

**BEST VALUE REVIEW OF HOMELESSNESS SERVICES
SERVICE USER QUESTIONNAIRE**

REPORT TO: Best Value Sub Committee

REPORT ON: Best Value Review of Dundee City Council's Homeless Service

REPORT BY: Chief Executive

REPORT NO: 609-2001

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report is the result of a Best Value Review into the Homeless Service provided by the Housing Department as part of the Council's Best Value Review process.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Sub Committee:

- 2.1. Agrees the outcome of this review as contained in this report.
- 2.2. Agrees the Director of Housing's proposals for continuous improvement outlined in Section 13.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. This review accounts for 1.3% of the Department's Revenue Budget at a budget cost examined of £430,150 reviewed.
- 3.2. There are no financial implications arising from the continuous improvement proposals outlined in Section 13.

4. LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

The provision of an effective and efficient Homeless Service is consistent with a number of Dundee 21 themes, including access to food, water, shelter and fuel at a reasonable cost. Protection of health and access to the skills, knowledge and information needed to enable everyone to play a full part in society.

5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

Provision of an effective and efficient Homeless Service ensures equality of access to safe supported accommodation for vulnerable clients who are in need of the services on offer.

6. DEFINITION OF SERVICE

- 6.1. Based at the Lily Walker Centre, the Homeless Services Unit administers the City Council's statutory obligations towards homeless persons arising from Part II of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, The Children (Scotland) Act 1995, and other related legislation.

BEST VALUE REVIEW OF HOMELESSNESS SERVICES SERVICE USER QUESTIONNAIRE

- 6.2. The principal legislative duties towards homeless persons consist of the provision of immediate temporary accommodation to homeless persons in priority need, investigation and assessment of applications against statutory criteria, provision of advice and assistance to non priority applicants, provision of permanent accommodation, advice and assistance as required, in accordance with the determination of an application and protection of the property of homeless persons accommodated by the authority.
- 6.3. Related work, in line with best practice guidance, covers, assistance to clients with a range of social, emotional and economic needs through advice, counselling and referral to a range of agencies who can provide practical and emotional support.
- 6.4. The Homeless Services Unit operates a 24-hour, all year round service and is geared to accept homelessness presentations at any time of day or night. To fulfil its primary duty, that of providing immediate temporary accommodation, the Homeless Service operates a range of temporary accommodation, designed to cater for most types of client group.
- 6.5. Temporary accommodation comprises:
- i. Lily Walker Centre: 16 single rooms; 5 self contained flats

The Centre operates as a one door advice, information and accommodation service, receiving initial presentations on a 24-hour basis. Accommodation and assessment staff are based at the Centre and DCC mainstream furnished tenancy services also operates from the Lily Walker Centre.
 - ii. Supported Accommodation Unit: 10 self contained flats

The Supported Accommodation Unit offers long stay temporary accommodation to those who would benefit from a period of support prior to taking up mainstream tenancies. The Unit has 24-hour staffing and offers a key working service.
 - iii. Dispersed Furnished Accommodation: 60 fully furnished flats

Dispersed flats are used as move-on accommodation from the Lily Walker Centre for families awaiting mainstream housing. The flats are semi supported in that two workers provide a visiting service which maintains the link between the client and the assessment and rehousing process. Dispersed flats are primarily used to accommodate families.
 - iv. Bed and Breakfast: Used on demand

B&B is primarily used to accommodate the growing number of single homeless persons the authority has a duty to provide with temporary accommodation. B&B use is restricted to single persons and is kept to a minimum wherever possible.
- 6.6. Homeless Services Unit staffing comprises:
- 1 x Principal Homeless Services Officer
 - 1 X Supported Accommodation Officer
 - 1 x Homeless Assessment Officer
 - 2 x Homeless Persons Officers

BEST VALUE REVIEW OF HOMELESSNESS SERVICES

SERVICE USER QUESTIONNAIRE

- 1 x Housing Officer
- 13 x Assistant Housing Officers
- 3 x Assistant Housing Officers, Part-time (relief)

7. **JUSTIFICATION FOR REVIEWING THIS SERVICE**

The Homeless Services Unit has been selected for review as part of the Housing Department's ongoing commitment to subject all its services to review against best value criteria.

8. **REVIEW METHODOLOGY**

8.1. The Review Team consisted of:

- Team Leader, Personnel & Management Services
- Ian Dobson – Lead Officer, PO, Homeless Services Unit
- John Wolstencroft – PO, Policy & Plans Unit
- Nick Sinclair – A.H.O., Homeless Services Unit

8.2. The review methodology involved consultation with both internal and external customers of the service to determine satisfaction levels and critical success factors. A performance review against the critical success factors was undertaken, followed by comparison and bench marking against similar local authority homelessness services.

9. **CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS**

9.1. **Stakeholders**

The principal stakeholders in Dundee City Council's Homeless Service are:

- i. Service Users – Current and former homeless persons who have received a service.
- ii. Internal Customers – Council departments who encounter and refer homeless persons to the Homeless Services Unit. Primarily, Housing Department sections and the Social Work Department.
- iii. External Customers – Agencies who work in partnership with the Homeless Service and who make referrals to the Homeless Services Unit.
 - Dundee Women's Aid
 - Dundee Stopover
 - Shelter Housing Aid Centre
 - Dundee North Law Centre
 - Outreach and Resettlement Service
 - Single Homeless Strategy Group Members
 - Health Board
 - The Corner

9.2. Consultation with both internal and external customers and service users of the Homeless Service was carried out in order to identify the critical success factors. Full survey results are available in Appendices 1 & 2.

BEST VALUE REVIEW OF HOMELESSNESS SERVICES SERVICE USER QUESTIONNAIRE

The consultation exercise consisted of:

- i. Service Users: Former homeless persons who have received a service were surveyed to establish whether services on offer met their needs in terms of the provision of temporary accommodation, advice, assistance, support services and permanent rehousing.
- ii. Internal and External Customers: Partner agencies were surveyed to establish whether services on offer were satisfactory and whether agencies felt that the Homeless Service assisted them in carrying out their work.

9.3. Following the stakeholder surveys the critical success factors identified for Dundee City Council's Homeless Service are:

- i. Cost to the City Council on behalf of citizens/Council Tax payers, of services under review.
- ii. Effectiveness of service in meeting statutory obligations of provision of temporary and permanent accommodation to those presenting as homeless.
- iii. Quality of service provided in terms of customer and referral/partner agency satisfaction with the service provided.

