



# Somerset Parent Carer Forum CIC Ltd.

The independent voice for families from birth to 25 with additional needs or disabilities

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**1<sup>st</sup> October 2026**

## **Young Carers Funding**

Chair, Councillors,

We are asking Somerset Council to pause the proposed withdrawal of funding for young carers and require proper scrutiny before any final decision is made.

This is not simply a budget saving. It is a decision affecting children who already carry significant caring responsibilities, and it raises important legal, safeguarding and procedural questions. The notification to providers appears to have been sent out in a rush, in fact it was not even correctly branded as from the council.

Legislation outlines the council's statutory duties towards young carers. The Council must ensure that young carers are identified, assessed and that their needs for support are properly considered.

Somerset's own Young Carers Strategy identifies early identification, participation, co-production and whole-family support as priorities. We cannot say these things matter while removing preventative support without clearly explaining what will replace it.

There is also a fundamental question about consultation.

What consultation has actually taken place with young carers and their families about this specific proposal? We are not talking about general budget consultation or previous consultation on the Young Carers Strategy. We are asking whether the children and families who will be directly affected by this funding withdrawal have been asked, listened to and given an opportunity to influence the decision.

Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child recognises children's right to have their views heard on matters affecting them. Article 3 requires their best interests to be a primary consideration. That should matter when this Council is making a decision directly affecting children.

There is also a serious scrutiny issue.

This proposal has come forward without first being considered by the Children, Families and Education Scrutiny Committee. Scrutiny exists to test evidence, challenge assumptions and examine alternatives before important decisions are made.



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So, we ask the Monitoring Officer and the Executive:

Why has this proposal not gone through the relevant scrutiny process?

Does the Council's Constitution require or provide for scrutiny of this proposal before Executive consideration and if that process has been bypassed, why?

There is also the question of impact.

Before withdrawing preventative support, where is the evidence of the likely impact on young carers' education, wellbeing, social isolation, family life and safeguarding? A impact assessment has not be submitted alongside this proposal which is a basic requirement.

Where is the assessment of whether demand and costs will simply be transferred to schools, social care, health services or other organisations?

And has the Council properly discharged its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty?

We are therefore asking Full Council for clear answers to five questions:

1. What evidence supports the proposed withdrawal?
2. What specific consultation has taken place with young carers and their families?
3. How will Somerset continue to meet its statutory duties towards young carers?
4. Why has this proposal not been through Children, Families and Education Scrutiny?
5. Has the Monitoring Officer and executive confirmed that the decision-making process complies with the Constitution and relevant statutory duties?

We recognise the financial pressures facing Somerset, but financial pressure does not remove the Council's legal and moral responsibilities to children. Young carers already carry responsibilities that most children do not. We should not ask them to carry the consequences of a decision that has not been properly scrutinised, consulted on or evidenced.

We ask Somerset Council to pause this proposal and require that proper scrutiny, consultation and impact assessment take place before any final decision is made.

Thank you.

Ruth Hobbs

CEO Somerset Parent Carer Forum CIC