

SOUTH CHESHIRE Crossroads Caring for Carers



Time to be Themselves

SOCIAL ACCOUNTS

1st April 2006 -31st March 2007

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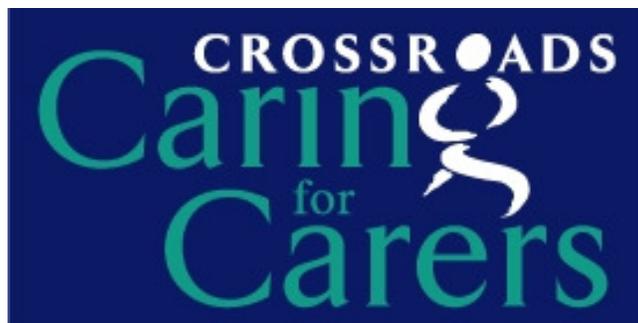
Lucy Whiting and Jean Herbert, South Cheshire Crossroads' Caring for Carers social accountants, would like to thank all staff, volunteers, board of trustees and external stakeholders, whose work has made this inaugural set of social accounts feasible, necessary and appropriate. Thanks go to all of the people who took the time to complete a consultation questionnaire and provided such crucial feedback on the services provided by South Cheshire Crossroads. Particular thanks go to the carers and their families who responded to the consultation. Their input has been important.

Thanks go to Claire Hunter and Khaleed Olaniyan, from Chester University who provided essential technical support to the accounting process. Also to Brigette Broadbent for her contribution in distributing questionnaires to carers and their families.

The particular help provided by Damian Lally and the social enterprise team from Cheshire County Council and John Pearce from the Social Audit Network ensured that staff from Crossroads were able to undertake and complete the social accounting process competently. Funding secured from the Northwest Development Agency was imperative in ensuring that the social accounting and audit process was able to take place. Thanks go to Katie Trent, from Cylch North Wales, who chaired the social audit panel, Tim Mann, County Manager and Rick Howell, Children's Services Development Manager, at Cheshire County Council were helpful as members of the panel, as were Sarah Fillingham, National

South Cheshire Crossroads Caring for Carers Social Accounts April 2006-March 2007
Management Trainee, and Tony Clare, Social Enterprise Officer at Cheshire County Council who acted as observers.

**“We help people to have a better life”
(Carer Support Worker, South Cheshire
Crossroads, June 2007)**



The Social Accounts Framework

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1 INTRODUCTION

Why undertake social accounting?

In December 2005 South Cheshire Crossroads organised a taster session in social accounting and audit on behalf of Crossroads schemes in the North West. The session was delivered by Graham Waterhouse and Anne Lythgoe, members of the Social Audit Network and was attended by nine schemes from across the North West of England. This session confirmed for South Cheshire Crossroads the value in undertaking social accounting and audit.

Jean Herbert, from South Cheshire Crossroads went on to attend a two day master class delivered by John Pearce, Social Audit Network in partnership with the Cheshire and Warrington Social Enterprise Partnership, who decided to run courses for local groups in order to raise the profile of social accounting and audit. These were funded through the Northwest Development Agency. The classes outlined the practical steps involved in undertaking social accounting and audit as well as the context within which social accounting has developed. A cluster of organisations from Cheshire with an interest in social accounting and audit was then formed, of which South Cheshire Crossroads was a member.

Social enterprise organisations are required to demonstrate the impact of their activities as opposed to relying on the public's assumption that the organisation is simply doing 'good work'. There is an increased demand from a range of stakeholders for organisations both within the third sector and from the private and public sectors, to account for their social, economic and

environmental impact, not simply their financial performance. There are several methods that exist that seek to assist organisations to demonstrate their effectiveness and impact. Some of these systems focus on measuring the quality of services provided i.e. the efficiency of the organisations or how well they utilise available resources. However the impact assessment framework that social accounting provides is broader and is concerned with measuring the social or environmental impact of an organisations activity. Social accounting provides a method whereby organisations can measure the extent to which they live up to the shared values and objectives they have committed themselves to.

To ensure that South Cheshire Crossroads services continue to be accessible and appropriate to the communities served, the organisation has developed on going systems for monitoring and evaluation. However, in order to improve the effectiveness of services for all stakeholders, the organisation needed to be able to measure the impact that services have on people's lives. South Cheshire Crossroads have therefore decided to embark on a programme of social accounting and audit and impact measurement. This involved the following actions;

1. Raising awareness of social accounting and auditing at all levels of the organisation
2. Engaging the organisation and its stakeholders with the social accounting process and producing a draft set of social accounts which reports on the organisation's social performance

3. Auditing the draft social accounts, revising and publishing the final accounts and subsequently embarking on a process of performance improvement
4. Producing audited social accounts on an annual basis and embedding the process within the organisational culture

Social accounting is a process that enables an organisation to assess and demonstrate its social, economic, and environmental benefits and limitations. It is intended that the data gathered via the social accounting process will inform the South Cheshire Crossroads Strategic Social Enterprise Plan (formerly referred to as the business plan) that the South Cheshire Crossroads reviews and produces annually.

The social accounting process will also enable South Cheshire Crossroads to form closer relationships with its stakeholders in order to enhance their involvement with the organisation.

It is recognised that the organisation needs to improve its dialogue with stakeholders, in particular carers and their families, and the social accounting process gives this opportunity. Those stakeholders choosing to engage with the social accounting process will play an active part in shaping the work of the organisation. The social accounting process can be seen as one way of empowering those stakeholders who may not feel part of the governance and management of the organisation. It has given a 'voice' and allowed an additional (aside from our standard routes which include writing, dropping into the office, emailing, talking to our Carer Support Workers, using our compliments/complaints procedure) the opportunity to voice complaints, concerns and

articulate what they see as the positive aspects of the organisation anonymously.

As well as providing the chance to engage in meaningful dialogue with stakeholders, social accounting presents an opportunity for comprehensive analysis of the results gathered, and a way of embedding this two way dialogue in the systems that exist within the organisation. The results gathered from the annual survey that has been used in the past have not always been utilised thoroughly by those responsible for managing and governing the organisations strategic direction. Information gathered from the questionnaires will be presented to the board of trustees and staff managing South Cheshire Crossroads, and will be used in the strategic social enterprise plan.

WHO DID THE WORK?

The majority of the work involved in the social, accounting process was carried out by three staff, Lucy Whiting (Scheme Manager), Jean Herbert (Children's Services Lead), and Brigette Broadbent (Office Administrator). Lucy maintains an active professional interest in social accounting and has sat on a social accounts audit panel for a social economy organisation. She is also currently in her third year of a Masters degree in Social Enterprise, which has involved significant study of social accounting and audit, and Jean had attended a two day master class, lead by John Pearce, in social accounting and audit.

One of the barriers that arose during the getting ready stage of the accounting process was that no-one within the organisation had social accounting within their existing job descriptions. It was therefore 'bolted on' to existing staff member's duties. Whilst this is not ideal, the enthusiasm and energy of individuals meant that the process was successful.

Additional support was provided by Chester University, who placed two second year degree students from their work based learning scheme to assist with the data analysis and transcription of the accounts. The social accounting is recognised as being extremely time consuming thus the supplementary support was invaluable.

STAGE ONE – GETTING READY

This first set of social accounts was produced with the support of Cheshire County Council and the Cheshire and Warrington Social Enterprise Partnership. Damian Lally, Senior Social Enterprise Officer with Cheshire County Council secured funding to enable four organisations within Cheshire to undertake the social accounting process, with mentoring support from John Pearce from the Social Audit Network (SAN).

Working within a cluster group provided a support network for the organisations involved as none of the organisations had previous social accounting experience. Monthly meetings were organised for the groups to share concerns/ good practice. This provided a valuable source of support to the social accounting team at South Cheshire Crossroads who were able to draw on the experiences within the group during the accounting process.

2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Crossroads is a national organisation which has 180 local affiliated branches such as South Cheshire Crossroads. Crossroads is named after the television soap 'Crossroads' in which a main character in the soap was in a major accident and consequently became a wheelchair user. A viewer of the soap, with a similar disability, wrote a letter of complaint to the production company of 'Crossroads', ATV outlining how they believed that the soap was wrongly portraying the experience of disability and furthermore, the soap failed to recognise the impact that the accident had on his mother who now had to care for him. As a result of this letter ATV appointed the viewer as an advisor on disability issues and donated £10,000 to enable the first respite service specifically catering for carers and their families to be established. This pilot scheme was set up in Rugby in 1974 and during its first year of operation, provided support to 28 families.

Today Crossroads Caring for Carers consists of 180 member schemes throughout England and Wales. All local schemes are independently established with a legal form of their own, i.e. company limited by guarantee, and are usually registered charities also. Crossroads Association sets out the operating framework for the schemes as well as the operational procedures and policies which schemes are expected to follow. Crossroads across England and Wales now provides over 4.4 million care hours are provided every year to more than 35,000 carers - The equivalent of over 500 years of care. Many Crossroads schemes provide additional services including young carer's projects, holiday play schemes for disabled children and care for people who are terminally ill.

