

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE – 19TH FEBRUARY 2007

REPORT ON: EUROPEAN FOUNDATION OF QUALITY MANAGEMENT (EFQM) SELF ASSESSMENT OF DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK

REPORT NO: 106 - 2007

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report informs members of the results from a recent EFQM analysis of the Social Work Department and of proposals for improvement actions.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Social Work Committee:

2.1 notes and approves the content of this report;

2.2 instructs the Director of Social Work to develop a set of improvement actions and to ensure that these are incorporated into the new Departmental Service Plan that will be produced later in 2007; and

2.2 instructs the Director of Social Work to provide a further assessment by mid 2008

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

4.0 SUSTAINABILITY POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 This report does not directly impact on the Council's Sustainability Policy.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The self-assessment process has evidenced that the Department is making progress in involving its customers in the development and delivery of services to meet need. This includes working with people from minority ethnic communities, disabled people and their families and people from other target groups. The proposed actions will ensure that staff in the Department continue to promote anti-discriminatory practice and to challenge discrimination and disadvantage in their day-to-day work.

6.0 MAIN TEXT

6.1 Background

Dundee City Council has chosen to use the EFQM excellence model as a framework for achieving continuous improvement and organisational development. In the Departmental Service Plan 2003–2007, the Director of Social Work states that, "As a Department, we aim to continuously improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of the services we provide".

As a means of supporting organisational development and to help deliver on the efficiency, effectiveness, economy and continuous improvement expected through Best Value, the Department has commenced on a plan to build on, and further develop, the use of the EFQM model of self assessment.

An initial EFQM self-assessment was undertaken in 1999-2000. This assessment was not repeated in full until 2004/05, as the Department did not have the infrastructure in place to facilitate this process until the establishment of the Strategy and Performance Service in the summer of 2003. This Service ensures that the Department has a co-ordinated and cohesive approach to the planning, development, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of services provided for people in need. It also has a key responsibility to make certain that achieving better outcomes for people is at the centre of all that the Department does. In line with its cross-cutting responsibilities, the Strategy and Performance Service has now assumed responsibility for undertaking the EFQM self-assessment and for ensuring that improvement actions are identified and progressed through Departmental Service Plans.

The EFQM Model of Self- Assessment

The EFQM Excellence Model is particularly helpful to providers of social services as it has, as its focus, all important components of organisational performance, including leadership, people, customers, processes and results. (Details of the EFQM criterion can be found in Appendix 1 - The Criterion of the EFQM Model of Business Excellence).

The use of the self-assessment approach of EFQM offers significant advantages to organisations. EFQM Self Assessment:

- provides an additional method of scrutiny on organisational performance by elected members;
- focuses on continuous improvement over time, in keeping with Best Value,
- ensures that assessments are under Departmental control and are comparatively low cost when compared to external consultation;
- generates fresh motivation;
- gives an insight into good practice;
- encourages a sense of participation and ownership;
- contributes to a process of continuous improvement;
- improves the understanding of the organisation;
- identifies strengths and areas for improvement.

6.2 Previous Results and Actions

The assessment, which was undertaken in 1999/2000, produced a score of 201 and suggested specific areas for improvement. An organisation achieving this score is described

by the EFQM literature as one which is: *"Starting on the journey towards business excellence. Applying people oriented quality initiatives to encourage cultural change"*.

In terms of the EFQM literature an assessment undertaken in 2004 described the Social Work Department as having improved to an organisation which is: *"Up and running with systematic practices. Using feedback from people, suppliers and customers to improve business performance."*

As a continuing part of the self-assessment process the Department produced a case study report on the functioning and performance of the Department. This case study has a strong focus on the development of an organisational culture which supports effective management and performance improvement. It sets baseline indicators for benchmarking future performance and consolidates a set of actions to be taken to achieve improvement.

As well as information from the EFQM self-assessment, the case study also draws on information gained through Best Value reviews, PMP audits, SWSI inspection reports and visits, and staff surveys. This case study will be regularly reviewed as, in the future, it may be used for award purposes.

The Social Work Department used the information from previous self-assessments and the case study to identify areas for improvement.

The issues which were addressed included:

- improving communication throughout the Department;
- ensuring staff have access to the training required to fulfil the requirements of their job;
- developing managers as leaders and improvers;
- incorporating staff survey results into future planning;
- being more aware of customer needs and using this knowledge to improve services.

6.3 Latest Assessment

Information Gathering

For the purpose of this assessment an electronic questionnaire (Pathway) produced by Quality Scotland was used. This is the same method as was used in the previous assessment. The completion of this questionnaire involved over 160 staff, of which about 15% were managers. To ensure consistency all participants were interviewed by staff from the Strategy and Performance Service.