10. **PERFORMANCE REVIEW**

10.1. The critical success factors identified at 9.3 were reviewed against the undernoted performance indicators:

- i. Number provided with temporary accommodation (1998/99, 1999/2000).
- ii. Time taken to assess case and reach decision (1998/99, 1999/2000).
- iii. Number offered permanent accommodation (1998/99, 1999/2000).
- iv. Number accepting permanent accommodation (1998/99, 1999/2000).
- v. Cost per applicant of providing the service (1998/99, 1999/2000).
- vi. Number re-presenting as homeless within twelve months of original application (1998/99, 1999/2000).

10.2. Housing Department records were analysed to obtain the undernoted performance information:

	1998/99	1999/2000
Number of applications	1029	1049
Number provided with temporary accommodation	575	578
Time taken to assess case	14 days	14 days
Number offered permanent accommodation	316	270
Number accepting permanent accommodation	236	212

BEST VALUE REVIEW OF HOMELESSNESS SERVICES SERVICE USER QUESTIONNAIRE

Number representing within twelve months	127	148
Cost per applicant (Budgeted expenditure minus rental income)	£218.56	£205.44

- 10.3. The performance information, when analysed, demonstrates the vital service provided to homeless persons in Dundee over the two year period 1998-2000. Homelessness is a major social problem and can occur for a variety of reasons ranging from violent and non-violent relationship breakdown, ejection by friends or relatives, loss of accommodation due to debt problems or behavioural difficulties to homelessness as a result of fire, flood or other disaster.
- 10.4. As described in 6.5 the Homeless Service operates a range of both supported and semi supported temporary accommodation designed to cater for most client groups to which the City Council has statutory duties under the homelessness legislation. Of the 2078 presentations over the two year period analysed, 1153 families and single persons were provided with immediate furnished temporary accommodation thereby resolving their crisis situation.
- 10.5. Assessment of applications, in terms of statutory criteria, was completed, on average, within 14 days against a performance target of 20 working days. Of the 870 applicants who met all qualifying legislative conditions 586 were offered permanent accommodation with 448 accepting permanent offers of DCC housing. In addition to those accepting offers of Council housing a significant additional number of applicants were assisted with rehousing to other tenures, principally Housing Associations and the private sector.
- 10.6. Although the numbers permanently rehoused in City Council stock may appear low compared to the total number of homeless applicants this should not be regarded as poor performance. The Homeless Service has a variety of statutory obligations other than simply providing permanent rehousing. A significant number of applicants (222) did not meet the qualifying criteria for permanent rehousing in that they are regarded as being non priority. Nevertheless, these persons are still homeless and a statutory duty to provide advice and assistance to obtain accommodation remains with the City Council. The majority of applicants in this category who present are single males and are perhaps the most problematic of homeless client groups in that they often have chaotic lifestyles, substance abuse difficulties and borderline mental health problems. Much of the work of officers of the Homeless Services Unit is spent in liaising with voluntary sector providers to obtain accommodation, referrals to support agencies and provision of advice and information to non priority applicants in order to discharge the City Council's obligations.
- 10.7. Sadly a high proportion of homeless applicants (484) are eventually categorised as lost contact. This group of applicants tends to be, in the main, females who have fled from violent or difficult relationships and have approached the Homeless Service for assistance. Although services are provided in terms of temporary accommodation, support, advice, referral to specialist agencies and assessment many drift back to the violent or difficult relationships they had originally escaped from. The Homeless Service is often seen as a respite service in these circumstances both by applicants themselves and significantly by advice and referral agencies such as Shelter Scotland, Social Work Department or Dundee Women's Aid. This pattern of abuse followed by return is reflected

BEST VALUE REVIEW OF HOMELESSNESS SERVICES SERVICE USER QUESTIONNAIRE

in the statistics for repeat applications whereby in 1998/99 12.3% of all presentations were from applicants who had previously made a homeless applications within 12 months. The figure for 1999/2000 was 14.1%.

- 10.8. The performance review has identified that of 586 applicants who were offered permanent housing only 448 actually took up the offer. A number of applicants fall into the category described in 10.7 but experience suggests that the majority of the 138 who refused offers did so because of the quality of housing available to homeless applicants and therefore they made other arrangements either outwith the Council sector or by moving into short term accommodation. The quality, availability and areas of choice on offer to homeless applicants is beyond the control of the Homeless Service and is governed by the priority awarded to statutory homeless applicants through the City Council's House Letting Regulations.
- 10.9. In addition to the performance information obtained the customer and partner agency surveys demonstrate satisfaction with the service being provided and further evidence the achievement of the critical successful factors.

I. Service Users Survey

To gauge homeless people's satisfaction with the Homeless Service a survey of people who had been rehoused by the service during 1998/99 was undertaken. This postal questionnaire survey was issued to a sample of 169 service users and a total of 28 returns was achieved which is equal to a response rate of 16.6%.

Household Information

The majority of respondents were aged 26-45 (61%), 56% were single and 36% were single parents. The majority described themselves as white/British, two respondents said they were European.

Accessibility of the Homeless Service

86% of respondents said it was easy to get in touch with the homeless service and the majority (75%) went direct to the service as opposed to being referred by another agency. 4% said they were unaware of the service or had difficulty in getting contact.

Temporary Accommodation

Of those who took up an offer of temporary accommodation 41% used the Lily Walker Centre and 47% had been in a network flat, 12% had used accommodation provided by the voluntary sector. The accommodation was comfortable according to 79% of respondents; 86% found accommodation to be clean and tidy. Of the minority who were dissatisfied with temporary accommodation reasons quoted included children being left unsupervised and the location of dispersed accommodation.

Homelessness Assessment

All respondents said that the requirement for a homelessness assessment was explained to them. Of those who responded, 96% were satisfied with the privacy of their assessment interviews, 93% were satisfied with the information they received

BEST VALUE REVIEW OF HOMELESSNESS SERVICES SERVICE USER QUESTIONNAIRE

and were happy that they had the opportunity to fully explain their circumstances. Negative comments received referred to the unfairness of only having one offer of accommodation. In the main comments were positive and reflected well upon staff.

The outcome of the assessment was communicated to 86% of respondents within four weeks and 89% were found to be priority homeless. 10% said they were unhappy with the decision and 7% said they were unaware of the outcome of their assessment.

Considering the information given on options for rehousing, 79% said they were informed how to apply for Council housing, 35% were informed about options in the Housing Association sector and 21% received information on the private rented sector. 25% were given information on direct access hostel accommodation.

Only 50% of respondents said they were given leaflets or other written advice, however all of those who did receive leaflets/written information said this was useful.

54% of respondents said they received additional advice on health, debt, social work services, legal services or benefits. Only 36% received advice on benefits and 7% on debt. As rent arrears and debt are among the major reasons for homelessness and are concerns for social exclusion, the provision of improved advice services in these

areas should be considered. This is particularly the case given the requirement to provide enhanced advice services to homeless persons which is contained in the forthcoming housing bill.