South Cheshire Crossroads is based in Sandbach, Cheshire, and provides a service within the boroughs of Crewe and Nantwich, Congleton and Vale Royal. South Cheshire Crossroads employs 35 paid staff, the majority of whom are employed as part time Carer Support Workers supporting carers and their families. There are three volunteers who support the work of the organisation. Governance is provided by a Board of Trustees/Directors, who have a range of skills and experience and who assume overall responsibility for the service. (South Cheshire Crossroads Annual Report 2004/5).

The social care marketplace is increasingly competitive in terms of securing contracts for service delivery. Historically, South Cheshire Crossroads relied heavily on grants and donations to sustain service delivery, however over the last five years, there has been a shift towards the delivery of public sector contracts on behalf of government bodies. South Cheshire Crossroads is undergoing a transitional stage where it is moving from being an organisation which has traditionally been grant dependent, towards working as a social enterprise and generating income through trade. The drivers for this shift are numerous, but primarily the change has occurred because of a reduction in the availability of grants to the organisation, and an increased pressure from service commissioners for South Cheshire Crossroads to deliver contracts. This shift away from grant dependency will require a culture change for the organisation. In order for the organisation to stay within the market however, the reality is that the shift is necessary. This has in turn affected the model of governance adopted by the Board of Trustees as they are in effect negotiating

and managing complex target driven contracts as opposed to delivering against grant funding. The organisation is also seeking to develop a base of clients who purchase the service on a private basis. Those clients may hold an individual budget (their own budget allocated through the local authority so people can commission services themselves) and choose to commission services directly from South Cheshire Crossroads.

South Cheshire Crossroads has a board of trustees who attend bi-monthly board meetings. Sub group meetings take place on a monthly basis in-between the main board meetings. There are 8 members of the board and they bring a range of skills and experience to the organisation. The board are responsible for the overall governance. There are also four sub groups that exist; HR, Finance & Performance, Care Practice/Standards and Business development. These groups are tasked with discussing relevant issues and taking recommendations to the main body of the board.

3 WHAT DOES THE ORGANISATION DO?

South Cheshire Crossroads Caring for Carers is a specialist voluntary organisation providing practical and emotional support to carers and people with care needs in their own homes and in the community. The organisation currently delivers short breaks to over 250 families across central Cheshire including 25 young carers. South Cheshire Crossroads is a registered charitable company limited by guarantee operating as a social enterprise.

The whole purpose of a Crossroads scheme is to provide practical and emotional support to Carers responsible for the care of children, adults or older people at home, who have a physical/sensory disability, learning disability, mental health issue or who are chronically ill.

A carer may be a friend, neighbour or relative who is providing support to someone else, either within the same household or living elsewhere, who would otherwise not be able to manage without that help. A carer's life is often restricted by the need to be on call 24 hours a day because the person they look after cannot be safely left alone for long periods. Carers are often under a great deal of physical and emotional strain through the demanding work of caring for someone heavily dependent upon them. They might be trying to hold down a paid job as well, and have other family commitments.

Crossroads services are individually tailored to meet the needs of each family and are flexible and adaptable around their needs.

Individual care plans are agreed between Crossroads, the carer and the person with care needs. People are able to decide for themselves what help and support they feel they need. A highly trained and experienced member of the team will then be allocated to the family providing the highest level of care for the person with care needs. The Carer Support Worker allocated to the family can provide all levels of personal care, support the individual with therapy plans, and perform complex specialist care tasks.

By providing this valuable type of respite service, South Cheshire Crossroads enables carers to continue caring for as long as they wish or are able to do so. Our approach is designed to help carers and disabled people feel comfortable and in control of the care that they receive. It is also designed to give people with a disability the opportunity of choosing to stay in their own home rather than living within an institution or being admitted to hospital.

Care and support is offered to carers of all age groups and disabilities. The service can work closely with, and alongside existing health, community services and other third sector organisations, thereby providing an additional element in a total care package for the family.

In addition to the core services described above, within South Cheshire Crossroads there is a young carer's project. This offers specialist support for children between the ages of 6 to 18 years who have caring responsibilities due to illness, drugs or alcohol addiction, mental health issues or disability. Again, the service is individually tailored to meet the needs of each situation. The

support offered is aimed to be appropriate to families needs and is based on a detailed assessment. This service can be offered on an occasional one off basis or more regular basis either one to one support or group support through the weekly social clubs.

Rationale

Community care legislation, The Carers Act, and Carers (Equal Opportunity) Act and the more recent Government White paper 'Your Health, Your Care, Your Say' highlight the importance of providing respite breaks to carers as well as high quality support to people with disabilities/illnesses. South Cheshire Crossroads has over the last twenty years worked in an ever changing and complex environment. It has constantly had to adapt to meet the needs of a wide range of stakeholders such as carers, communities of people with care needs and other service providers and purchasers within the statutory, voluntary and community sectors. The culture within which the organisation works has also changed significantly and as it continues to grow, develop and adapt towards its environment and working practices are reviewed to ensure that it continues to be effective and meet the challenges ahead in a pro-active way.

When the team carry out next years social accounting cycle, they will endeavour to relate outcomes to the objectives that the organisation seeks to deliver.

Quality Assurance

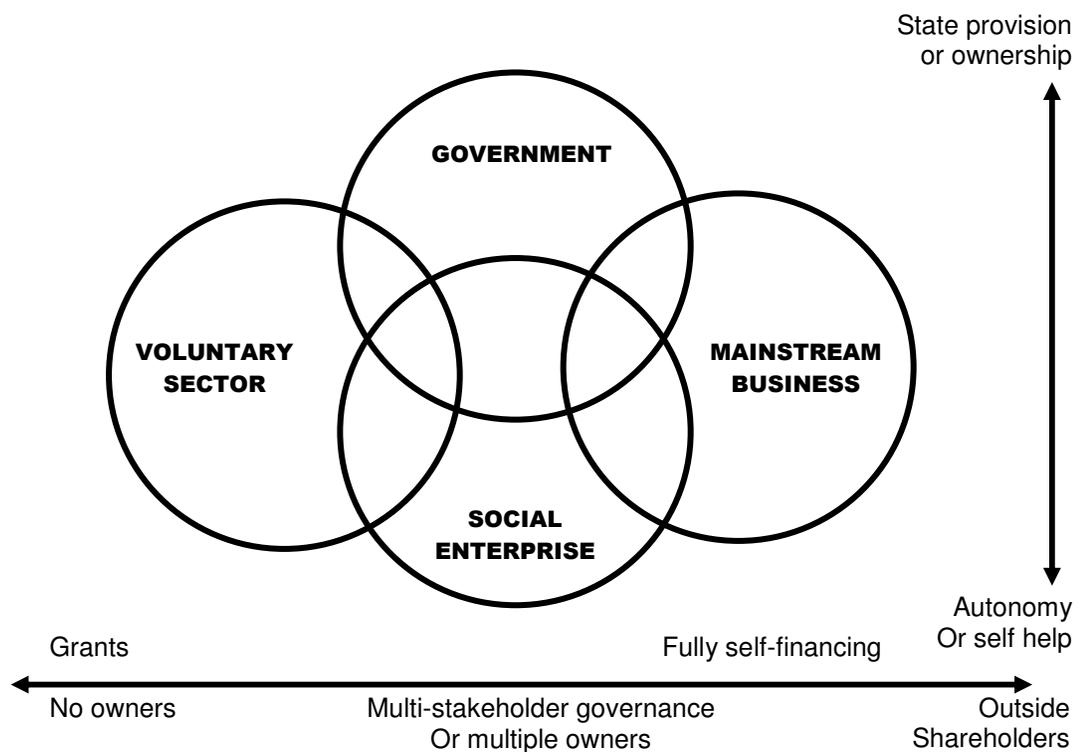
As a member of the Crossroads network South Cheshire Crossroads adheres to a national quality framework. The quality, governance, planning and sustainability of services is audited

biennially by Crossroads National Association. In addition to this locally the service quality is assessed via the social accounting process (formerly a customer satisfaction survey). The scheme is registered with the Commission for Social Care Inspection and in its latest inspection in January 2007 the organisation received an excellent rating (the highest that can be awarded). Copies of the inspection report are available free on request or can be downloaded from the Commission for Social Care Inspection website (copies of the report are available by clicking the following link

<http://62.73.173.233/CSCI/DCA/44/DS0000053744.V289833.R02.S.pdf>).

South Cheshire Crossroads has continually worked to develop a proven track record of being an effective provider of services to carers and people with care needs with experience of understanding and responding appropriately to their needs. Through its work, they have accumulated expertise and built strong tangible relationships with communities, providers, purchasers and commissioners. The approach to development has been built on maintaining links with communities at a grass roots level as well as focusing on a wider strategic brief.

