

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE – 19 AUGUST 2002

REPORT ON: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PLANNING AUDIT 2001/02

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK

REPORT NO: 625 - 2002

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of the report is to inform elected members of the performance of the Social Work Department with regards to the Performance Management and Planning Report audited externally by Audit Scotland.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Social Work Committee:-

- 2.1 notes the performance of the Social Work Department as outlined in the attached report by Audit Scotland.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

The Performance Management and Planning Audit identified that Social Work staff continue to obtain the skills, knowledge and information needed to provide efficient services. In addition service users are enabled to participate fully in decisions made at both individual decisions and during the development of services.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

There is a wide recognition of the way in which the City Council conducts, promotes, publicises and communicates its activities to the diversity of Dundee's citizens.

6.0 MAIN TEXT

Background

Performance Management and Planning Audits which deliver continuous improvement, resulted from the Best Value Task Force's second report in July 1998. In reviewing the performance of Councils, Auditors require to be satisfied that local authorities have in place appropriate management arrangements to secure value for money from the resources available to it.

The attached Evaluation Summary reports on the department's progress in the third year using the Performance Management and Planning Audit Framework.

Contents

The Auditors noted that eleven improvement actions were outstanding from last year, ten of these have been completed and the remaining action, that of evaluating best value reviews, was seen as part of the corporate strategy regarding Best Value.

Key important actions included:

- a departmental involvement strategy with an emphasis on the active participation of users in the planning and development of services;
- the implementation of an Information Strategy;
- the increased management awareness of continuous improvement;
- the implementation of a Human Resources Strategy.

The Auditors report noted that the evidences supplied was good both in quality and scope and namely:

- significant achievements were made in Child Protection and Criminal Justice Services which have resulted from a systematic framework to achieve continuous improvement;
- concentrates on quantifiable outputs and improved outcomes to service users;
- a clear commitment given by officers at all levels within the service to the completion of the PMP submission;
- the service made good progress and highlights a number of achievements in improving the delivery of the service.

Conclusion

This Performance Management and Planning Report reflects the third and final audit of the Social Work Department's activities. Continuous improvement will continue to be monitored using the EFQM self assessment module.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 The Chief Executive and the Director of Corporate Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information), were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

9.0 SIGNATURE

Director of Social Work

Date

19 July 2002

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

- 1 Best Value has been progressing in Scottish Councils since late 1997, with the Best Value Task Force's second report issued in July 1998 requiring Councils to develop a performance management and planning (PMP) framework, which delivers continuous improvement.
- 2 Part of the auditor's statutory responsibilities is to be satisfied that a local authority has in place appropriate management arrangements to secure value for money from the resources available to it. With the introduction of the Best Value regime, the PMP audit has been used to review the progress that Councils are making in implementing the framework set out by the Best Value Task Force.
- 3 A PMP audit was carried out in Social Work in 1999/2000 and, as part of this process, the Service identified a number of planned improvements to both the PMP framework and the method of service delivery. The 2000/01 audit included a review of progress made towards implementing these actions. As a number of actions had not yet been completed at that time, we have carried out a final review of progress made.

Audit Approach

- 4 The audit was carried out in accordance with guidance issued by Audit Scotland. This required the Service to undertake a self-assessment of their progress to date and complete an Improvement Action Progress Report. The service was also required to submit a Best Value Achievement Report setting out tangible improvements, which have been achieved over the last three years.
- 5 Our role was to:
 - Review a sample of supporting evidence to verify the extent to which the service had implemented their agreed improvements and achieved what they set out to;
 - Ascertain why the service had not implemented agreed improvements and remedial action planned to recover from any slippage in progress;
 - Verify the service's achievements recorded in the Best Value Achievement Report through checking a sample of supporting evidence.

Improvement Action Progress Report

- 6 Eleven improvement actions were outstanding from last year and we are pleased to report that ten of these have been completed:
 - A departmental involvement strategy has been implemented with an emphasis on the active participation of users in the planning and development of services
 - Mechanisms to reinforce good practice in consultation have been implemented
 - Best Value Implementation Plans are included within the Service Plans and are also included into the personal action plans of Service Managers
 - An Information Strategy has been implemented
 - An HR Strategy and Employee Development Review (Appraisal) are now implemented
 - The Finance post with responsibilities for development of costing and financial information has been filled

- Increased Management awareness of continuous improvement within the Department
 - There is a co-ordinated approach to all planning activities
 - The allocation of resources is clear, identifiable and understood
 - Performance monitoring has been improved through improved understanding and ownership of key performance results
- 7 The remaining improvement action, that of evaluating value for money in best value reviews, has not been carried out as this is seen as part of the Corporate Strategy regarding Best Value.
- 8 In our view, the service's progress in implementing the agreed improvement actions has been good.

Best Value Achievement Report

- 9 The Best Value Achievement Report sets out the service's main achievements over the last three years. We are pleased to note that this report:
- Highlights a number of significant achievements, such as Child Protection and Criminal Justice Services which have resulted from a systematic framework to achieve continuous improvement;
 - Concentrates on quantifiable outputs and improved outcomes to service users, rather than processes and inputs; as evidenced by the development of Preparation of Throughcare and Aftercare Strategy, Remodelling of day care services and Joint Delivery of services for parents and children,
 - Covers a range of topics including stakeholder impact, resource use, internal management processes and future developments and planned improvements;

Conclusions

- 10 A key requirement of the PMP audit is that process is evidence-based. We sample checked a range of evidence to verify the Service's submission and found that, in general, the evidence supplied was good in terms of quality and scope.
- 11 Overall, the Service has made good progress in implementing the actions agreed in 1999/2000 and the Best Value Implementation Report highlights a number of achievements in improving the delivery of service.

Acknowledgements

- 12 The contents of this report have been agreed with relevant officers to confirm factual accuracy. The co-operation and assistance given by all officers contacted during the course of this review is gratefully acknowledged. There was a clear commitment given by officers at all levels within the service to the completion of the PMP submission.