Rehousing

All respondents were rehoused by the Council, 22% were rehoused within a month, 30% in 1-3 months and 53% took more than 3 months.

The type of house and area that the house was located in met the requirements of 81% of respondents with 89% saying the house was large enough for their requirements. Some respondents commented that they did not have much choice of housing and had to take flats or houses in areas where they did not feel secure, e.g. multi-storey flats.

General

Considering the homeless service as a whole, 93% of respondents said that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the service provided.

II. **Partner Agency Survey**

Partner agencies were surveyed to establish whether services on offer were satisfactory and whether agencies felt that the Homeless Service assisted them in carrying out their work. 28 forms were issued with a total of 15 responses being received; this represents a return rate of 53%.

Accessibility of Service

All of the survey respondents said that it was easy to contact the Lily Walker Centre, however 4 (26%) said that they did not know how to contact the Centre out of office

BEST VALUE REVIEW OF HOMELESSNESS SERVICES

SERVICE USER QUESTIONNAIRE

hours. The Homeless Service offers a 24 hour service and it may be that some agencies are unaware of this.

Quality of Service

All respondents described Homeless Service staff as helpful, polite and knowledgeable when recalling client referrals.

Three of the agencies who responded said that relevant advice upon other housing options was not given where the referral to the Homeless Service was not accepted. This in part reflects the results of the service user survey.

Considering advice on other, non-housing, services, 6 (21%) said that staff did not provide any advice. This raises the question of whether this advice would have been appropriate at that time and in that situation. This does however reflect the results of the service user survey where nearly half of respondents said that they received no additional advice. It is noted that 91% of respondents said that they were happy with the outcome of referrals made to the Homeless Service.

Liaison

Agencies were questioned on the effectiveness of liaison arrangements with the Homeless Service. Six of 14 respondents said they had regular liaison meetings. Eight respondents said they would like to have more liaison with the Homeless Service.

General

92% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the way they or their clients were dealt with.

The one respondent who said they were ambivalent asked for a more co-ordinated approach from the Housing Department and more creative solutions for the problem of homelessness.

11. **RESULTS OF COMPARISONS**

- 11.1. A benchmarking exercise was carried out to compare Dundee's Homeless Service to that of other local authorities. Due to the nature of homelessness in different areas and the services on offer it was difficult to find other homelessness services which could be compared on a truly like to like basis. In total four separate local authorities were approached with three supplying useable information.

For reasons of confidentiality those local authorities from which information has been received are identified as local authorities "A", "B" and "C". Details are contained in the audit file.

- 11.2. The aim of the benchmarking exercise was to compare Dundee City Council's Homeless Service with other local authority services in terms of cost and quality, the undernoted results were obtained:

	DUNDEE	A	B	C
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BEST VALUE REVIEW OF HOMELESSNESS SERVICES SERVICE USER QUESTIONNAIRE

Number of presentations 1998-2000	2078	8461	1355	3462
% of homeless presentations against total households	2.9%	4.2%	2.2%	No info.
% of presentations provided with temporary accommodation	55%	39%	23%	16%
Average time taken to assess applications	14 days	3 days	No info.	11 days
% of applications assessed within target (28 days)	77%	93%	No info.	82%
% of Council house lets to statutory homeless households	9%	41%	23%	12%
% of applicants re-presenting within twelve months	13%	17%	No info.	No info.
Cost per application of providing service – total budgeted expenditure	£942	£577	£636	£496
Real cost per applicant – expenditure minus income	£212	No info.	No info.	No info.

11.3. As can be seen from the above table only limited comparable data was obtained. Dundee's Homeless Service appears to cost significantly more per applicant than other Council's although information on the real cost per applicant was unavailable.

11.4. Only Council's A and B provided service descriptions and from these it can be seen that different authorities operate homeless services in a different manner which has a direct bearing on the cost per applicant. Dundee City Council's homeless service is a stand-alone service dealing with all aspects of the City Council's statutory obligations towards homeless persons, other than the allocation of permanent housing.

Council's A and B, in addition to their homelessness staff, used area housing office staff to carry out functions such as assessment of homelessness applications, management and maintenance of temporary accommodation and administrative functions. The cost of these additional functions are contained within area housing management budgets and are not directly attributed to homelessness costs.

11.5. Unlike Council's A and B, Dundee City Council operates a one-stop advice, information and accommodation service through the Lily Walker Centre. The Lily Walker Centre provides a far more responsive service to homeless persons in that it operates on a twenty four hour basis and can provide immediate temporary accommodation for any person presenting without the need for referral to other accommodation units. Council's A and B operate homeless services within office hours and direct applicants to accommodation which may be located some distance from the central office at which they have presented. Similarly the emphasis in Dundee is on supported temporary

BEST VALUE REVIEW OF HOMELESSNESS SERVICES SERVICE USER QUESTIONNAIRE

accommodation. In addition to twenty four hour staffing at the Lily Walker Centre and floating support to the network of dispersed furnished accommodation, Dundee City Council operates a twenty four hour staffed supported accommodation unit. This unit provides long stay temporary accommodation to persons who require support and assistance with a range of difficulties which may prevent them successfully maintaining mainstream housing. From the limited information obtained in the service descriptions neither Council's A or B operated the same level of supported accommodation and consequently did not incur the staffing costs necessary to provide this level of service.

- 11.6. Dundee also appears to operate a more liberal policy towards the provision of temporary accommodation. 55% of all homeless applicants in Dundee were provided with fully furnished temporary accommodation as opposed to 16% by Council C. No information is available on the detailed reasons for the difference in numbers accessing temporary accommodation across the four Councils studied but it would appear that the quality of provision, ease of access and less restrictive policy in operation in Dundee are significant factors in the use of temporary accommodation. Dundee's Homeless Service adheres strictly to guidance contained within the Code of Guidance Scotland and will therefore provide temporary accommodation to any applicant who presents a prima facie case that they require it. Greater numbers of people using temporary accommodation has a significant cost implication in terms of replacement and refurbishment costs.
- 11.7. Council A appeared to perform better than Dundee in the assessment of homelessness applications with an average assessment time of 3 days as opposed to Dundee's 14 days. Whilst no explanation of this was forthcoming in the benchmarking information received, follow up discussion with officers from Council A suggested that a low level of investigation of applications was undertaken and that the majority were accepted on the information received at initial interview. Dundee's Homeless Persons Officers undertake a full assessment of applicants' circumstances both in terms of statutory criteria and personal and social circumstances. In addition to homelessness assessments officers in Dundee are also required to carry out vetting of applicants in accordance with Housing Department vetting policies. The full assessment of applicants' circumstances, whilst time consuming and costly, reaps benefits in that the assessment process often identifies support needs which can be addressed thereby assisting applicants to maintain tenancies and prevent repeat homelessness. The success of this approach is reflected in Dundee having the lowest level of repeat presentations of the four authorities.
- 11.8. Where Dundee does perform significantly worse than the other authorities surveyed is in the percentage of lets going to statutory homeless households. Council A allocated 41% of all Council house lets to homeless persons as opposed to Dundee with only 9%. As discussed at 10.8 and in the service users survey a number of homeless applicants found alternative accommodation in other housing sectors or with short term accommodation solutions due to quality, location and house type on offer to them.