South Cheshire Crossroads operates as a social enterprise. Its mission is primarily to deliver social benefit (enhance carers lives) and any surpluses are reinvested for that purpose, as opposed to being distributed to shareholders and owners.



(Reference taken from 'Value – Led, Market Driven' (Westall, A 2001). Reproduced by kind permission of Institute for Public Policy Research)

Within this social enterprise positioning model, South Cheshire Crossroads currently exists within the overlap of voluntary sector and social enterprise. Crossroads is at present a charitable company limited by guarantee. Funding is generated by the delivery of specialist respite support services to Carers and their families, and this is financed via a range of funding agreements held with the Local Authority and others. The organisation is looking at becoming increasingly self financing through the development of a variety of income generating activities, for example charging some clients for the service provided.

Mission, values, objectives and activities

In order to complete the accounts the mission, values, objectives and activities needed to be identified and operationalised. The social accounting process identifies whether the organisation is true to the objectives set out and measures the extent to which the values are met by the organisation. There was a significant amount of work involved in ensuring that the organisation had an agreed mission, values, objectives and activities. These were ratified at a business planning event which involved a range of stakeholders held in March 2007, and endorsed by the board of trustees at their May 2007 board meeting.

Mission:

“South Cheshire Crossroads exists to enhance Carers lives”

Values:

- Inclusive – the service aims to be accessible to carers and their families
- Professional - our service aims to exceed national guidelines relating to good practice
- To retain independence from statutory service providers
- Enterprising
- Passionate – we are passionate about carers needs and their right to a break
- Adaptable and progressive
- Caring/ Friendly
- To be a good employer

Objectives:

1 Provide respite support to carers and their families

(1a) by offering the provision of community based support workers who can provide practical and emotional support to carers and their families, within the home (or away from the home) on a regular basis.

(1b) by carrying out an assessment at the point of referral

(1c) by ensuring that staff are matched with families they support in terms of their training

(1d) by encompassing the concepts of equality and diversity

(1e) by ensuring a consistent service provision in terms of staffing

(1f) by involving people in the compilation of their individual care plan

(1g) by listening and responding to clients needs and by acting appropriately if they are not happy

(1h) by making effective use of new technologies within clients homes to ensure efficient working practice and minimise risk.

2 Develop specialist services for group of carers with similar

needs e.g. young carers

(2a) by working with partner agencies to deliver bespoke services in response to identified need

(2b) through carrying out research to identify areas of unmet need for carers that can be developed by South Cheshire Crossroads

(2c) by linking into local, regional and national strategy relating to the delivery of health and social care services

(2d) by involving carers in the development of new initiatives

(2e) by generating income (via trade) to support the development of new initiatives/projects

3 To have a well trained workforce with a low staff turnover

(3a) by offering appropriate training and development opportunities to all employees and volunteers within the organisation

(3b) by ensuring that all paid employees have satisfactory terms and conditions

(3c) by adopting and implementing an effective equal opportunities policy

(3d) by adopting and implementing an effective health & safety policy

(3e) by respecting the importance of employees private lives

(3f) by expecting high performance standards of paid staff

4 Develop into a financially sustainable, carer led organisation

(4a) by increasing public awareness of Crossroads and also increasing the community membership of the company

(4b) by fully informing members and directors about the work of the company and ensuring active involvement in all aspects of the company

(4c) by aiming to achieve full cost recovery on all contracts

(4d) by keeping the local community, in particular carers and their families informed about the work of the company and involving them in its future direction

(4e) by having efficient and effective accounting processes

(4f) by generating income through the provision of bespoke packages of health and social care services to individuals or groups requiring specialist support and reducing reliance on non specialist 'domiciliary care' packages.

(4g) by offering bespoke packages of support to clients with Individual Budgets / In Control (their own funding to purchase services)

(4h) by organising appropriate training for directors and members

(4i) by re-investing surplus into service development

(4j) by monitoring and evaluating the quality of the service provided to stakeholders

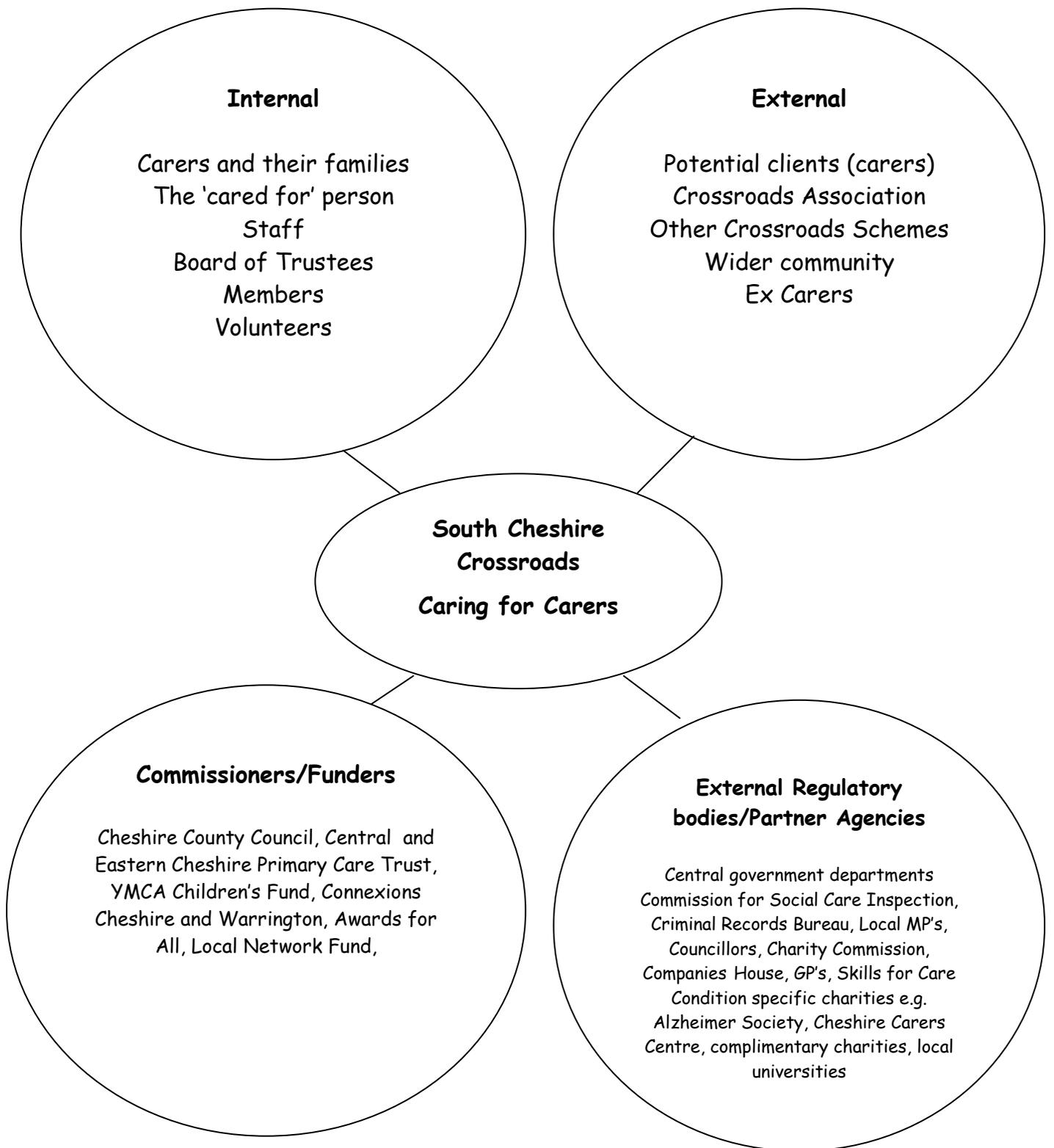
(4k) by undertaking a rolling programme of social accounting and having the accounts audited on an annual basis.

(4l) by exploring opportunities for collaborative working where appropriate

4 South Cheshire Crossroads Stakeholder Analysis

The stakeholder map was developed during a team meeting held on the 19th December 2006. The team meeting consisted of staff employed by South Cheshire Crossroads. The analysis attempts to capture key stakeholders. During the accounting process, it was decided, by the social accounting team (Lucy Whiting, Jean Herbert, Claire Hunter and Khaleed Olaniyan) that certain groups would be consulted with during this first set of accounts. Further analysis of this issue is included later in these accounts.

South Cheshire Crossroads Stakeholder Analysis



5 Scope of Social Accounts and Audit

What has been reported?

The social accounts produced examined the organisations agreed mission, values, objectives and activities. All objectives were included in the evaluation process although some questions were amended to suit the respondent.

Who has been consulted?

During the mapping exercise the staff team identified groups of key stakeholders. This included several stakeholders whose involvement with the organisation was arguably limited. As part of the initial evaluation of the stakeholder analysis, the scope of the social accounting process was discussed at length by staff. It was felt that given that this would be the first set of social accounts produced by South Cheshire Crossroads, the focus would be on consultation with several groups of key stakeholders. It was decided that during this round of accounts, the focus would be on stakeholders who it was felt were most affected by the work of the organisation.

