

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 13 FEBRUARY 2014

REPORT ON: REVIEW OF DUNDEE HOMEFINDER SERVICE

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF HOUSING

REPORT NO: 111-2014

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report sets out a review of the options for providing the Dundee Homefinder Service.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that option 3 would provide best value to the Council. Therefore it is recommended that the Council terminates the contract with Transform Community Development and that the Council provides the Dundee Homefinder service thereafter.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Dundee Homefinder Service is currently run by Transform Community Development. The service is funded by an annual grant of £206,000 (2013/14) from the Other Housing account.

The transfer of this service to Dundee City Council will result in annual financial savings of £40,000. The savings in 2014/15 will be £30,000 based on the service transferring to the Council in July 2014.

4.0 MAIN TEXT

4.1 Background

The Dundee Homefinder Service was set up to maximise the use of Private Rented Sector Tenancies to prevent and resolve homelessness. The service has been run by Transform Community Development since 2008.

The project targets a minimum of 220 lets per year and offers tenants a rent deposit guarantee where there is no other alternative source of deposit available. The project promotes the use of the Homefinder service to landlords in the Private Rented Sector. It also works closely with the Private Sector Services Unit within the Housing Department.

In 2012/13 the Dundee Homefinder Service placed 213 households in private sector tenancies.

The Dundee Homefinder Service is currently funded by an annual grant of £206,000 from the Other Housing account.

4.2 Options Appraisal

In order to ensure best value the Council must appraise services provided by the voluntary sector and consider whether best value is being obtained.

An options appraisal for future delivery of the Dundee Homefinder Service is set out below.

4.2.1 Option 1 - Continue to run the Dundee Homefinder Service under the contract with Transform Community Development.

This will retain the status quo with similar outcomes and no savings will be realised.

- 4.2.2 Option 2 - Issue a tender to be assessed on a quality and cost basis seeking potential voluntary sector providers to deliver the service.

This would expose the service to the market and determine whether the service can be provided at the required service levels at lower cost.

- 4.2.3 Option 3 – Dundee City Council provides the Dundee Homefinder Service.

Realise savings of £40,000 per annum.

Based on the existing staff complement within Transform Community Development this would require the Council's Housing Department to establish one Project Co-ordinator Post, 3 Contact and Assessment Workers, 1 Housing Support Worker and one Part-Time Administrative post. The estimated total cost including the Rent Deposit Fund and other associated overheads for the project is £166,000.

From the legal advice obtained it is anticipated that by the Council providing the service in house that the Transfer of Undertakings (TUPE) would apply.

The presumption at this time is that the provider would want to transfer the existing staff complement as outlined above. Job evaluation would be required to be carried out to ascertain the appropriate Council grades for the posts.

Notice would have to be given to Transform Community Development to terminate the service and arrangements would have to be made to transition the service to the Council. Therefore it is estimated that the earliest the service could be delivered by the Council would be from July 2014.

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 and all other Chief Officers have been consulted on the preparation of this report. No concerns were expressed.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

DIRECTOR OF HOUSING

DATE: JANUARY 2014

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL**Equality and Diversity Rapid Impact Assessment Tool****Part 1**

Date of assessment December 2013	Title of document being assessed Review of Dundee Homefinder Service
1) This is a new policy, procedure, strategy or practice being assessed (If yes please tick box) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	This is an existing policy, procedure, strategy or practice being assessed? (If yes please tick box) <input type="checkbox"/>
2) Please give a brief description of the policy, procedure, strategy or practice being assessed.	To Review the service provision of Dundee Homefinder Service.
3) What is the intended outcome of this policy, procedure, strategy or practice?	To provide the most cost effective, customer focused and cost efficient means of providing the Dundee Homefinder Service.
4) Please list any existing documents which have been used to inform this Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment.	None
5) Has any consultation, involvement or research with protected characteristic communities informed this assessment? If yes please give details.	No
6) Please give details of council officer involvement in this assessment. (E.g. names of officers consulted, dates of meetings etc)	Gordon Birrell
7) Is there a need to collect further evidence or to involve or consult protected characteristics communities on the impact of the proposed policy? (Example: if the impact on a community is not known what will you do to gather the information needed and when will you do this?)	No further evidence has been identified.

Part 2

Which protected characteristics communities will be positively or negatively affected by this policy, procedure or strategy?

NB Please place an X in the box which best describes the "overall" impact. It is possible for an assessment to identify that a positive policy can have some negative impacts and visa versa. When this is the case please identify both positive and negative impacts in Part 3 of this form.

If the impact on a protected characteristic communities are not known please state how you will gather evidence of any potential negative impacts in box Part 1 section 7 above.

	Positively	Negatively	No Impact	Not Known
Ethnic Minority Communities including Gypsies and Travellers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender Reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or Belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People with a disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Socio-economic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy & Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please state)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 3

1) Have any positive impacts been identified? (We must ensure at this stage that we are not achieving equality for one strand of equality at the expense of another)	If yes please give further details No
2) Have any negative impacts been identified? (Based on direct knowledge, published research, community involvement, customer feedback etc. If unsure seek advice from your departmental Equality Champion.)	If yes please give further details No
3) What action is proposed to overcome any negative impacts? E.g. involving community groups in the development or delivery of the policy or practice, providing information in community languages etc. see Good Practice on DCC equalities web page	N/A
4) Is there a justification for continuing with this policy even if it cannot be amended or changed to end or reduce inequality without compromising its intended outcome? (If the policy that shows actual or potential unlawful discrimination you must stop and seek legal advice)	If yes please give further details - No
5) Has a 'Full' Equality Impact Assessment been recommended? (If the policy is a major one or is likely to have a major impact on protected characteristics communities a Full Equality Impact Assessment may be required) Seek advice from your departmental Equality Champion.	If yes please give further details - No
6) How will the policy be monitored? (How will you know it is doing what it is intended to do? e.g. data collection, customer survey etc.)	Service delivery will be monitored by the in house team and the Homeless Services Unit.

Part 4**Name of Department or Partnership: Housing****Type of Document**

Human Resource Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>
General Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strategy/Service	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Change Papers/Local Procedure	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guidelines and Protocols	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Contact Information

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Signature of author of the policy:	Gordon Birrell	Date 17/12/2013
Signature of Director / Head of Service area:	Elaine Zwirlein	Date 17/12/2013
Name of Director / Head of Service:	Elaine Zwirlein	
Date of next policy review:	On-going	

