

Homelessness Strategy Working Group (HSWG)

Remit as at April, 2014

Purpose of Working Group

To consider the broad interests of homeless people including –

- (1) to discuss and review the *strategic objectives for Homelessness and Housing Support*;
- (2) to recommend priorities;
- (3) to receive monitoring information and reports on initiatives;
- (4) to receive and discuss reports from actions groups;
- (5) to identify gaps *and suggest improvements* in the service;
- (6) *to provide an integrated approach to services*;
- (7) *to consider housing support, and support available to people who are threatened with homelessness and those already homeless*;
- (8) *to improve the quality of life of homeless people and people who are threatened with homelessness; and*
- (9) *to tackle discrimination of homeless people.*

Method of Operation

The Working Group will –

- (1) *monitor progress on delivering the strategic objectives for Homelessness and Housing Support (which forms part of the Local Housing Strategy)*;
- (2) *perform a central role in consultation exercises which affect homeless people, including advising agencies which are planning consultation exercises, to ensure that the views of homeless people are represented (as appropriate)*;
- (3) *co-ordinate an annual event to address issues impacting on homeless people*;
- (4) *raise the profile of homeless people in Aberdeen*;
- (5) *advise relevant bodies on issues relevant to homeless people*;
- (6) *widen the role of the Working Group throughout the city and not just the Council*;
- (7) *meet with Housing Officers to discuss issues, progress and improvements (I.P.I.)*;
- (8) *operate in conjunction with other organisations (as appropriate) to come up with a unified approach to tackle homelessness; and*
- (9) *receive feedback from homeless people about the work of the Working Group and on how it can improve*;

Accountability

The minutes of the Working Group will be reported via the Information Bulletin to the Housing and Environment Committee. Extracts from Working Group minutes will be submitted to other Council Committees as appropriate depending on the action requested.

Membership

- (1) *Aberdeen City Council – The Membership will be appointed by the Housing and Environment Committee (the parent committee) with appointees linking to each of the Council committees.*

- (2) *Partner and community organisations – one representative from each of the following –*
- (a) *Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP);*
 - (b) *Aberdeen Foyer;*
 - (c) *Castehill Housing Association;*
 - (d) *Citizens Advice Bureau;*
 - (e) *Langstane Housing Association;*
 - (f) *Shelter; and*
 - (g) *Co-optees (as appropriate), for example, community groups working with/for homeless people – to be determined as and when required by the Chairperson, the Council’s Champion for Homeless People.*
- (3) *If any member of the Working Group should miss three meetings consecutively, it will be open to the Working Group to exclude that member on a permanent basis. This will not apply if the said member has arranged for a substitute to be present at the meetings.*
- (4) *Members’ attendance will be monitored at Working Group meetings, Co-optees’ attendance will **not** be monitored.*
- (5) *The appointment of Members will be subject to approval by the parent committee. Co-optees will be appointed at the Chairperson’s discretion, no approval is therefore necessary. The removal of any Member will need to be approved by the parent Committee. This does not apply to a Co-optee.*
- (6) *If the Working Group Members are not in agreement on any matter that is before them, instead of a division, the matter will be referred to the parent Committee for consideration and decision (outlining majority/minority views) as per the standard practise for Working Groups.*

Remit

*Changes to this remit will be subject to the Working Group agreeing on the changes **and** then the parent Committee approving the changes.*

Admin Support

Staff from Housing and Community Safety (Housing and Environment) and Legal and Democratic Services (Committee Services) Sections of the Corporate Governance Service of the Council will support the work of the Group.

For the purposes of the HSWG, “homeless people” refers to people who are homeless or are threatened with homelessness.