After identifying which stakeholders were to be omitted from the social accounting process within this cycle of social accounts, it was decided that four key groups of stakeholders would be consulted with, using three similar questionnaires. The stakeholders covered by this cycle of social accounting included;

- Carers and their families
- Staff & Volunteers at South Cheshire Crossroads

- South Cheshire Crossroads Board of Trustees
- Commissioners/Funders/Partners/Referrers

The stakeholders were grouped into three sections;

- 1 Carers and their families
- 2 Staff, volunteers and trustees
- 3 Commissioners/Funders/Partners/Referrers

Each of the above groups were sent a slightly different questionnaire, as it was recognised that not all of the objectives or activities related to everyone. Copies of the questionnaires are attached as appendices.

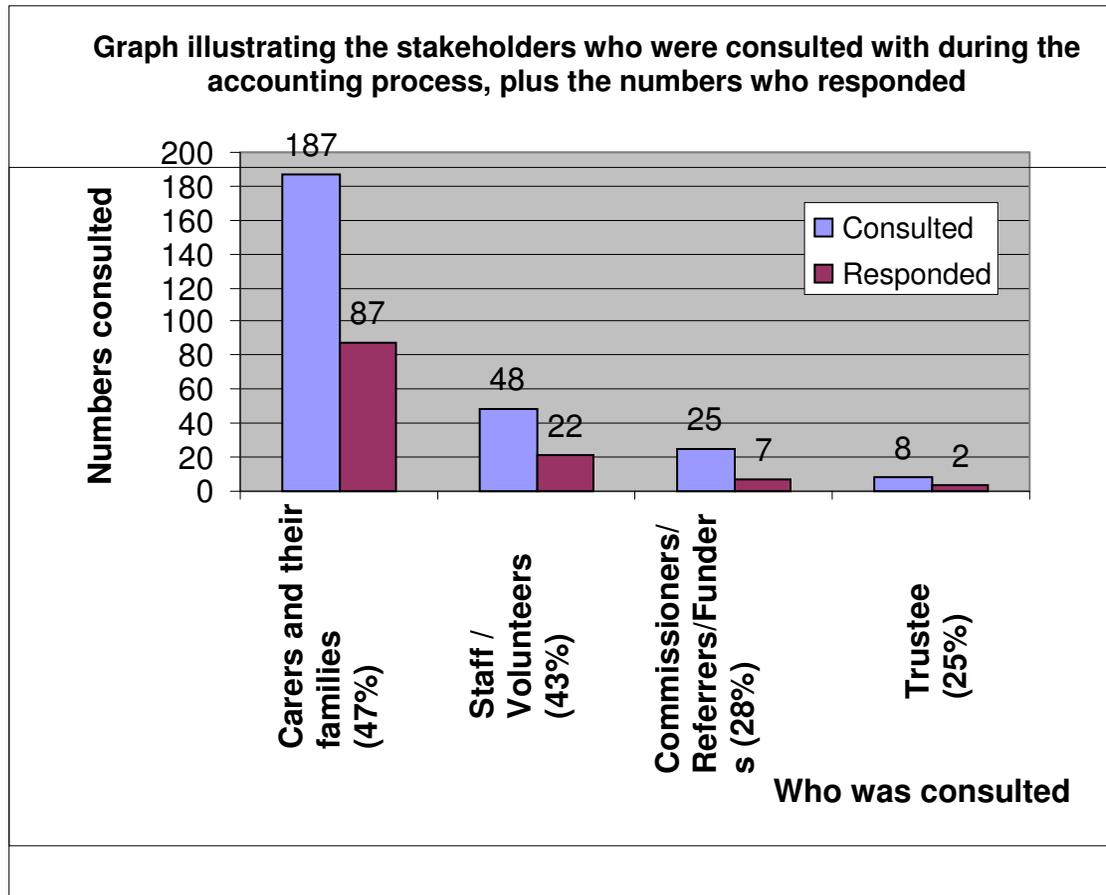
The Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) carried out an unannounced inspection earlier on in the year, which included extensive consultation with families. The report is included as part of the consultation process within Section 10 (Compliance Reports).

Unfortunately, members were omitted from the consultation process as a specific group. The members are interested parties who pay a nominal subscription charge to become affiliated to the organisation. They have full voting rights at the AGM, elect board members /auditors and agree any constitutional changes. This was an oversight on behalf of the social accounting team, who had made the assumption that members of this had in fact already been consulted with once. This was not always the case, and subsequently some members of this group of stakeholders were not consulted with. In next years accounting cycle members will be consulted with as a group in their own right. Stakeholders such as trustees and members will also be asked what they bring to the

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organisation as it is recognised that the relationship is a reciprocal arrangement.

Mapping Stakeholders Worksheet

Key Stakeholders
<p>Carers and their families; Carers, Young Carer, Young carers families</p>
<p>Staff: paid and voluntary, Board/committee members, trustees, advisory group members</p>
<p>Commissioners/Funders; Allison Ainsworth (Cheshire County Council), Pam Massey (Central & Eastern Cheshire Primary Care Trust), Denise Coy (Cheshire County Council), Lynne Davies (Cheshire & Warrington Connexions), Partner Organisations / Referrers; Angela Kirk (St Luke's Hospice), David Harvey (Cheshire Carers Centre), Jane Moore (Cheshire Carers Development Initiative), Graham Bushill (Oakhanger), Esther Fletcher (National Autism Society), Helen Clark (Making Space), Karen Urmston (Crossroads Caring for Carers in Ellesmere Port, Neston & Wirral), Tom Livingstone (Chester Crossroads), Andrea Kinsey (East Cheshire Crossroads), Nick Edwards (In Control, Cheshire County Council). Anne Roberts (Crossroads Association), Katie Wylde (St Johns Ambulance Young Carers Project), Stephanie Lawley (Central & Eastern Cheshire Primary Care Trust) YMCA Cheshire Children's Fund, Eric Harding (Wesley Centre).</p>



Demographic facts about the Carers and their families

During this accounting period, 28592 hours of respite care were delivered to carers and their families across central Cheshire.

Carer's age and gender

AGE GROUP	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Carers under 10 yrs	7	5	12
Carers between 11 - 18 yrs	7	9	16
Carers between 19 - 29 yrs	3	1	6
Carers between 30 - 39 yrs	4	6	10
Carers between 40 - 49 yrs	16	17	33

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Carers between 50 -59 yrs	29	33	62
Carers between 60 -69 yrs	35	28	63
Carers between 70-79 yrs	37	32	69
Carers between 80 -89 yrs	17	18	35
Carers 90+ yrs	4	1	5
Total	159	152	311

Relationship of carer to person with care needs

Child- Parent	27
Parent – Child	51
Spouse/ Partner	137
Other Family Member	94
Friend/ Neighbour	2
Other: (Please list) •	
Total	311

Referral sources

Social Services	45
Community Health Team/Nurse	18
GPs	5
Health	9
Self / Family / Friends/ Neighbours	22
Voluntary Organisations	17
Other (e.g. education)	17
Total	133

WHO WAS OMITTED FROM THE CONSULTATION PROCESS?

It was decided that some groups that had been identified during the stakeholder analysis exercise would not be consulted with as part of this accounting cycle. These groups can be listed as follows;

Ex-Carers: It was decided that given the limited contact this group actually has with the organisation, they would not be consulted with as part of the accounting process. Potentially the response rate from this group may be low, as potentially the service is no longer appropriate to their needs, or the service has ceased because the person the carer cared for has died, or if they weren't happy.

General Public: The general public were omitted from the consultation process, as potentially those consulted with would not know enough about the organisation in order to justify their inclusion in the accounting process. In addition to this there was not enough time or resources to conduct and transcribe surveys carried out with members of the general public. Marketing has been identified as a key priority for the organisation, particularly in the light of the emphasis with in the strategic business plan, on developing the private purchase market in Cheshire. The Scheme Manager is in the process of writing a strategic marketing plan which will compliment the existing strategic plan that the organisation is working with. When South Cheshire Crossroads carries out the social accounting process next year, this group of stakeholders may be consulted with. Arguably they consist of

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potential carers - 1 in 6 people will be become a carer at some point in their lives (Department of Health Website 2007).

External Regulatory Bodies: This stakeholder group consists of partners from a huge range of sectors. It was decided that organisations such as Central Government departments would be omitted from the consultation process due to the fact that South Cheshire Crossroads is a local organisation which potentially means that national organisations may have a limited understanding of activities carried out. However, other organisations such as the Commission for Social Care Inspection and Crossroads Association were consulted with.

Methodology

After consideration, it was decided that the methodologies that would be used during the social accounting process would be semi-structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The key reason for deciding to use questionnaires was that the time allocated to producing this first set of accounts was limited, and it was felt that questionnaires would be a relatively quick and simple method of gathering data from stakeholders. The questionnaires that were distributed included both open and closed questions which provided both quantitative and qualitative data. The semi-structured interview carried out provided qualitative data.