However the significant difference in service delivery between Dundee and Council A is that Council A's homeless service actually allocates housing to homeless persons as opposed to Dundee where this function is carried out by area based lettings staff. The ability to allocate housing means that Council A's service can be more responsive to the needs of homeless persons and can obtain permanent accommodation far more quickly. Dundee City Council's allocation policy often means homeless applicants are only awarded priority to access medium demand property, consequently homeless persons who require particular areas or house types, due to support needs or medical requirements, spend far longer in temporary accommodation and often drift away to other tenures or housing solutions. The priority awarded to homeless persons and the resultant time taken to access housing has cost implications for this authority through the extended use of temporary accommodation. The priority issue also affects the ability to deliver the

BEST VALUE REVIEW OF HOMELESSNESS SERVICES SERVICE USER QUESTIONNAIRE

homeless service due to problems caused by logjams in temporary accommodation affecting the throughput of applicants.

- 11.9. In general terms the comparative data obtained would suggest that Dundee's Homeless Service is delivered in a more holistic and sensitive manner than those of the other authorities studied, reflecting a greater emphasis on quality of service. Dundee would appear to have higher costs per applicant although it should be noted that each of the three other Council's service costs rose over the two years compared whereas Dundee's costs fell. Given the shortage of information received it may be worth carrying out a more in-depth comparison to identify any areas of good practice from other authorities which may result in cost savings.

12. **OPTION APPRAISAL**

- 12.1. Following the performance review, customer surveys and comparisons carried out, the following options were considered:

- i. Seek alternative provider for service delivery.
- ii. Continue to provide the service in-house.

- 12.2. Although there are a number of voluntary organisations, providing accommodation and support to homeless persons, operating in Dundee, no single agency is equipped to provide the level of statutory services which Dundee City Council is obliged to provide. In particular there are no alternative providers who can supply assessment and accommodation services to families who are homeless as alternative providers simply cater for single homeless persons in the City. For this reason option (i) was discounted.

- 12.3. Given the statutory requirements imposed on the Homeless Service, allied to the achievement of the critical success factors, as evidenced by the high levels of customer and partner agency satisfaction, it is felt that continued provision of the service in-house represents best value to the City Council and should be the recommended option.

13. **CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PROPOSALS**

- 13.1. The undernoted continuous improvement proposals have no cost implications. It is proposed that all service improvements are carried out within financial year 2001 – 2002.

- 13.2. The review identified different practices and methods of service delivery amongst the four Council's studied which appear to influence the final cost per applicant of providing the service. It is proposed that a detailed comparison is undertaken between ourselves and Council A with a view to identifying any areas of good practice which can be adopted and which would result in cost savings. It is proposed that a report to Housing Committee on the outcome of the comparison will be made by June 2002, however this is dependent on the willingness of Council A to engage in this process.

- 13.3. The service user survey identified several areas for continuous improvement, including:

- i. The service should ensure that homeless people know how to contact them by ensuring that printed media are widely distributed and up to date. This will be achieved by revising the service information leaflet: Homelessness Your Rights by October 2001 and thereafter ensuring distribution to all City Council public information points.
- ii. Staff must ensure that information on state benefits debt and other housing options are up to date and freely available to all applicants. This will be achieved by revising

BEST VALUE REVIEW OF HOMELESSNESS SERVICES SERVICE USER QUESTIONNAIRE

the service information booklet: Homeless In Dundee, Your Key To Accommodation, by October 2001.

- iii. The service manager should check and ensure that the communication of the outcome of homelessness assessments are as clear as possible. This will be achieved by August 2001.
- 13.4. Although outwith the scope of this review many comments received from service users complained of the inappropriateness of rehousing offered. Particular complaints centred on time taken to rehouse and the quality of the house offered. It is proposed that the Housing Convener's Working Group on House Letting Service should consider the relative priority given to homeless persons and the time taken to rehouse this group as this has obvious knock-on effects upon the time spent in temporary accommodation and consequent costs of providing the service. A report examining the issues and making recommendations on service improvements will be presented to Housing Division Management Team by April 2002.
- 13.5. The partner agency survey also identified areas for continuous improvement, these included:
- i. Ensuring that referring agencies are aware of the services on offer and in particular the hours of operation. As per 13.3.
 - ii. Given that eight referring agencies requested more liaison with the Homeless Service it is proposed that a further survey is undertaken to gauge the type and frequency of liaison arrangements with individual agencies. The survey will be completed by December 2001.
 - iii. One agency reported that young people feel that housing/homelessness networks in Dundee can be complex and confusing and that young people are interested in developing awareness raising of what is on offer in the City. It is proposed that this issue is remitted to the Youth Housing Strategy Working Group to carry out consultation with young people on service improvements. This item will be progressed through the Youth Housing Strategy action plan. The action plan is due to be reported to Housing Committee in December 2001.
 - iv. One agency highlighted the difficulty of finding appropriate accommodation for clients with mental health problems. It is proposed that the operation of the Special Needs Committee is examined and the outcome of research into Hospital Discharge of people vulnerable to homelessness (due to report July 2001) are considered by Housing, Social Work and Health Services. This item will be discussed by the Joint Community Care Executive Group in September 2001.
- 13.6. Throughout the review the importance of quality advice in both preventing and resolving homelessness was highlighted. It is proposed that a comprehensive training programme is developed to enable staff to be in a position to carry out their obligations to provide advice and assistance in an effective manner.

This service improvement should be tied in to the requirements of the forthcoming Housing Bill which will impose a duty on local authorities to provide enhanced housing advice. The detail of the level of advice to be available is awaited through secondary legislation.

