by our caring role
* Over 90% of young carers said that they had struggled to get homework completed in the past year
* Caring is inherently unpredictable – on some mornings, attending can be a privilege
* Almost half of young carers in secondary schools were persistently absent.
* Schools are under requirement to share daily attendance data, but young carers are not currently included within this.
* In terms of educational attainment, there is very little national data – and this gap needs addressing urgently.
* 72% of schools reported having zero young carers in their school.
* Holly has been volunteering with Centre 33 – the same charity that supported her. Her experience is that young carers behave in one of two ways – either unusually mature, or they might appear to be acting out.
* Often bad behaviour is the sign of unmet needs, young carers often need to shout to be heard.
* Young carers are often forgotten about in debate around access to mobile phones. Young carers will need to be in contact with family members if they are unwell.
* Holly talked about how she used to hide in toilets at school trying to get one bar of data to see how her daughter’s 8th brain operation had gone.
* Schools cannot take away responsibilities, but they can reduce the impact it has on young carers.
* Wants to see young carers flourish and accessing university

**Alex**

* Alexandra started being a young carer when she was 7, but was only identified when she was 12 – which has now led to her getting access to amazing support from her local young carer service.
* Alex explained how young carers care for the people because we love them, but we need more support.
* Alex talked through the recommendations:
1. Teacher awareness campaign to ensure that all teachers are aware. Alex had 9 different teachers to explain the situation to, not to mention supply teachers.
- Alex reiterated the fact that 72% of schools reported zero young carers in their school census. The report sets a target for no schools to report zero young carers
2. Every school should have a young carers lead. There are hundreds of schools across the country who already have young carers leads in place. But we heard about the disparity between whether there was a lead, and whether young carers knew there was a lead. This lead means young carers don’t need to go to every single teacher – you can just talk to that lead who can then inform people for you.
3. Young Carers Policy – 23% of young carers said that there was no support at all in their education setting. This policy should be in accessible language, produced with young carers and set out what support is needed. Every young carer has different needs. This could also cover things like access to phones for young carers who need to check home
4. Young Carers Pupil Premium – young carers and school know they need support. This would help improve access to pastoral and academic support. It would be modelled based on the existing service children premium.
5. There needs to be further research about experiences particularly of youngest young carers and also young carers who have their own needs. Alexandra highlighted the experience of Edward, a 6 year old young carer and the impact
* Chris Vince thanked Holly and Alex for their incredible contributions and for summing up the importance of this APPG.
* Baroness Keeley highlighted about the fact that 72% of schools said that they didn’t have young carers as a particular concern.
* Ruby said that her school were very keen to support young carers, but didn’t know. Went to multiple schools, none of whom identified them.
* Lewis – I wasn’t identified in school or even university. When you are recognised – often you are at breaking point and only then you find out about practical or financial support available.
* Holly – Her school were great and had a young carers champion – and that support made a huge difference in getting to where she is now.
* Holly highlighted how the default on the school census is that they are not a young carer.
* Charlotte Cane talked about going to university and the extra stresses that this can bring for young adult carers.
* Holly talked about how she is lucky that she wasn’t a primary carer, but experienced a lot of guilt – her sister had been unwell and gone into hospital. I didn’t know whether it was serious enough for
* The level of support for carers at university is very poor and often confused with care leavers.
* Lewis talked about how he is the primary carer for his mother because of mental health and so really struggled with the guilt. The support for carers is really poor. When you look on the website – it mixes support up for parents/carers.
* Ruby – Is currently on a gap year and when it came around to UCAS, she said she couldn’t apply because of her dad – no-one challenged that thought process, even though I got As and A\*s in her A Levels.
* Chris Vince highlighted that support in universities is an area that is often picked up.
* Lord Young asked about what support young carers were getting. Alex explained how she could get support but was a 6-week programme.
* Alex’s mum highlighted about the lack of family support. You go and talk to your GP, council and ask what family care or support can be provided – you have the impact on the siblings and parents haven’t slept for ten years.
* John Slinger MP talked about that he was trustee at Warwickshire Young Carers. If there is anything he can do by way of Parliamentary Questions, or debates, he is really keen to support. Young carers are often invisible in the system, even though they are so impressive as young people. Wants to do everything.
* Chris Vince stated that he is keen that this APPG has positive outcomes – 3 key areas:
1. Awareness of schools
2. Support for young carers in university – young adult carers often get left and forgotten
3. Joining-up of services between services
* By way of introduction, suggest write to the Education Secretary to introduce themselves.
* Also suggest write to Higher Education Minister about issue of young adult carers in university. The point that Lewis made about going onto a university website feeling they were not talking about them is really important.
* Andy McGowan explained that the next round of UCAS carer data is due out in December and might be worth considering writing once we have the results from that data.
* Chris Vince highlighted the need to ensure in any conversations about carers, we also need to ensure young carers are part of it.
* Baroness Keeley raised about need to improve identification and also to push for a national carers strategy. This would be cross-departmental.
* Chris Vince highlighted that APPG for Carers will be pushing about a national carers strategy, and we need to support that work to ensure young carers and young adult carers are being considered.
* Alison Bennett raised about engaging with chairs of select committees.
* In relation to the frequency of meetings, Chris Vince proposed to have formal meetings quarterly and then have APPG activities to coincide with Young Carers Action Day and Carers Week. **Agreed**.