Quantitative methods produce a result which can be measured and expressed in numerical form and therefore it is easier for comparisons to be made across data. Quantitative data is objective and relatively quick and easy to collect and transcribe. In contrast, qualitative data produces subjective data and measures individual's feelings/views. It allows respondents the opportunity to be descriptive and allows the researcher to develop a complex understanding of their views and opinions.

Three questionnaires were produced, one for staff/trustees, one for carers and their families and one for commissioners and referrers. With hindsight it would have been extremely useful to have produced a pilot questionnaire for respondents to complete. Unfortunately due to the pressures of time and resources this was not done. A pilot study could have provided useful information in terms of highlighting any ambiguous questions and would have allowed the questionnaire design to be improved. Similarly, a pilot

questionnaire would have enabled the questions to have been refined so they were clearer to the respondents. Clearly, if a pilot study had been undertaken it would have been necessary to use a different sample of respondents. If the same sample had been used this might have influenced their later behaviour if they have already been involved. For future social account cycles, a pilot questionnaire will be tested on a group who will not subsequently be involved in the actual social accounting process.

The sampling technique used was quota sampling. This technique was used as it is a non-random method and made it possible to select precisely the sample that was required so that a selective group was chosen. Using this method allowed for a specific group of people to be targeted who were directly linked to South Cheshire Crossroads.

There are several advantages to using postal questionnaires which include the following;

- A large sample size can be reached fairly quickly
- It is a cost effective method
- In terms of a wide geographical spread, postal questionnaires are a useful way of contacting a cross section of respondents
- Respondents anonymity can be preserved if necessary
- It is arguably easier for respondents to answer any personal questions or make complaints about the service, due to the fact there is no interviewer present therefore less likelihood of interviewer bias.

In terms of the disadvantages of utilising postal questionnaires, it could be argued that by not having an interviewer present to provide clarification, those questions which may have seemed ambiguous or unclear could not be explained to respondents. Therefore there is a danger that such questions were avoided or answered incorrectly. With postal questionnaires there is also a risk of a low response rate. This point was taken into consideration and it was decided that for one key group of stakeholders (trustees) where the response rate was at first very low, a reminder email was sent out to encourage a greater response.

The closed questions that were put into the questionnaires produced standardised data which enabled comparisons to be made within the results and graphs to be produced. This enabled comparisons to be made and conclusions to be drawn from the statistics. However, closed questions only provide the respondent with a limited number of answers to choose from which may cause the respondent to choose an answer which did not truly reflect their view or they may have proceeded to choose 'I don't know'.

In order to involve young carers and their families in the social accounting process it was decided that three semi-structured interviews would be carried out. However, when it came to the implementation of this, it became clear that the amount of time involved in this type of research method had been greatly underestimated. Time limitations meant that there was only sufficient time for one interview to be undertaken. However, the semi-structured interview that was undertaken has provided the accounts with some useful qualitative data. Any questions that

were unclear could be explained by the interviewer so that the quality of data is reliable. The face to face nature of these interviews also meant that the interviewer was able to register facial expressions and body language. This acted as an indicator as to how comfortable the respondent was in answering the question and if they were confused about a particular question. The transcript from the interview with a young carer's family is attached as an appendix.

There are disadvantages to face-to-face interviews in that the respondents may have answered the questions differently due to the presence of a researcher, which could lead to interviewer bias. There is also the concern that interviewee may wish to discuss issues which do not directly fit with the research question.

In order to collect the qualitative data from the questionnaires, each open ended question was recorded and then all of the qualitative comments given per question was recorded. Emerging trends were identified for each question and for each individual questionnaire. Following discussions within the social accounting team, questions were identified which met each objective. The comments collected were then applied to each objective to analyse how well the objective was deemed to be met. The quantitative data was collected through a series of charts of each question which was then recoded on a database. Graphs were produced to illustrate this data.

6 REPORT ON PERFORMANCE, VALUES, OBJECTIVES

'A positive aspect outcome of the questionnaires is that the majority of the clients believe that South Cheshire Crossroads provides a good service which they are satisfied with and that the staff are the best thing about the service as they are friendly, reliable and caring'

Quantitative Information

Analysis of questionnaire data relating to the objective 1:

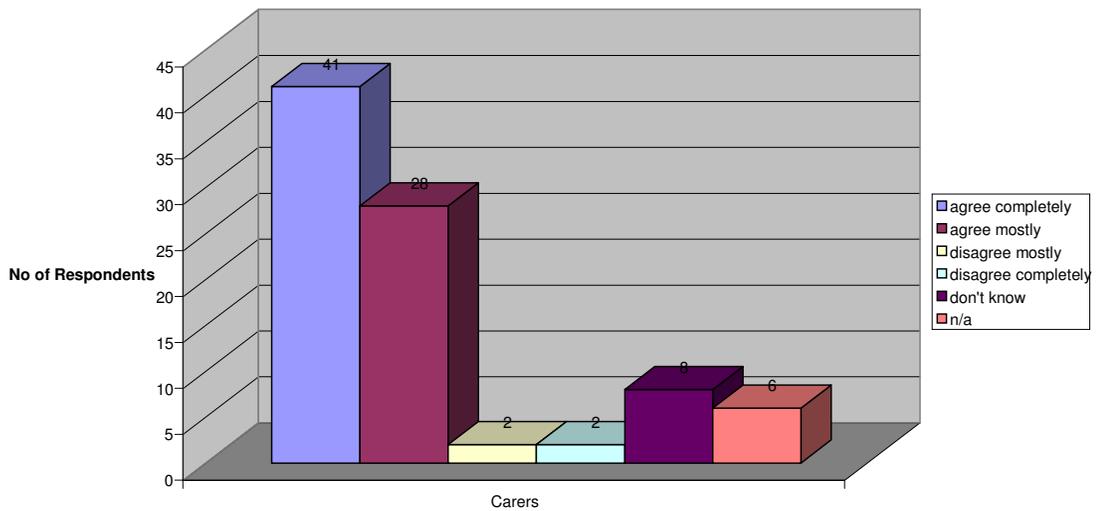
Objective 1: Provide respite support to carers and their families

Activity 1a: By offering the provision of community based support workers who can provide practical and emotional support to carers and their families, within a family's home (or away from home) on a regular basis

Results from Carers

Overall the response given was good, 47% (41) of Carers marked 'agree completely', 32% (28) 'agree mostly', with only 3% of Carers opting for 'disagree mostly' and 3% for 'disagree completely'. Almost 8% (8) of Carers indicated that they 'don't know', 7% (6) did not answer the question.

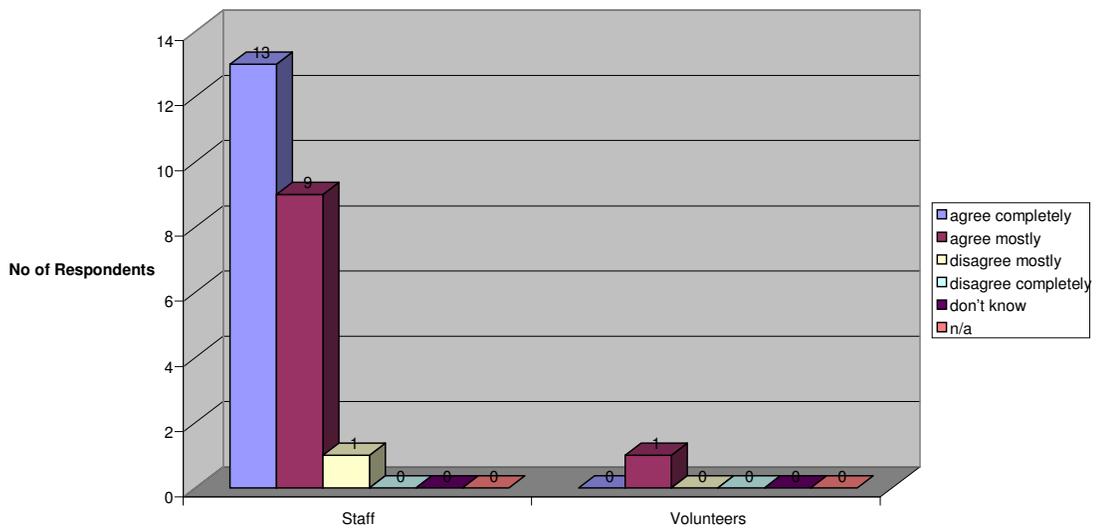
Activity 1a- Carers Response to 'I feel that I have been offered both emotional and practical support from Crossroads'



Staff Responses

In terms of staff responses, only one respondent replied with 'disagree mostly' to this question. Staff's response to activity 1a showed similar trends, 54% (13) 'agree completely', and 42% (10) 'agree mostly' and 4% (1) who disagreed mostly.