**BEST VALUE REVIEW OF HOMELESSNESS SERVICES
SERVICE USER QUESTIONNAIRE**

14. **CONSULTATION**

The Director of Housing has been consulted on this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Best Value Submission to the Secretary of State for Scotland 1997. Policy & Resources Committee – 11th December 1997.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

DATE _____

Appendices:

- i Service User Survey Results
- ii Partner Agency Survey Results

BEST VALUE REVIEW OF HOMELESSNESS SERVICES SERVICE USER QUESTIONNAIRE

Appendix I

PART A ABOUT YOU

Q1

What age were you when you applied as homeless?					
16-18	19-25	26-45	46-60	Over 60	TOTAL
1	8	17	2		28
3.57%	28.57%	60.71%	7.15%		100%

Q2

Are you:		
Male	Female	No resp
2	26	
7.14%	92.86%	

Q3

When you applied, did you apply as:				
Single	Couple	Couple/Child	Single/Child	No resp
16		1	10	1
57.14%		3.57%	35.71%	3.57%

Q4

Please tick the box which best describes your ethnic origin (tick as many as apply)					
White	Black	British	Asian	European	African
24		1		2	
85.71%		3.57%		7.14%	
Chinese	Pakistani	Indian	African/Carib	Other	Unknown
					1
					3.57%

PART B
ABOUT THE WAY YOU FIRST GOT IN TOUCH WITH THE HOMELESS SERVICE.

Q5

When you became homeless or knew that you were going to become homeless, was it easy to get in touch with someone from the Homeless Service?		
Yes	No	No resp
24	4	
85.71%	14.29%	

Q6

If you answered No to Question 5, can you say why you found it difficult to get in touch with the Homeless Service.	
	Total No Resp
2 didn't know of service	4
1 didn't know where to go first	
1 had unanswered phones/letters	14.28%

Q7

How did you contact the Homeless Service?		
Telephoned or went to the Lily Walker Centre	21	75%
A Housing Officer advised me to contact the Lily Walker Centre	3	10.71%
A Social Worker advised me to contact the Lily Walker Centre	1	3.57%
Women's Aid advised me to contact the Lily Walker Centre		
Shelter Housing Aid Centre advised me to contact the Lily Walker Centre	1	3.57%
No response	2	7.14%

Q8

Thinking about when you first contacted the Homeless Service, tick the boxes which best describe how they treated you		
Very helpful	20	71.43%
Helpful	5	17.86%
Neither/Nor		
Unhelpful	2	7.14%
Very unhelpful	1	3.57%
No response		

Very caring	11	39.29%
Caring	13	46.43%
Neither/Nor		
Uncaring	1	3.57%
Very uncaring	1	3.57%
No response	2	7.14%

Very polite	15	53.57%
Polite	8	28.57%
Neither/Nor		
Impolite	1	3.57%
Very impolite	1	3.57%
No response	3	10.71%

Q9

Thinking about how you answered Q8, can you say why you answered in the way you did			
19 Positive	2 Negative	2 Average	5 No comment
67.86%	7.14%	7.14%	17.86%

QUOTES

• Because the person that I saw made me feel important when I was homeless
• They were very understanding of my situation and to the needs of myself and my children.
• Because they simply were polite
• We were treated with contempt and disrespect and when we were eventually offered housing some of our personal effects were either lost or stolen as if being in the position were, wasn't bad enough without dealing with that.
• At the time I was heavily pregnant and had recently separated from my partner. Everyone I had contact with then and since have been sympathetic and reassured me. They kept in constant touch with me to let me know what was going on and everything was sorted out very quickly.
• Because they were very helpful, caring and polite.
• The Homeless Officer visited me in hospital and went over what sort of care facilities I would need. He was very helpful and caring. He made me feel reassured that I would have somewhere to go when I left hospital.
• Because I thought the man that we saw was very nice and helpful and tried to help the best he can.
• I have answered in this way because, when I phoned L.W. Centre I was given an appointment with a Homeless Officer the same day, who was extremely helpful. She did not make promises she could not keep. Also she took the time to explain anything and everything about the situation.
• Gave me help and advice that I needed.
• They were very helpful by giving me all the information that I needed to know. They were very caring because they treated me as a person and not a number and I found them to be very polite. If it wasn't for the help and care at the Lily Walker Centre I don't know what I would have done or where I would have gone.
• Just told me all the things I would have to do and sorted everything for me.
• When I first went to see X he told me I would not get in the Lily Walker at that time. I had got a letter from my doctor to prove I was ill as I said, then I got in, but I had a very upsetting time on my first visit, when they saw the letter they were more helpful.
• I was put in a furnished house the next day after I phoned. The man I spoke to about my situation was very caring as I was threatened by my ex landlord and when he phoned he heard the same and I was told by him I had to go into homeless as my landlord put my son and myself in danger. I just felt they cared about you as a human being.
• Because they helped find somewhere for me and my daughter to stay.
• I saw different people. The average was good and efficient. On the caring front, one individual stands out. The others were more detached.
• They never did their best for my needs and were very uncaring when they said that they couldn't help me when I had no place to go.
• Gave me information on housing.
• I answered this because they were really helpful and it didn't take very long for me to get a house.
• I knew the staff would have to help me in any way they can, but I didn't think they would have treated myself and my 5-year old son as well as they did. They made us feel really welcome and at home, even though we were homeless. The staff were really nice and I can honestly say that our stay in the Lily Walker Centre was a very nice place to live, especially as we had nowhere else to stay. Myself and my son were happy when we stayed there.

PART C

THIS PART OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE IS ABOUT THE TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION WHICH THE HOMELESS SERVICE MAY HAVE PROVIDED.

Q10

Were you offered temporary accommodation?		
YES (Go to Q11)	NO (Go to Q15)	No Resp
20	8	0

71.43%	28.57%	0%
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Q11

Did you take up an offer of temporary accommodation?		
YES (Go to Q12)	NO (Go to Q15)	No Resp
14	6	0
70.00%	30.00%	0%

Q12

What type of temporary accommodation did you use? (Please tick as many as apply)		
Lily Walker Centre	7	25%
Women/s Aid		
Honeygreen		
Network Flat	8	28.57%
Stopover	1	3.57%
Bed & Breakfast		
Clement Park House	1	3.57%
No Response	13	46.43%

Q13

When you were first given your temporary accommodation, was it?		
Very comfortable	3	21.43%
Comfortable	8	57.14%
Neither/nor		
Uncomfortable	2	14.29%
Very uncomfortable	1	7.14%
No response		

Very clean	7	50%
Clean	5	35.71%
Neither/nor	1	7.14%
Dirty		
Very dirty		
No response	2	14.29%

Very tidy	7	50%
Tidy	5	35.71%
Neither/nor	1	7.14%
Untidy		
Very untidy		
No response	2	14.29%

Q14

Do you have any general comments on the accommodation you used?		
4 Positive	3 Negative	7 No comment
26.66%	20.00%	47%

COMMENTS

• The Lily Walker Centre was okay. Staff were helpful. But they should keep the children under more control. They ran about until about 11pm at night.
• Yes, it was very clean and tidy and it felt safe.
• We were really happy with our stay in the network flat.
• Just that it was somewhere that felt like home for me and my kids to feel at home together.

