

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH COMMITTEE - 23RD APRIL 2012

REPORT ON: CUSTOMER CARE OFFICER REPORT 2011

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK

REPORT NO: 163 - 2012

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To inform the members on the progress of Customer Care against the Customer Service Excellence Standard and the management and operation of the statutory Complaints Procedure during the calendar year 2011.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Social Work and Health Committee:

2.1 note the contents of this report and;

2.2 authorise the Director of Social Work to publish it according to the statutory requirements.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

4.0 MAIN TEXT

4.1 The Department has been pursuing Customer Service Excellence Standard, the replacement of the previous Charter Mark. To progress this in 2008 the Department developed and implemented a three year Customer Service Excellence Standard Framework. Whereas significant progress has been made it is no longer planned to pursue formal accreditation in the current financial climate due to the high cost involved. The Department will however continue to work towards making improvements against the Standard and reporting on it in its customer care approach as well as participating in corporate initiatives.

4.2 The Standard Framework, which is based on the Cabinet Office Customer Service Excellence model, covers areas of Customer Identification, Customer Satisfaction, Leadership Policy and Culture, Delivery Standards and Standards for Timeliness and Quality

4.3 This report highlights the progress of significant customer care initiatives against the Customer Service Excellence Standard as detailed in previous Customer Care Officer reports. The report does not seek to highlight all initiatives many of which are integrated into day to day practice.

4.4 CUSTOMER IDENTIFICATION

Under this section the following initiatives have been progressed.

- Improved K2 recording of client groups/profiles and characteristics.
- Improved management information and datasets.
- Undertaking needs analysis across service groups for matching needs and services to inform commissioning.

- Putting frameworks in place to quality assure consultation activities.
- Developing process to systematically engage service users and carers.
- Collating and analysing information from user consultations (a major service user and carer survey was undertaken during 2010) in addition to a range of other targeted consultation to inform the Departmental Improvement Plan. It is planned to run this survey again within the next 12 months.
- Improving our ability to demonstrate to regulators how performance management has led to positive change (this is evidenced by our positive responses to Care Inspectorate recommendations).

4.5 **CUSTOMER SATISFACTION**

Under this section the following initiatives have been progressed.

- Ensuring that each service has a systematic approach to the assessment and analysis of satisfaction levels (this has been achieved through our segmented survey of service users and carers).
- Implementing the use of the Care Inspectorate Customer Satisfaction Survey (the survey referred to above section is based on this method).
- Identifying areas for process improvement (the complaints procedure has been updated to an electronic version this will allow for easier monitoring of performance).
- Services have adopted a wide range of methods to obtain customer feedback some examples include:
 - *Have Your Say* forms have been used for a number of years to take into account the views of looked after and accommodated children at the time of their reviews, since June 2011 the forms have been analysed and the results compiled into an interim performance report. Examples of key findings were 85% were partaking in at least one activity e.g. football or swimming and 96% were satisfied with their placement (70% liked it and 26% felt it was acceptable). The others were accommodated in Secure Units.
 - Dundee Partnership in Practice (PiP) Review 2011 Consultation Report is a major consultation undertaken alongside people with learning difficulties and their carers.
 - The Dundee Independent Living & Community Equipment Centre undertook a survey of satisfaction levels in November 2011. Some key results show that 97.5% of respondents were satisfied with the time it took to deliver equipment and 97.5% agreed that overall they were satisfied with the service.
 - Social Work Criminal Justice Services survey people who have work undertaken by offenders on Community Payback Orders. Over 30 (90% of respondents) people or organisation have given positive feedback between November 2011 and March 2012.
 - Extensive Enablement Service satisfaction level survey (results currently being analysed).

4.6 **LEADERSHIP POLICY AND CULTURE**

Under this section the following initiatives have been progressed.

- Continually updating public information. New publications include a *Guide to Social Work Services in Dundee*. This is a major publication which includes Customer Care Standards and advises people on complaints, compliments and suggestions, as well as information on our services (new publication by May 2012).
- Developing new policies and procedures in line with national expectations e.g. new legislation. A good example of this is our contribution to producing public information on Protecting People.
- Ensuring that users are able to use the language of their choice when dealing with Social Work services (use of the Language Line Interpreting Service and the Council Interpreting Service).
- Developing and implementing staff training on ethical case recording (training developed and delivered to 380 key staff).

- We now have a well-established Local Practitioner Forum as part of an approach to getting customer-facing staff's insight and experience incorporated into internal processes, policy development and service planning.
- Identifying and recognising good practice and/or innovative examples. To achieve this we regularly submit examples of good practice for national awards. Over the past few years, we have had a number of winning entries and been runners up with others.
- We are involved in piloting customer service qualifications for reception staff.

4.7 **RANGE OF INFORMATION**

People can access a range of information about social work services in Dundee our printed and web information is extensive and is kept under review. Audits are undertaken on the information at our reception points.

▪ **Printed publications**

The department's main first point of contact information is contained in a publication titled: *A Guide to Social Work Services in Dundee*. This publication is widely distributed to public outlets such as GP surgeries (32), neighbourhood libraries (14), the voluntary sector (Dundee Voluntary Action), local community planning partnerships, housing, the customer centre at Dundee House, social work offices. A range of service information leaflets covering Children's Services, Community Care Services and Criminal Justice Social Work are also available in printed and electronic formats.