Activity 1a-Staff Responses - Crossroads provides emotional and practical support to Carers



In conclusion it is fair to say both staff and Carers believe that this activity is being implemented and that Crossroads is also producing positive results in relation to care given. Overall the response given was good, almost half completely agree.

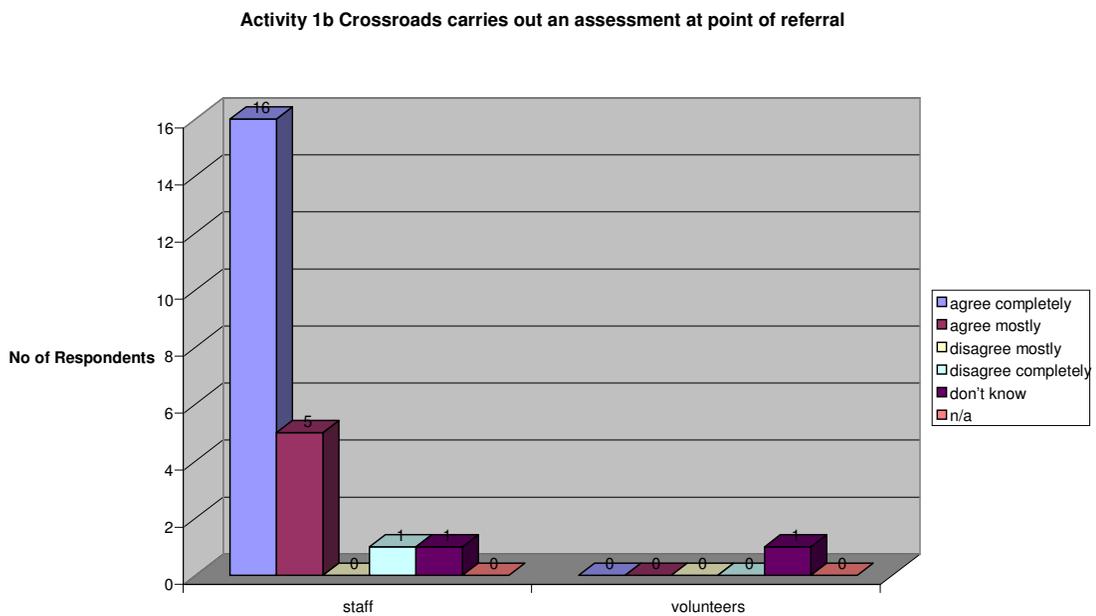
Results from others including Commissioners and Referrers

Results from this group were positive with 71% (5) saying that they agree completely and 29% (2) agreeing mostly. This would suggest that the group questioned agree that this activity is being achieved.

Activity 1b: By carrying out a care needs assessment at point of referral.

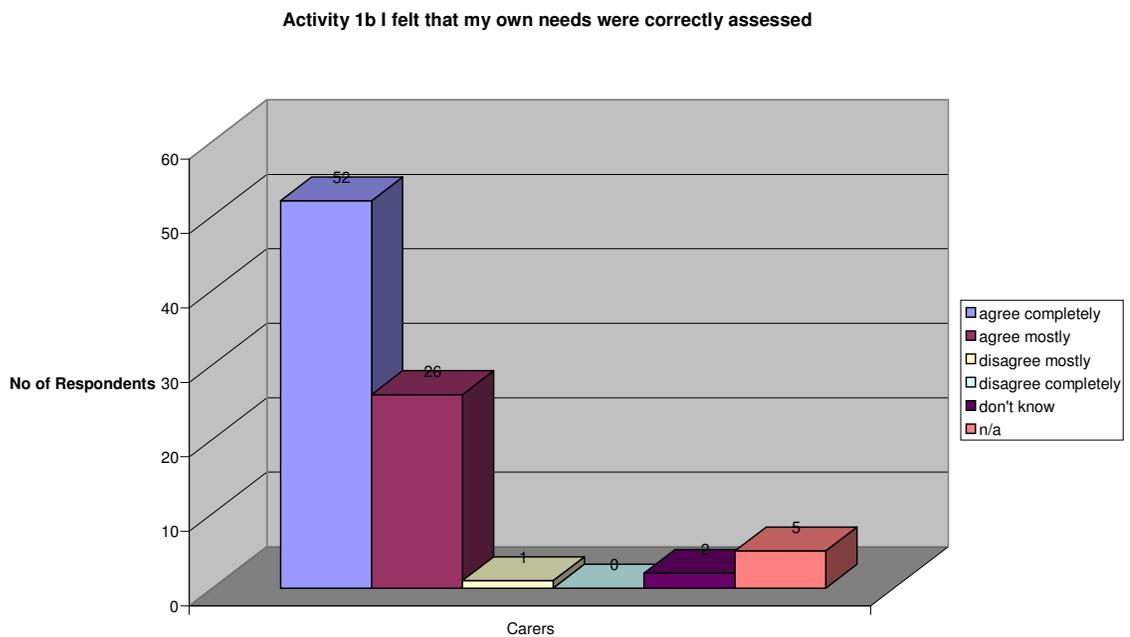
Staff responses

The overall response shows that 73% (16) of staff 'agree completely', 18% (4) of staff 'agree mostly', that an assessment was carried out at point of referral. Only 4.5 % (1) of staff marked 'disagree completely' and 4.5 % (1) answered that they didn't know. It may be that these Carer Support Workers did not understand the question, as Crossroads is required by legislation to carry out a care needs assessment when anyone is referred to Crossroads. The fact that this is taking place is evidenced within the Commission for Social Care Inspection report 2007. Over three quarters of the staff agree completely that an assessment is carried out at the point of referral (when a client is referred to Crossroads) with almost 20% agreeing mostly.



Carer's responses

The response to activity 1b in relation to question 2.2 of Carers questionnaire shows that 60% (52) chose 'agree completely', 30% (26) 'agree mostly'. Only 1% chose 'disagree mostly', while (2) said they didn't know and 6% (5) felt that this question was not applicable to them. From these results, it is fair to say that client's generally feel that their needs are being assessed correctly.



Results from others including Commissioners and Referrers

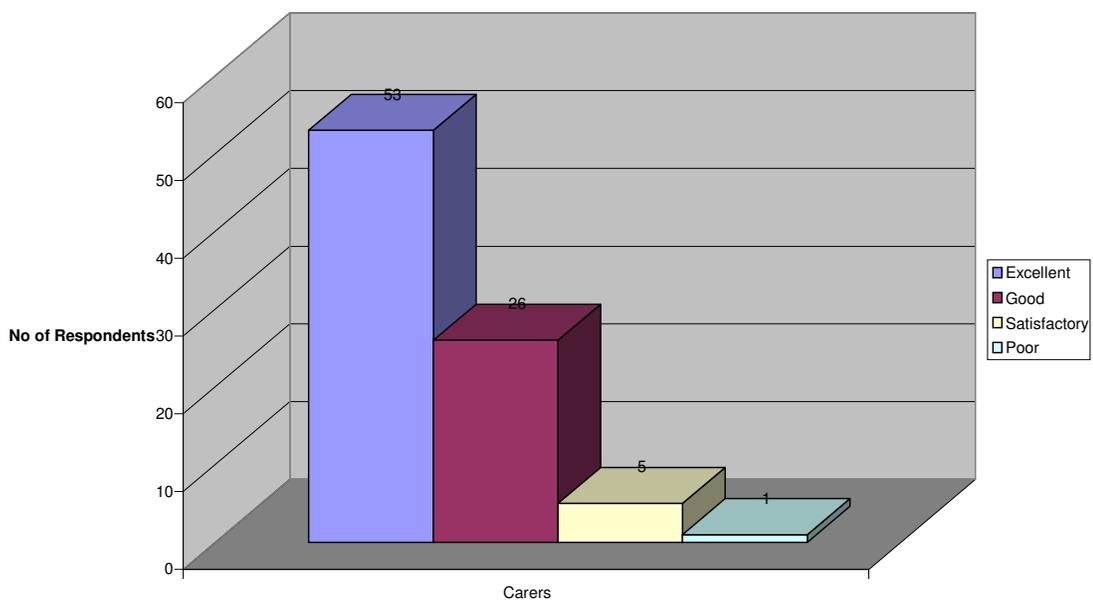
These results were pleasing in that 44% (3) agreed completely and 28% (2) agreed mostly with only 28% (2) saying that they did not know. However work still needs to be carried out in terms of raising awareness of South Cheshire Crossroads procedures with this group.

Activity 1c: By ensuring that staff are matched with families they support in terms of their training.

Carers Responses

Results show that carer's response to this question in relation to the activity to be very positive. 61% (53) stated the level of training to be 'excellent', 30% (26) 'Good', 5% (5) 'satisfactory' and 1% (1) 'Poor'. Although more than 50% considered the training staff uses to be 'Excellent', head way can still be made so that negative responses are diminished further. Due to the nature of the questionnaire questions a small volume of respondents chose not to answer the question.

