

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE - 21 MARCH 2005

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: 186 - 2005

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 2005 review of the Departmental Service Plan; and
- 2.3 instructs the Director of Social Work to provide a further assessment by mid 2006.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

4.1.1 The European Foundation of Quality Management model of excellence places a high value on people both as employees and as customers. The biggest asset in the Social Work Department is its staff and the Director, and his extended management team, strive to ensure that people continue to have the opportunity to undertake satisfying work in an increasingly diverse economy. The self-assessment process contributes to a culture of continuous improvement where services are developed and reviewed to better meet need. It helps to ensure that resources are used efficiently and that wherever possible local needs are met locally.

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 its vision statement Dundee City Council Social Work Department states "We will continue to make a real difference to the quality of life of citizens of Dundee by providing effective services for people with needs". 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 had not been repeated in full since, 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 Information Gathering

For the purpose of the 2004 assessment two main methods were employed. These consisted of an electronic questionnaire (Pathway) produced by Quality Scotland. The completion of this questionnaire involved over 160 front line staff who were interviewed by staff from the Strategy and Performance Service.

In addition the most senior managers in the Department (third tier and above) completed a facilitated self-assessment workbook also produced by Quality Scotland. The results of the use of these two methods give detailed information on strengths and areas for improvement within the organisation, as well as a comparative score against the previous assessment. The methods also provide a framework for future self assessment processes.

6.3 Results

The last full assessment, which was undertaken, 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*".

Many of the areas for improvement identified in the previous assessment and other organisational developments have been actioned. This work has involved:

- the recognition of the contribution of people (achieved by the Annual Awards Ceremony);
- the use of external consultants under the Scottish Executive Support to Front Line Staff agenda;
- the provision of management development workshops;
- the introduction of management behaviour standards, these will be further developed by identifying and addressing management competences and training needs;
- the appointment of a staff support officer and a Scottish Health at Work Bronze Award;
- improvements to the staff newsletter and other communication (the Director's personal addresses to over 1000 staff were seen as significant events);
- the introduction of a supervision policy and an effective support to staff handbook;
- the encouragement of creativity (achieved by service improvement groups);
- the empowerment of first line managers (achieved by introducing flexible working practices and culture change workshops);
- the systematic recruitment targeting of potential staff for hard to fill posts (this has led to the development of the Social Care Academy in Partnership with Dundee College).

The assessment undertaken during 2004 now scores the Department at 280, an improvement of 40%. In terms of the EFQM model, this means that the Department is described as an organisation which is: "*Up and running with systematic practices. Using feedback from people, suppliers and customers to improve business performance.*"

There were no reduced scores in any of the nine EFQM criterion since the last assessment. The most significant improvement increases were in the customer results and society results criterion. The improved scores, and the vast amount of information generated from the exercises, indicate that the Department is making good progress. It is also worth noting that the score from the managers' workbooks, and the score from the staff groups involved in the CD Rom exercise, were within a few points of one another. This is encouraging as it means that staff and managers are seeing the organisation in the same way.

6.4 Next Steps

As a continuing part of the self-assessment process the Department will produce a case study report on the functioning and performance of the Department. The case study will have a strong focus on the development of an organisational culture which supports effective management and performance improvement. It will develop baseline indicators for benchmarking future performance and will consolidate a set of actions to be taken to achieve improvement. As well as information from the EFQM self-assessment, the case study will also draw on information gained through Best Value reviews, PMP audits, SWSI inspection reports and visits, and staff surveys. Once completed, an approach will be made to Quality Scotland to have the case study independently assessed to confirm the validity of our scoring. This case study will be regularly reviewed as, in the future, it may be used for award purposes.

It is clear from the process of information gathering in the self-assessment that the staff group, as a whole, has a strong commitment to improving the services provided by the Department. There is also a strong belief that the Department can perform as well as any other council in Scotland when it comes to providing a service. This comparative information was asked in a question under the key performance results criterion. Most staff responded positively when asked to grade the statement *"we are achieving results as good as others (council's) over time.*

The Social Work Department will use the information from the self-assessment and the case study to identify areas for improvement. A wide a range of staff will then be asked to contribute their views and ideas on how to achieve these necessary improvements and to help define a set of actions to be taken within specified timescales.

The issues which will be addressed are likely to include:

- communicating performance results and targets to front line staff;
- ensuring staff have access to the training required to fulfil the requirements of their job;
- developing managers as leaders and improvers;
- incorporating the recent staff survey results into future planning;
- being more aware of customer needs and using this knowledge to improve services.

Details of intended actions, with timescales, will be incorporated into the review of the Departmental Service Plan, which will be undertaken in the months following the end of the financial year. This plan will concentrate on an achievable number of indicators of improvement.

Conclusion

This EFQM self-assessment has been an important step forward in terms of organisational development in the Social Work Department. It has 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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Director of Social Work

Date 11 March 2005

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.