

REPORT TO: HOUSING COMMITTEE – 18 FEBRUARY 2002

REPORT ON: SINGLE HOMELESS AND YOUTH HOUSING STRATEGIES
1998-2001
UPDATE AND INTEGRATION INTO HOMELESSNESS
STRATEGY 2003-2006

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF HOUSING

REPORT NO.: 58-2002

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. To report progress on existing homeless strategies, and describe the requirements to produce a Homelessness Strategy in line with the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.
- 1.2. To propose the single homeless and youth housing strategies be integrated into the required Homelessness Strategy 2003-06.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. It is recommended that Committee acknowledge the success of the Single Homeless and Youth Housing Strategies 1998-2001, produced and implemented in partnership with the Single Homeless and Youth Housing Strategy Groups.
- 2.2. It is recommended that Committee note the requirements to produce a comprehensive Homelessness Strategy as set out in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.
- 2.3. It is recommended that Committee approve the proposal to incorporate the Single Homeless and Youth Housing Strategies into the comprehensive Homelessness Strategy required under the new Housing Legislation.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. There will be no increase in the cost of ongoing funding to projects providing accommodation and support to young and/or single homeless people as contained within existing Other Housing budgets.
- 3.2. The requirement to conduct a needs assessment, and develop a Local Homelessness Strategy 2003-2006, will be met from ring-fenced funds allocated by Scottish Executive for this purpose.

4. LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. The objectives of the Single Homeless and Youth Housing Strategies are consistent with a number of Key Dundee 21 Themes; including access to good food, water, shelter and fuel at a reasonable cost; health is protected; access to the skills, knowledge and information needed to enable everyone to play a full part in society.

5. **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS**

Participation in the Single Homeless and Youth Housing Strategies fulfil the Council's commitment to assist those in need by ensuring that accommodation and care is available for vulnerable people.

6. **BACKGROUND**

6.1. The Council's commitment to meeting the needs of young and single homeless people has been evident since 1992, when the Housing Committee adopted "A Five Year Strategy for Accommodation and Support of Single Homeless People", as produced by the Single Homeless Strategy Group (SHSG).

6.2. In August 1998, Housing Committee adopted the Dundee Single Homeless Housing Strategy 1998-2001. This new strategy had been developed through a short life review group involving Health and Housing Agencies, voluntary organisations with Housing and Social Work Departments.

6.3. The outcome was a 3-year project based Action Plan, designed to reflect changing circumstances and priorities in Dundee, and emphasise the benefits of resettlement for Single Homeless People.

(Resettlement has been defined as, "To secure access for vulnerable homeless people with a history of sleeping rough, to long-term accommodation which best suits their needs, and to ensure that they do not subsequently lose it, or move to less suitable accommodation. "G. Randal and S. Brown, DOE 1995").

6.4. During the 1999 annual review of the Action Plan by the SHSG, 7 projects were identified as requiring specialist development to meet the needs of young and vulnerable, single homeless people in the City.

6.5. To meet this need, the Youth Housing Strategy 2000-2003 was devised by relevant partners to address the accommodation and support needs of 16-21 year olds of local young people.

6.6. Consistent with the Single Homeless Housing Strategy the Youth Housing Strategy activities were defined in a 3-year Action Plan, reviewed annually.

6.7. In 2000, the Youth Housing Strategy Group combined with the Development and Implementation Group of the Children's Services Plan 1998-2001: Services for Young People Affected by Homelessness, due to the parallels in the objectives, priorities and membership of those groups.

6.8. The Youth Housing Strategy Group name was retained, and the membership and Action Plan consolidated to eliminate duplication. The Action Plan enables the Council to meet their duties to 'children in need' as identified by the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 by addressing the needs of vulnerable young people affected by homelessness.