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A 2-bedroom flat for a family of five is pretty self explanatory. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flat was furnished and clean. Only flaw was 12 up in multi. |

PART D

THIS PART OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE IS ABOUT HOW YOUR HOMELESS APPLICATION WAS ASSESSED AND THE DECISION UPON WHETHER YOU QUALIFIED AS BEING HOMELESS.

Q15

Did the Homelessness Officer explain that they would have to do an assessment of your homeless application to find out if you qualified?		
Yes	No	No resp
28	0	0
100%		

Q16

Please describe your homelessness interview(s) by ticking the boxes which best describe how you felt:

A

Were you satisfied with privacy/confidentiality?		
Very satisfied	13	46.43%
Satisfied	14	50%
Neither/Nor		
Unsatisfied		
Very unsatisfied	1	3.57%
No response		

B

Were you happy with the information you were given?		
Very satisfied	11	39.29%
Satisfied	15	53.57%
Neither/Nor		
Unsatisfied		
Very unsatisfied	1	3.57%
No response	1	3.57%

C

Were you happy that you had the chance to fully explain your circumstances?		
Very satisfied	13	46.43%
Satisfied	13	46.43%
Neither/Nor		
Unsatisfied		
Very unsatisfied	1	3.57%
No response	1	3.57%

Q17

Thinking about your homelessness assessment interview, can you briefly tell us about what you thought was good or bad about it?			
Positive	Negative	Neither	No response
16	2	2	8
57.14%	7.14%	7.14%	28.57%

COMMENTS

• It was good because I was given advice on housing and legal help.
• I was very happy with the way my case was handled and I don't have anything bad to say.
• I was told I would have to wait a few weeks. I was given all the information that was available. The lady I spoke to suggested a furnished flat as I might get one more quickly. She sorted it all out for me. I have no bad comments about the way I was dealt with.
• Good one-to-one interview.
• Nothing was bad about it.
• Was told I had to pay £60 a week for temporary accommodation. I had to wait 4 months to get an offer and could not refuse as you only get one offer (very unfair).
• They were clear about what could be offered and about waiting times. Didn't build up fake hopes.
• The interview was understanding and was as helpful as possible.
• The only bad thing was I had to take the first offer which was a multi which I had stated for about 8-9 years I didn't want a multi, as I am scared of heights, and my son couldn't go out. I had to give up my pets to my family until I get out of the multi. I was told a few months ago I have to wait five years.
• I found the interview was quick and informative. I understood everything and what was expected of me in temporary accommodation. I didn't find anything bad.
• I can't remember but I think it was good.
• The people were very understanding.
• I don't have any bad points about it. I thought I was treated with the highest respect for myself and the situation I was in. Also with compassion.
• It was not bad. The second time I went back in the letter they apologised for the way I was interviewed at first.
• I thought it was good because it was private. They took you in a room away from everybody else.
• I had no problems with our interview at all. I was happy with the way everything went.
• I thought it was very good because on that day the man that I got was a great help and I was also told that I would get a network flat but couldn't tell me where it was because someone was still living there which I respected.
• There isn't enough paper in the world to tell you everything that was bad. The only good thing is?
• Told to press for quick references to speed up waiting time.
• They were very nice and it was over quite quickly.

Q18

How long after your first interview with a homelessness officer was it before you were told of the decision on your application?		
Up to 2 weeks	15	53.57%
Between 2 and 4 weeks	9	32.14%
Between 4 and 6 weeks	2	7.14%
More than 6 weeks	1	3.57%
No response	1	3.57%

Q19

What was the decision on your homeless application?		
Priority Homeless	25	89.29%
Non Priority Homeless	1	3.57%
Intentionally Homeless		
Not Homeless		
Don't Know	2	7.14%
No Response		

Q20

If you were unhappy with the decision, please state briefly why:	
Unhappy	No Response
3	25
10.71%	89.29%

COMMENTS

• To have to wait four months when priority homeless is ridiculous.
• AT first I was unhappy. The second day when they knew I was unwell they were very helpful.
• We were in a network flat for over 6 months in cramped conditions.

Q21: WERE YOU GIVEN ANY ADVICE ON THE FOLLOWING?

A

How to apply for Council housing		
Yes	No	No Response
22	4	2
78.57%	14.29%	7.14%

B

How to apply to a Housing Association		
Yes	No	No Response
10	7	11
35.71%	25%	39.29%

C

How to get privately rented accommodation		
Yes	No	No Response
6	11	11
21.43%	39.29%	39.29%

D

Direct access hostel accommodation		
Yes	No	No Response
7	10	11
25%	35.71%	39.29%

Q22

Did you receive any additional advice? (Please tick as many as apply)		
Health	3	10.71%
Debt	2	7.14%
Social Work Services	3	10.71%
Legal Services	5	17.86%
Benefits	10	35.71%
Other		
No Response	13	46.43%

Q23

Were you given any leaflets or other written advice?		
Yes	No	No Response
14	13	1
50%	46.43%	3.57%

Q24

Please tick the box which best describes how useful you found the information you were given		
Very useful	6	21.43%
Useful	8	28.57%
Neither/Nor		
Not useful		
No Response	14	50%

PART E: ABOUT HOW YOU WERE REHOUSED

Q25

Following your application, were you rehoused?		
Yes	No	No Response
274		1
96.43%		3.57%

Q26

What type of housing did you get?		
Council housing	27	100%
Housing Association	13	1
Private Rented		

Q27

How long was it between the time that you were notified that you would be rehoused and the time that you were offered a house?		
Up to one month	6	22.22%
1-3 months	7	30%
Over 3 months	14	52%
No Response		

Q28

YOU WILL HAVE DISCUSSED YOUR HOUSING REQUIREMENTS WITH A HOMELESSNESS OFFICER. WAS THE HOUSE:

A

In the area you needed		
Yes	No	No Response
22	5	
81.48%	18.52%	

B

The type you needed (e.g. flat/maisonette/multi)		
Yes	No	No Response
22	5	
88.89%	18.42%	

C

The right size for you/your family		
Yes	No	No Response
24	45	
88.89%	14.81%	

Q29

THINKING ABOUT HOW YOU ANSWERED Q28, CAN YOU SAY WHY YOU ANSWERED IN THIS WAY?