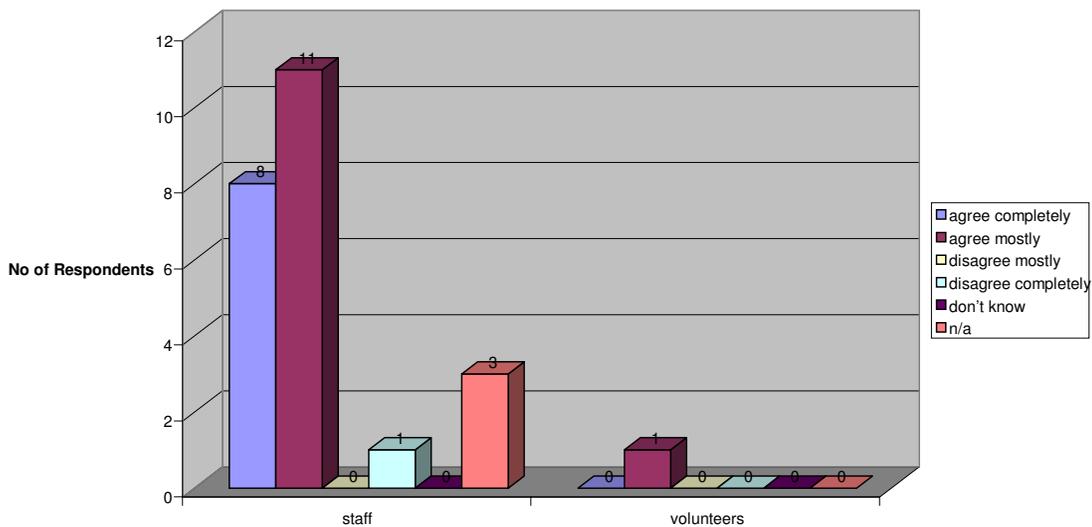
Activity 1c Standard of training of staff matched with clients needs



Staff Responses

Responses to question 2.3 in relation to activity 1c showed a different set of results the majority answered the question with 'agree mostly' 52% (11) and 38% (8) 'agree completely'. From this it can be seen that although there is still high % of respondents that positively believe that they have been trained to high degree, work can be done to improve this result and therefore increase the value of this action in relation to the objective.

Activity 1c I feel that I am adequately trained to work with the families I support



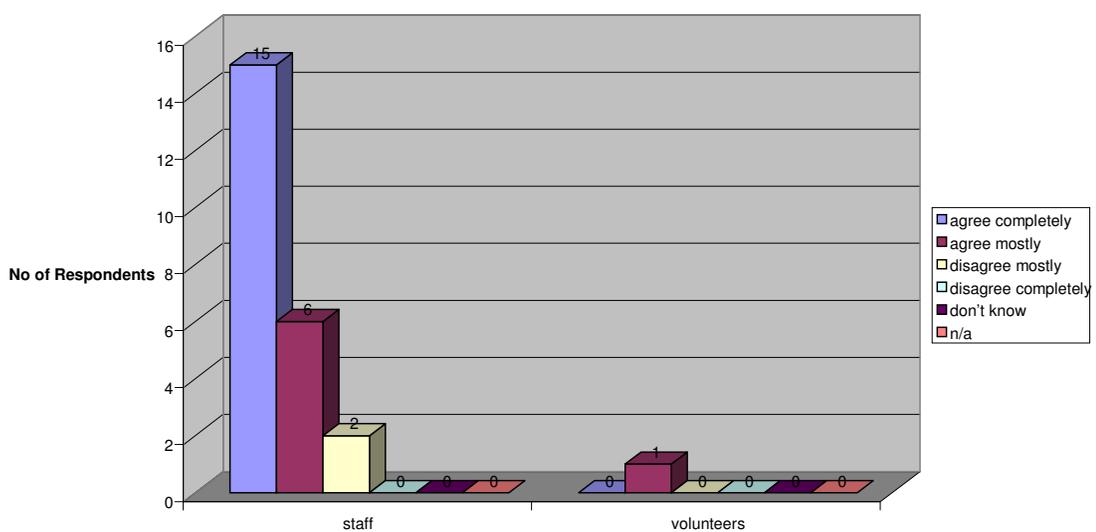
Results from others including Commissioners/Referrers

When this group were asked how if they felt that Crossroads staff were trained to go into the families they work with the results were as follows; 44% (3) said they agreed completely, while a further 28% (2) said they agreed mostly and only 28% (2) said they did not know. This could be for a number of reason including their relationship to the service and the appropriateness of them having to know the answer to this question although it is difficult to tell the exact reason due to the confidential nature of the responses and being unable to tell who gave that certain response.

Activity 1d: By encompassing the concepts of equality and diversity

Staff responses were as follows. As can be seen from the chart below 62% (15) said that they agreed completely, 30% (7) said they agree mostly, 8% (2) said they disagree mostly with none respondents saying they didn't know or that the question was not relevant to them.

Activity 1d I feel that Carers are treated with respect and provided with equal opportunities



Results from others including Commissioners/Referrers

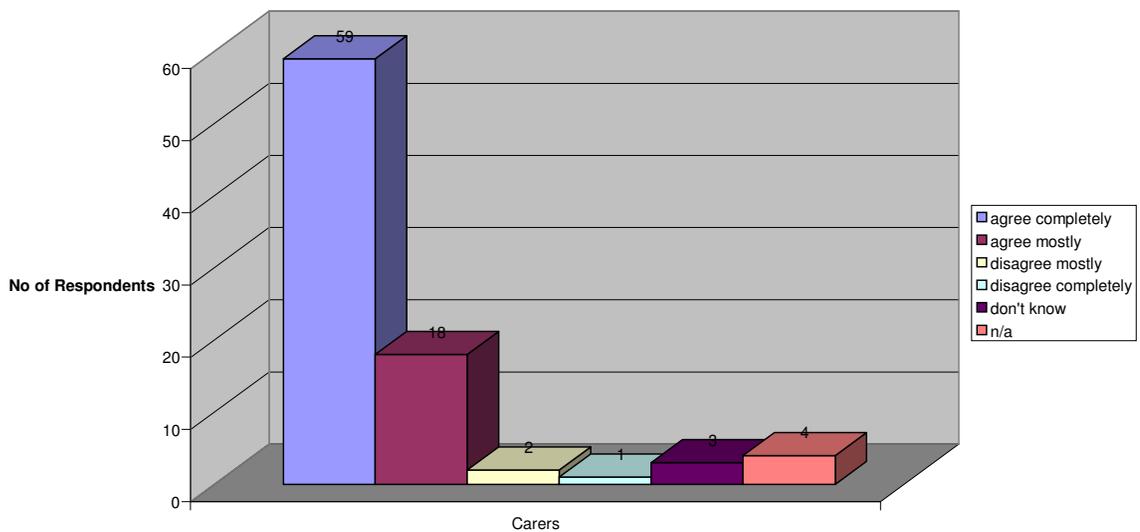
The other group consulted gave similar results with 29% (2) agreeing completely, 42% (3) agreed mostly and 29% (2) said they didn't know. Again a possible reason for the response of 'don't know' could be due to the relationship of the respondent to the organisation.

Activity 1e: By ensuring a consistent service provision in terms of staffing

Carers Responses

Over half of the respondents 68% (59) agree completely with the above statement and 20% (18) agreeing mostly. Overall the results are positive with only a small 3% (2) answering 'disagree mostly' and 1% (1) who answered 'disagree completely'. However there were also 3% (3) who answered 'don't know' and 4% (4) who said that the question was not applicable to them. This could imply that the question given was not clear enough or again the question did not apply to the respondent.

Activity 1e I feel that I have received continuity with the staff who have supported me.

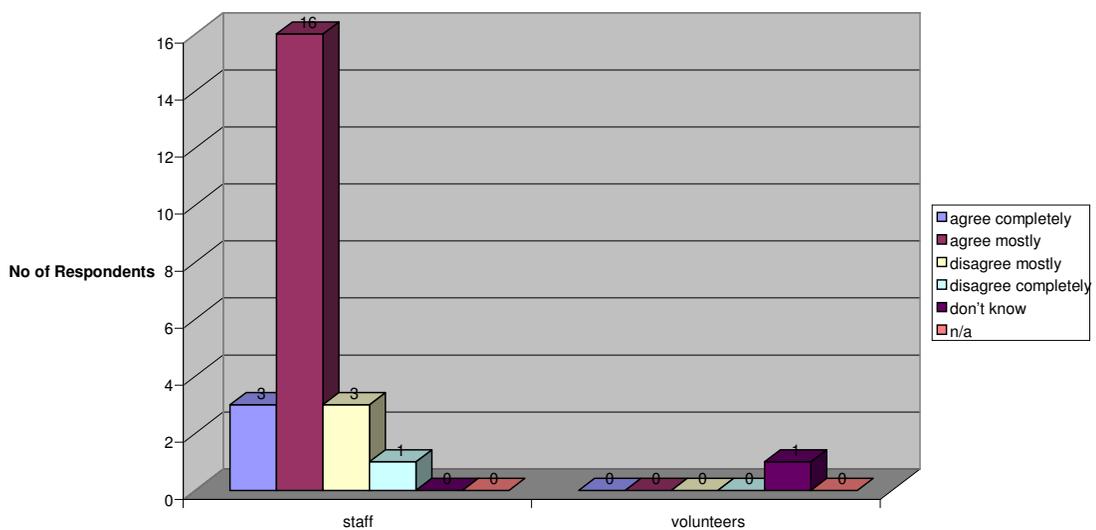


Staff responses

The chart below shows the majority who answered this question indicated that they 68% (16) 'agree mostly' but only 13% (3) 'agree completely' and the same 13% (3) answering 'disagree mostly'. 6% (1) answered that they disagreed completely. The 1 volunteer who responded 'don't know' could be that they felt they did not know enough about the general service to comment on this activity.