▪ **Dundee City Council website**

The Council's website is increasingly used by the public to source information about services in Dundee. Social work public information is well populated on this site. Up -to-date sections includes: social work publications, the A-Z of council services, social work quick links (e.g. Your Guide to Social Work Services in Dundee) and frequently asked questions. The *For Your Information* area also directs users to specific news items e.g. information about the launch of the Protecting People of All Ages in Dundee booklet. Advertising features and kickers are also used to promote and highlight specific services, initiatives and there are links to 6 micro sites.

If a member of the public requests information which is not available in hard printed form, staff are encouraged to check to see if the information is on the Council's website and print off a copy for the customer.

▪ **Linked micro sites**

There are 6 key special micro sites which can be accessed from the main social work, and/or Council pages.

These are:

- Integrated Children's Services - access to the Children's Services Directory and other relevant information for children's services staff
- Fostering or Adoption
- Children's Rights Service
- Dundee Child Care and Protection Committee
- Dundee Adult Support & Protection Committee
- Dundee Independent Living Centre

▪ **Advertising, media and proactive public information campaigns**

The social work department uses press, radio and occasional TV advertising to promote specific services including:

- Fostering and adoption
- Dundee Independent Living Centre.
- Protecting People in Dundee.

4.8 **DELIVERY STANDARDS**

Under this section the following initiatives have been progressed.

- Developing and implementing a maintenance strategy. We now have a programme of visits to reception areas to ensure information is up to date and the area is as welcoming as possible.
- Developing new procedures for Adult Support and Protection.
- We have benchmarked our Service User and Carer survey results against the Scottish average (Care Inspectorate survey results 2008). This process will be repeated in the next 12 months
- A Business Continuity plan is in place and has been tested in severe weather and to a lesser extent with flu.
- The development of personal outcomes frameworks across our services.

4.9 **STANDARDS FOR TIMELINESS AND QUALITY**

Under this section the following initiatives have been progressed.

- We have increased our range and scope of measurement for complaints by introducing an electronic monitoring system.
- We will continue to report on our performance against the national social work timescales for complaints.
- We have a good range of time performance included in our management data sets.

4.10 **COMPLAINTS**

- 4.10.1 The social work complaints procedure has up to four stages. If the complainant is not happy with the outcome at any stage, they can ask their complaint to be escalated to the next level. The first stage is the informal or Level 1 complaint, which can usually be resolved at the point of service delivery. If a complainant is unhappy with the outcome of the investigation, it can be escalated to a Level 2. This level requires a more in depth investigation and serious complaints are always investigated at Level 2. If the complainant remains dissatisfied, the Director (this stage can be bypassed at the complainant's request) reviews the complaint. The next stage if requested is a hearing by the Complaints Review Committee of Dundee City Council.
- 4.10.2 Level 1 complaints are required to be acknowledged within 5 days and have a response within 14 days. Level 2 complaints have to be acknowledged within 5 days and a response within 28 days. These timescales can only be extended under exceptional circumstances and by mutual agreement. The Complaints Review Committee concludes in 56 days.
- 4.10.3 A total of 60 complaints, 57 Level 1 and 3 Level 2, were recorded in the 2011 calendar year. These include 25 Community Care, 24 Children's Services, 9 Criminal Justice Services and 2 general social work complaints. Of these 60 complaints, 18 (34.6%) were upheld whereas 34 (65.4%) were not upheld. Investigations on 8 complaints are still ongoing. The highest numbers of complaints feature staff attitude or service standards.
- 4.10.4 The figures for 2010 were 46 complaints, 27 at Level 1 and 9 at Level 2.
- 4.10.5 Acknowledgement targets were achieved in 98% (87% 2010) cases and completion targets (set by procedures or agreed with complainant) in 90% (83% 2010) of cases.
- 4.10.6 No complaint went to the Complaints Review Committee or the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman during 2011.
- 4.10.7 The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) has developed a simplified complaints handling procedure for the public sector across Scotland. The new standardised procedure, when implemented, could have major impact on social work sector since it may bring informal complaints that are now dealt separately, into the formal complaints process. The number of stages a complaint goes through is likely to be reduced and over the course of the next year our procedures may have to be substantially re written to take account of the changes. The Social Work Department has been preparing for this by developing an electronic system to reduce paperwork and improve monitoring.

4.10.8 An analysis of complaints data shows that there has been an increase in Level 1 complaints and this was expected with the development of electronic recording immediately a complain is received. The reduction in Level 2 complaints is welcome and there has been an improvement in the acknowledgement and completion times. The Department continues to show a relatively small number of formal complaints when it is considered that we have contact with over 9000 service users often under very difficult circumstances. Most complaints are not upheld but the Department must always try and improve the approach to customer satisfaction as most complaints, even if not upheld, demonstrate at least some perception of dissatisfaction.

4.11 **COMPLIMENTS**

The Department has recorded centrally 131 written compliments about services. There are probably many more not recorded. These have been received by a wide range of services including, welfare rights, older peoples residential and day services, learning disability services, hospital social work, family support centres, care and assessment teams, physical disability services and Criminal Justice Services. These written compliments give the Director an opportunity to respond to the individual or team involved.

5.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

This Report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. There are no major issues.

6.0 **CONSULTATIONS**

The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services and Head of Democratic and Legal Services have been consulted in preparation of this report.

7.0 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

Alan G Baird
Director of Social Work

DATE: 11th April 2012