7. **PROGRESS**

7.1. The successes of Single Homeless Housing Strategy 1998-2001 and the Youth Housing Strategy 2000-2003 and the developments contained in the respective Action Plans, can be seen in the following achievements:

- 7.2. The quality of local accommodation has improved dramatically with the opening of new hostels for single and young homeless people at Brewery Lane (Cyrenians), Foundry Lane, (DSG) and Cowan Grove (NCH). These premises offer privacy and a secure environment for effective resettlement work to take place.
- 7.3. The Wishart Day Centre moved to new premises with facilities to extend the scope of services for homeless clients.
- 7.4. Approximately £2m of additional funding has been awarded to the Authority from Rough Sleepers Initiative (RSI) and DSS, to enable our partners to meet strategic objectives and provide local services.
- 7.5. Introduced in 1998, the Outreach and Resettlement Team has made contact with over 400 rough sleepers, and supported 109 hostel clients to resettle into independent living, 85 are sustaining these tenancies.
- 7.6. NCH Scotland – Dundee Supported Living Project provides assistance for up to 14 clients aged 16-21 years, preparing them to take up DCC tenancies, and for those in tenancies experiencing difficulties sustaining them.
- 7.7. The Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme secured RSI and CRISIS funds, to increase choice and help homeless people access accommodation in the private sector, by providing a Rent Deposit Bond. Ten have been accommodated since this service was introduced.
- 7.8. The newly established CRISIS Fareshare project will receive £90,000 from CRISIS to distribute surplus food products to local hostels and day centres.
- 7.9. Dundee's Foyer is being developed to meet the needs of young people in the city, by linking accommodation, support, education and training for employment projects. This facility is likely to attract £340,000 from New Futures fund to ensure appropriate training is available and delivered to vulnerable young people.
- 7.10. To respond effectively to the homeless 16-17 year olds who apply to the Housing Department as homeless, joint Social Work/Housing Assessments are being explored.

8. **NEW DUTIES**

- 8.1. Correspondence from Scottish Executive in September 2001 confirmed that Sections 1 and 2 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 would commence on 1 October 2001.
- 8.2. Section 1 requires the Authority to assess local homelessness and prepare and submit a strategy for preventing and alleviating homelessness in the area. Guidance on preparation and development of a local homelessness strategy is expected shortly, with a strategy to be in place by 1 April 2003.
- 8.3. Housing and Personnel Committees approved a framework to utilise additional resources allocated to the Authority for this purpose in December 2001 and January 2002 respectively.
- 8.4. In these circumstances, it is appropriate to incorporate the Action Plans of the Single Homeless and Youth Housing Strategies into the comprehensive Local Homelessness Strategy developed this year for the period 2003-2006.
- 8.5. Members of the Single Homeless and Youth Housing Strategy groups have been appraised of the requirements and are willing to continue to work in partnership in new structures, to fulfil the new duties and meet the needs of all local homeless people.

8.6. It is proposed that the existing groups and Action Plans be reviewed and appropriate members participate in the development of the overarching local homelessness strategy. The priority single homeless and youth housing projects will be identified in the new homelessness strategy 2003-2006.

9. **CONCLUSION**

9.1. The requirements of new legislation, backed by available resources, create an opportunity to simplify the current arrangements and develop a comprehensive Local Homelessness Strategy 2003-2006, in collaboration with appropriate local partners.

10. **CONSULTATION**

10.1. Members of Dundee Single Homeless and Youth Housing Strategy Groups, as well as Directors and Chief Officers have been consulted on the contents of this report.

11. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

11.1. The following were approved by Housing Committee:

A 5 year Strategy for Accommodation and Support of Single Homeless People; June 1992.

Dundee Single Homeless Housing Strategy 1998-2001; August 1998.

Dundee Single Homeless Housing Strategy Review 1999; November 1999.

Rough Sleepers Initiative 2000-2002; November 1999.

Dundee Youth Housing Strategy 2000-2003, December 1999.

Dundee Single Homeless Housing Strategy Review 2000; November 2000.

Rough Sleepers Initiative Update 2000; November 2000.

Dundee Youth Housing Strategy 2000-2003 Review 2000; December 2000.

Use of Funding to Implement Homelessness Sections – Housing (Scotland) Act 2001; December 2001.

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DIRECTOR OF HOUSING

SIGNED: _____

DATED: _____