Findings

The recent self-assessment shows that our EFQM score has increased from 201 in 2000 to 283 in 2006. This maintained the Department's position in the EFQM banding: *"Up and running with systematic practices. Using feedback from people, suppliers and customers to improve business performance."* This EFQM description applies to organisations who score between 250–499. The results have been segmented for the main service areas in the Department and averaged into a total score for the Department. All scores are in the same EFQM banding.

The findings section is divided into two parts, Enablers Criterion and Results Criterion.

Enablers Findings

It is clear from the results and from comments at the interviews that our staff feel that there have been improvements and have identified some areas for improvement in the following areas.

Leadership

- Work related training is more widely available and better organised.
- Managers are better trained.
- Managers are increasing their support of improvement activities and listening more to staff ideas.

Scoring in the leadership section of the questionnaire shows an overall improvement but it has been identified by a number of participants that staff of all grades are under pressures from increasing demands on the organisation for services.

Policy and Strategy

The most significant improvements in this section were.

- The development of business plans that meet the needs of the organisational strategy
- The communication of these plans and people's understanding of their roles in achieving the goals set out in these plans.
- The use of relevant information to develop goals and plans.

In spite of these improvements there is still a demand in the organisation for plans and strategies to be summarised and targeted for communication to staff who will be expected to carry out the tasks.

People

The Department has achieved *Investor in People* status since the last EFQM assessment and this section shows the best overall improvement in the organisation. Particularly the following areas.

- Setting objectives in line with business plans both for teams and individuals.
- Staff being encouraged to take the initiative and implement changes.
- Communication initiatives undertaken by senior staff.
- Staff being encouraged to take part in improvement activities.
- Staff being trained and developed to meet business needs

Although this section shows an improvement in all questions a number of staff feel there is room for improved career development and for some aspects of staff development to be better organised. It is anticipated that this will improve with the full implementation of the *Effective Support to Staff Handbook*. This publication places obligations on the Department to regularly review personal development plans through an employee development and review process.

Partnerships and Resources

Many results in this section show an improvement over the last assessment but some others show a decrease. It is felt that this is in part due to staff being able to take a much more analytical and critical view of the Department's performance. The improvements were featured in the following areas.

- Financial control, allocation of resources and managing risk
- The use of emerging technologies
- The process of measuring and monitoring of contractors and providers

Areas for improvement were identified as.

- Improving the availability and use of management information.
- Building maintenance and security.

Processes

It is clear that within this section there has been marked improvements in a number of areas but this has been balanced by staff identifying other areas that we should aim to improve. The improvements have been in the following areas.

- There has been a significant increase in staff being more aware of the Department being involved in using established frameworks such as Investor in People, Vanguard, Hygiene control and EFQM to define the management of processes.
- The Department is improving in the analysis of customer requirements and trends.
- The reviewing of key performance indicators.
- Gathering customer feed back.

Areas for improvement include.

- More systematic use of information management.
- The overall perception of performance on meeting standards has not changed significantly but less people were prepared to allocate a very high score. This may point to communication issues which will feature later in the report.

Results Findings

The following criterion focus mainly on the range and quality of results the Department holds on key aspects of its business. It is also concerned with trend over time information and how well we compare with similar local authorities. These results are grouped in sections covering: People Results; Customer Results; Society Results and Key Performance Results.

Customer Results

Staff perceptions were similar or showed a small improvement in this section. This is an area where we would expect the Scottish Executive self-assessment publication *How Good is Your Team?* to have a major impact on customer results. This process, which has improving service user outcomes as a key component, is currently being developed throughout the Department.

People Results

In this section participants felt that there had been improvements in the use of information obtained from staff surveys and in the perception that these survey results will show a higher level of people satisfaction.

It is clear that there are opportunities to increase the scoring in the criterion by regularly getting important management information and performance information out to staff. The Department introduced a communication strategy for staff during 2006 and developing accessible regular performance information for staff will be a priority under this strategy.

Society Results

This criterion questions what the department is achieving in relation to local and national society. It has a range of questions on societal perception, ethics and environmental factors. Our staff feel that we should do more to ask communities what they feel about the

Department as a responsible provider in the community. This is an issue that we will prioritise under our involvement strategy which is due for completion over the next two months.

There are also less very low scores recorded for environmental factors and it seems people are much more aware of sustainability issues.

