

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMITTEE

HAVING AND KEEPING A HOME: STEPS TO PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE – FOLLOW-UP

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS ON SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE RECEIVED TO DATE

Thank you for your email of 12 November 2014 which provided a summary of the evidence received by the Equal Opportunities Committee while following up the work on youth homelessness, and for giving us the opportunity to comment on any key points which are particularly important. I asked the Principal Officer of our Homeless Strategy Team and our Integrated Children's Services Manager for comments, and they have suggested a few areas which they feel are important:

- More informal mediation or conflict resolution to prevent homelessness may be more appropriate than more formal mediation.
- Use of volunteers for mentoring and befriending can work along with (but not replace) paid officers and may help to give longer term and more flexible assistance e.g. someone to go along with clients to appointments, someone to chat with etc.
- Assistance into employment, training, or education is important to assist young people to move forward and enable them to learn to cope. At the minimum, meaningful activity must be put in place to ensure softer skills are developed.
- Safe and supported accommodation is a must for this very vulnerable group. Discretionary housing payments need to be considered as a high priority where someone in this client group receives an income which means they then lose housing benefit entitlement. This is to allow young people to take up employment while in temporary accommodation and give the local authority time to arrange a permanent let and ensure they can afford to work.

I hope this is of use in preparing for your further work on this topic.

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Chief Executive's Department
Dundee City Council
12 December 2014