COMMENTS

• I was offered housing that was in an unsuitable area and too small
• I got in Menzieshill where I stayed for 8 years in a bedsit with my son. I put in for a bigger flat in 1994 and stated then no multi as my fear of heights and my pets. I had to go private to get a bigger flat for my son and myself. Now with being in a multi I suffer from depression and am on medication.
• I need a flat that was easy access and easy for me to look after. The multi flat is a great and was nicely decorated when I got it.
• I needed a 4-apartment as I have a son (9 years) and a daughter (3 years) but was given a 3-apt. flat which is a bit small.
• I could not have got a better flat if I had tried myself.
• In my housing application I specifically asked for the area that I am staying and they met my needs.
• No specific area required.
• The house I applied for when I was homeless was a multi storey (Alexander Street, Hilltown, preferably high up). My house is in Maxwelltown Tower and I am at the very top, 21a, so I can't get any better than that.
• Because I got the area and the type of house and the size of house I asked for.
• We approached it from a practical view of what I was most easily going to get quickly and a house that I would be able to settle into.
• Because the house I am now in is ideal for me.
• I got a place in the area that was my first choice, didn't want multi storey which I didn't get and needed 2 bedrooms, which I have.
• I answered this way because I got exactly what I asked for.
• It was in the area for my work and fitted my requirements.
• It was just what I wanted and where I wanted.
• I didn't really put down the area I was offered but had to accept because of housing shortages.
• House would have been better for my 4-year old to get out to play.
• Because I applied for Kirkton and got St. Marys.
• I was put in an area I didn't want and the house was too small, because my daughter was with me as well, but they said she wouldn't count as she didn't move into the homeless with me.
• Because I was near my family.
• Was told I could only be offered housing in areas that nobody else wanted. Never having lived in a scheme before this was very scary and still is.
• I like the house and area but it's big for one person and with my bad health there is too many stairs.

Q30

Thinking about how you were treated by the Homeless Service as a whole, how satisfied were you?		
Very Satisfied	15	53.57%
Satisfied	11	39.29%
Neither/Nor		
Unsatisfied	1	3.57%
Very Unsatisfied	1	3.57%
No Response		

Q31

HOW DO YOU THINK THAT WE COULD IMPROVE OUR HOMELESS SERVICE?**COMMENTS**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I was refused a loan from the DSS so I could not move into the house. I was told to stay until a decision was made. X told me I could stay at the Lily Walker Centre but he did not tell me that I would end up with £400 rent arrears. I'm not the first person this has happened to. I know of other people this has happened to. Now I have court proceedings against me and I really don't think it's fair. Apart from that the Lily Walker Centre is a good place to stay until you are rehoused.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be more understanding to the needs of the customer and not put people who have never lived in a scheme in with people who deal drugs, threaten people with knives, rob houses and burn rubbish up the side of buildings, and that was only in three months. To say I am unhappy is an understatement.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By advertising is a bit better.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think it's fine the way it is.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homeless Service was good, Dundee City Council was a nightmare. I am a single mother on my own. You couldn't believe where they offered us (working class).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think the Homeless Service is fine and don't think there should be much improvement.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By checking into people's background a bit more and finding out how they were made homeless in the first place.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I personally don't think you could improve on the service and attention I was given at any of my appointments at the office. Everyone was helpful and friendly.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I was happy with the service I got so I don't think there is any way it could be improved.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Going on my experience with the homeless service I can't think of any improvements that are needed. Everyone was kind and helpful and everything was sorted out very quickly.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By advertising your services more openly.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a difficult question to answer as the homeless service was only a part of matching us with a house that worked for us as a family. The practicalities the homeless service offered were all that we required from them. Just make sure the present committed staff's ideas are valued and implemented.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personally I don't have anything to say about the homeless unit because I feel that I was treated good. I was given my house quick and I think when you're homeless you have to take one day at a time and as I say I think the people I dealt with were very helpful. PS: I would just like to say thank you because if the Lily Walker Centre did not help me I probably would not have my new house and I probably wouldn't be getting on with my life, so I would just like to say thank you again and that's from me and my children.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think you do a brilliant job. The only thing I would say is when you're homeless all you think about is when you're going to be contacted about a house that's come up for you, but it doesn't happen and we start to think that not a lot is being done. I just think that you should keep us informed about looking for houses for us, as we always think that nobody is making much effort to try to rehouse us quickly. We never wanted to be homeless, it just happens. It's not a nice thing. Thank you for letting us have our opinions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More advice on support network (all of Q22). Printed list of who, where and contact number so I can choose who I need.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The manager at Clement Park House should listen to your needs and respect you. Apart from that, I was very satisfied with the help I got.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As far as I'm concerned, I do not see when improvement is needed. The people who I had any dealings with at Lily Walker Centre were very kind and understanding. That also continued all the time in the network flat right up until they got me moved into my own house. Thank you all so very much.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I found the service very helpful. They managed to get me the ideal flat and I have lots of help from Outreach and Resettlement officer, Social Work Dept., S. Army, Lily Walker Centre, to help me keep it.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try to put people in accommodation that's suitable to their needs. As now I suffer from depression which I now have to take medication. Before this I didn't have depression and was not on any kind of medication. The homeless was very considerate overall apart from the flat I received. Thank you.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To give genuine homeless or unintentionally homeless people more chance of being rehoused into at least the equivalent of the house they had to leave, instead of trying to force them to move into unsuitable areas away from their family and relatives as in a lot of cases they may need family support.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I liked it but my daughter didn't. She cried herself to sleep every night so I don't really know what you can do to improve it.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I was very satisfied with the help of everyone in the Lily Walker Centre. I don't think they need improve. It offered everything I needed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I don't think you need any improvement as I was treated very good and was satisfied.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think it is fine.

- It's a little late to start thinking about improving your service as it should never be in the state is in now. Only a complete overhaul of staff and courses in manners and respect would be a good start.

The percentages are calculated on the number of respondents to each question, where appropriate, not on the overall.

Appendix 2

No. of Questionnaires = 15

Q1

Have you referred clients to the Lily Walker Centre before?		
Yes	No	No response
14	1	0
93.3%	6.6%	0

Q2

When have you referred clients?		
Previous three months	7	33.3%
Previous six months	5	23.8%
Prior to that	8	38.0%
No response	1	4.9%

Q3

If so, how many?		
1 - 5	6	42.9%
6 - 10	3	21.4%
Over 10	3	21.4%
No responset	2	14.3%

Q4

Was it easy to contact the Lily Walker Centre?		
Yes	No	No response
14	0	0
100%	0%	0%

Q5

If no, can you say why or what difficulties you encountered?	
Sometimes Homeless Officer not available but they are good at calling us back quickly.	