Key Performance Results

From the discussions at the interviews and the overall results it is felt that staff are now far more able to analyse performance information and to appreciate the impact this information has on their ability to do the job. There is a call for information on performance to be communicated to teams in a meaningful and regular manner that allows the team to assess its own performance against both local and national performance targets. This is of particular importance at a time when there is an expectation that all teams are involved in the self assessment of their own performance following the publication of the Scottish Executive: *How Good is Our Team? Evaluating the performance of a social work team.*

Managing Performance

As a result of EFQM self assessment, self evaluation and inspection processes and other activity it has become clear that process improvement and the management of performance are becoming increasingly important activities within the Social Work Department, both internally and in conjunction with planning and service delivery partners. In addressing this changing and growing need, the Strategy and Performance Service has reviewed its staffing structure and redefined roles and responsibilities. This has resulted in the work of a Senior Officer being refocused on process improvement and performance management across the Department and the creation of a Strategy and Performance Assistant (AP3).

6.4 Next Steps

It is important that the information gathered in the self-assessment process is prioritised along side other information collected from staff surveys, Social Work Inspection Agency Reports and Audit Scotland Best Value Reports. This process allows us to build on the progress already made and to identify areas that we should concentrate on improving so that we can achieve our shared aims and vision and those objectives set for us by external scrutiny and regulation. The case study described above will now be updated to reflect new information and to prioritise areas for improvement. These areas are likely to include:

- further develop shared outcomes for people,
- communicating performance results to front line staff and encouraging them through the *How Good is Your Team?* process to set priorities for improvement,
- using information from our service users and stakeholders to design future services,
- achieving full implementation of the Effective Support to Staff handbook,
- undertaking a major employee survey across all social work staff, and
- maintaining a strong approach to staff training and management development.

It is clear from the self-assessment interviews that our staff are committed to providing a high quality service and there has been an increase in the percentage of our staff who give a high score to the survey statement: “ *we are achieving results as good as others (council's) over time*” These interviews are also demonstrating that staff are more knowledgeable about the Department, as well as being increasingly able to use this knowledge to analyse the performance of the Department and how it impacts on their working lives and the lives of service users.

It is also important that increasing priority is given to supporting process improvement activities and the management of performance across the Department and this will be co-

ordinated by the Senior Officer (Performance) assisted by the Strategy and Performance Assistant.

Conclusion

EFQM self-assessments have been an important step forward in terms of organisational development in the Social Work Department. They have clearly indicated the approach the Department should be taking in order to achieve continuous improvement. The information from the self-assessment will enable the Director and his staff to make improvements to the organisation which will have the maximum benefit to service users. In keeping with the EFQM focus on people and customers, the Department recognises the importance of seeking the opinions of service users and staff in such an improvement agenda and will strive to continue to find the most effective ways of achieving this.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Depute Chief Executive (Finance), Assistant Chief Executive (Community Planning) and the Assistant Chief Executive (Management) were consulted in the preparation of this report.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 None

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9 February 2007

Appendix 1

The Criterion of the EFQM Model of Business Excellence

The model asks for detailed information on the nine criterion described below.

Criterion 1 - Leadership.

Definition: How leaders develop the mission, vision, and values required for long-term success and implement these via appropriate actions and behaviours, and are personally involved in ensuring that the organisation's management system is developed and implemented.

Criterion 2 - Policy and Strategy

Definition: How the organisation implements its mission and vision via a clear stakeholder focused strategy, supported by relevant policies, plans, objectives, targets and processes.

Criterion 3 - People

Definition: How the organisation manages, develops and releases the knowledge and full potential of its people at an individual, team based and organisation-wide level, and plans these activities in order to support its policy and strategy and the effective operation of its processes.

Criterion 4 - Partnership and Resources

Definition: How the organisation plans and manages its external partnerships and internal resources in order to support its policies and strategy and the effective operation of its processes.

Criterion 5 - Processes

Definition: How the organisation designs, manages and improves its processes in order to support its policy and strategy.

Criterion 6 - Customer Results

Definition: What the organisation is achieving in relation to its external customers. These measures are of the customers' perception of the organisation (obtained, for example, from customer surveys, focus groups, vendor ratings, compliments and complaints).

Criterion 7 - People Results

Definition: What the organisation is achieving in relation to its people. These measures are of the people's perception of the organisation (obtained, for example, from surveys, focus groups, interviews, structured appraisals).

Criterion 8 - Society Results

Definition: What the organisation is achieving in relation to local, national and international society as appropriate.

Criterion 9 - Key Performance Results

Definition: What the organisation is achieving in relation to its planned performance.