Q6

Did you know how to contact the Lily Walker Centre out of hours?		
Yes	No	No response
10	4	0
71.4%	28.6%	0%

Q7

Did the Lily Walker Centre provide a service for the client you referred?		
Yes	No	No response
14	0	0
100%	0%	0%

Q8

If no, were the reasons explained to you?	
• We encourage young people using our drop-in to self refer and can't always find out about specific responses.	
• Yes	

Q9

Did you ask for follow-up information on how your referral was being dealt with?		
Yes	No	No response
7	6	1
50%	42.9% (go to Q1)	7.1%

Q10

If Yes, did you receive follow-up information?		
Yes	No	No response
7	0	0
100%	0%	0%

Q11

Thinking about when you contacted the Homeless Service, tick the boxes which best describe how they treated you		
Very helpful	9	64.3%
Helpful	5	35.7%
Neither/Nor	0	0%
Unhelpful	0	0%
Very unhelpful	0	0%
Very knowledgeable	6	42.9%
Knowledgeable	8	57.1%
Neither/Nor	0	0%
Unknowledgeable	0	0%
Very unknowledgeable	0	0%
Very polite	4	28.6%
Polite	10	71.4%
Neither/Nor	0	0%
Impolite	0	0%
Very impolite	0	0%

Q12

Did the Homeless Officer provide relevant advice on alternative accommodation options if they were unable to accept your referral?		
Yes	No (Go to Q.14)	No response
8	3	3
57.1%	21.4%	21.4%

Q13

What type of advice was offered?		
Direct access hostels	6	21.4%
Private sector housing	4	14.4%
Mainstream Council housing	6	21.4%

Housing association	6	21.4%
Other	3	10.7%
No responset	3	10.7%

Q14

Did the Homeless Officer provide advice on where your client might access other services (i.e. support services, legal advice, furniture etc.?)		
Yes	No (Go to Q.16)	No response
6	6	2
42.9%	42.9%	14.2%

Q15

Can you please expand on the type of advice you received?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officers have a good knowledge of what's available where and can advise on best option(s) for young people we are supporting. • I was advised to contact bed and breakfast and Salvation Army hostels. • Support in moving applications forward with Area Officers.

Q16

Were you happy with the outcome?		
YES (Go to Q18)	NO (Go to Q15)	No Resp
11	1	20
78.6%	7.2%	14.2%

Q17

If no, please say why
We would encourage more preventative work, advocacy in the private rented sector. We would also encourage Dundee City Council to adopt a more corporate approach towards their statutory and non statutory duties.

Q18

Does the Homeless Service have regular liaison meetings with your Agency?		
Yes	No (Go to Q.20)	No response
6	8	0
42.9%	47.1%	0%

Q19

If Yes, how often are these meetings held?		
Monthly	2	33.3%
Quarterly	1	16.7%
Other	3	50%

Q20

Would you like to have more liaison with the Lily Walker Centre?		
Yes	No (Go to Q.22)	No response
8	5	1
57.1%	35.7%	7.2%

Q21

If Yes, can you say how this would benefit your Agency?
• Regular meetings to tackle homelessness and discuss issues that are relevant in terms of allocation and rent arrears policies and procedures
• Involvement of more staff in how Housing referrals have been advantageous. We would wish to see this trend continue.
• To ensure staff are aware of all the positive actions being taken and to receive feedback from staff of other sections.
• Improved liaison would assist both agencies to keep abreast of developments and to provide appropriate support to those in need of services.
• Provide information on changes to services and keep up to date with developments. Improve knowledge of both services to benefit clients.
• This would strengthen the links and create open communication channels between different agencies. It would help to keep up to date information circulating up and down the networks.
• In making appropriate referrals as sometimes we have doubts in referring people although they do present as being vulnerable but for what reasons?
• I think we liaise quite well as things stand.

Q22

Were you satisfied with the way you and your client were dealt with?		
Very satisfied	4	28.6%
Satisfied	9	64.2%
Neither/Nor	1	7.2%
Unsatisfied	0	0%
Very unsatisfied	0	0%

Q23

Can you please say why?
<p>Very satisfied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New aspects of our relationship with LWC are beginning to bear fruit. Patience while we revised our procedures was appreciated. The close working relationship we have pays dividends to young people. • The last client I referred was very happy with his regular contact with staff and advice offered. • Clients report back feeling they have been treated fairly and in a friendly way. <p>Satisfied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over the time our project has used LWC as a resource for young people we have had a consistently good response when working with young people in need. • More accurate advice was given. • Staff are always helpful and treat clients very sympathetically. • Outcome suited client. • Appropriate advice and information has been received and staff have attempted to respond to client need. • Received advice and information relevant to clients' circumstances and how best to proceed. <p>Usually people present in times of crisis and if they can be dealt with promptly and efficiently at a time when they are most vulnerable this can prevent a deterioration in their mental and physical health.</p> <p>Neither/Nor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the main we are satisfied with the service. We recognise your limitations but we would like a more coordinated approach from DCC Housing Services and more creative solutions to the problems found by homeless people and those badly housed.

Q24

Do you feel the Homeless Service assists your Agency to carry out its work?		
Yes	No	No response
14	0	0
100%	0%	0%

Q25

Can you please say why?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often people who present can have their medication reviewed promptly but if other stress factors are around this can delay the effect and the recovery of the patient (e.g. homelessness as a stressor).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very often, mental health problems have homelessness / housing problems present also.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to direct client to appropriate services and resources.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In times of crisis it is essential that the fundamental resource of shelter can be provided prior to any additional therapeutic work being undertaken.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most often the referral made is satisfactory.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Without their help on emergency cases it would be far more difficult for my staff to do their job.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are not able to provide this service from a central point.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good liaison with Homeless Services Unit staff. The Homeless Services Officer who deals with our clients is helpful and understanding of our clients' needs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeless officers are committed to doing their best for young people, even when these young people have made mistakes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The support that staff provide for some of our clients is invaluable as often our clients need some one-to-one contact for a few weeks after discharge from hospital or after a break up of family etc., enabling them to secure mainstream accommodation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people are not simply processed. Consideration is given to individual circumstances.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility with a client group which can at times need changes to perceived plans.

Q26

What improvements can be made to the Homeless Services Unit from your Agency's viewpoint?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people feel that the general housing/homelessness networks within Dundee can be complex and confusing. There is a greater need to improve these services and increase awareness of what they can offer. Young people are interested in developing this work.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better liaison with staff will assist in improving knowledge of the service and the limitations which must be applied.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better communication on developments, sharing of knowledge to assist in service provision and more regular contact.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better and more regular information on your service.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources are a priority, we need to continue to highlight the necessity for more in the Dundee area. Not all patients from mental health teams can be appropriately placed due to the nature of their illness. We need to identify these individuals and find more suitable types of accommodation to meet their needs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more coordinated approach that accepts and recognises a corporate approach. We would also encourage more adherence to policy such as 'Best Value', better application of your rent arrears procedure, which could include more good practice. Greater priority and eliminate social exclusion, this includes the problem of poverty.

All percentages are calculated on number of responses to each question