The 3 members of staff who indicated that they agreed mostly shows there is still some work to be done in this area.

Activity 1e I feel that carers and their families are provided with consistency in terms of staffing



Results from others including Commissioners/Referrers

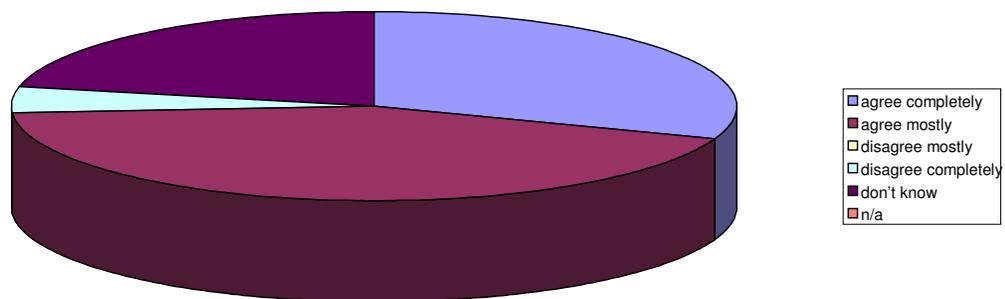
Responses were that 30% (2) agreed mostly while the remainder 70% (5) said that they didn't know. This could be due to the relationship between the respondents and the organisations although it is difficult to tell due to the confidential nature of questionnaires.

Activity 1f: By involving the people in the compilation of their individual care plan

Staff Responses

This chart shows staff response to question 2.5 'I feel that clients are involved in compiling their care plan. Results show over a third 30% (7) said that they 'agree completely', but 41% (10) chose 'agree mostly'. There is no negative response to this question; however (5) did not answer this question.

Activity 1f Staff responses to clients being involved in compilation of care plans

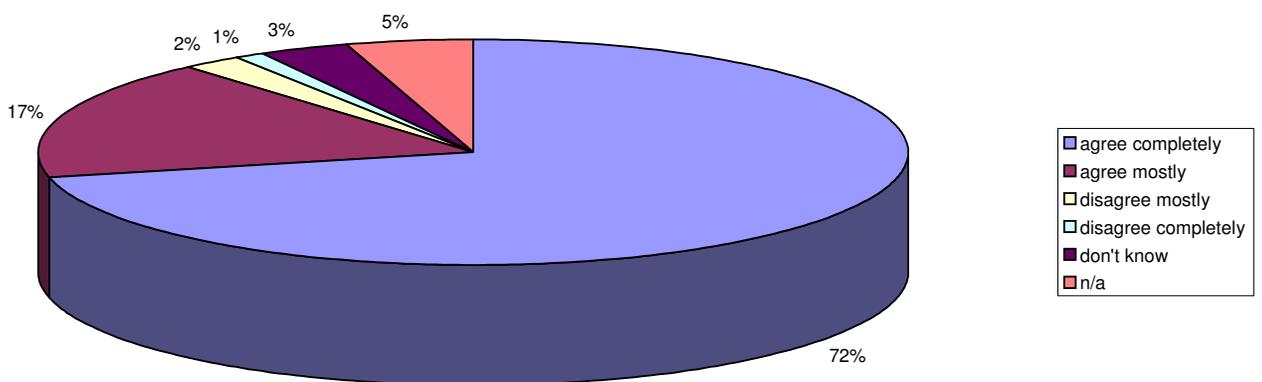


Carers Responses

This chart shows carer's response to question 2.4 'I was involved in the initial care plan'. 72% of carers answered 'agree completely' to the question, with 17% 'agree mostly', 2% 'disagree mostly', 1% 'disagree completely' and only 3% 'don't know' with 5% not replying to the question. Overall the results of this question show that more than 70% of clients agree that they had been involved in compiling their care plan. These results show that South

Cheshire Crossroads is working well to achieving this goal however further work could be carried out to find out how the small proportion of respondents could feel more involved in the compilation of their care plan.

Activity 1f Carers responses to the question ' I was involved in the initial care plan'



Results from others including Commissioners/Referrers

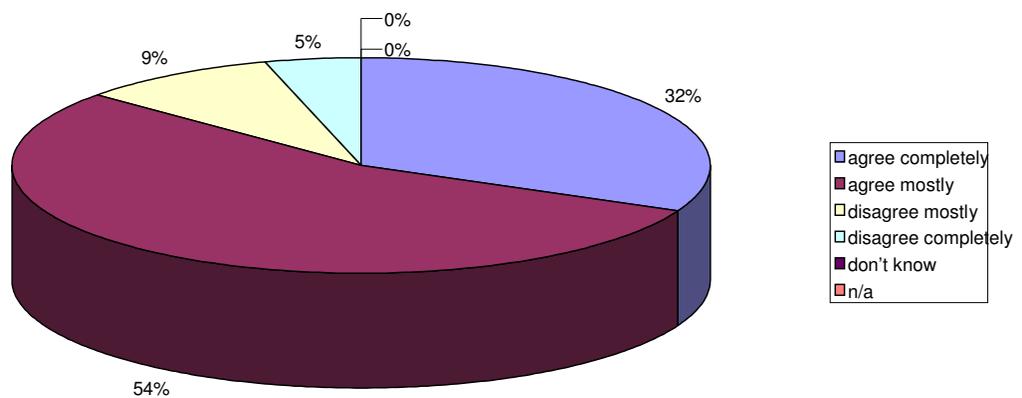
42% (3) agree completely and 6% (1) agree mostly with 42% (3) saying that they did not know. It is to be expected that a small number would not know the answer to this question and again is possibly due to the nature of the relationship with the organisation.

Activity (1g): By listening and responding to clients needs and by acting appropriately if they are not happy.

Staff Responses

When asked about agreement with the following to statement 'I feel that clients are listened to when they are not happy', 32% (7) 'agree completely', 54% (12) 'agree mostly', 9% (2) 'disagree mostly', 5% (1) 'disagree completely', with no respondents answering that they did not know. Overall results show that the majority of staff believe that clients are listened to when there is a problem. Whilst this is a positive result with the majority of respondents responding 'agree mostly' and 'agree completely', it would seem that further work can be done to establish how staff feel the service could be improved.

Activity 1g Staff response to 'I feel that carers are listened to when they are not happy.'

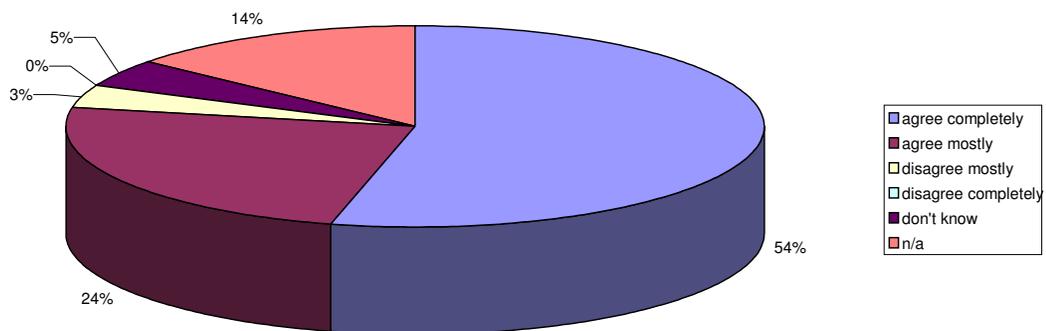


Carers Responses

Responses to the statement, 'If I have contacted the office with a query or problem, I felt satisfied with the way it was handled', were that 54% (47) 'agree completely', 24% (21) 'agree mostly', 3% (3) 'disagree mostly', 0% 'disagree completely', 5% (4) 'don't know' and 14% (12) felt that this questions was 'N/A' to them.

Overall results show that clients are satisfied with the contact with the office in order to resolve queries and problems. Due to the high % which answered 'agree completely' it is unlikely that a priority will be to further explore this issue.

Activity 1g Carers Responses to 'If I have contacted the office with a query or complaint, I have felt satisfied with the way it was handled'



Results from others including Commissioners/Referrers

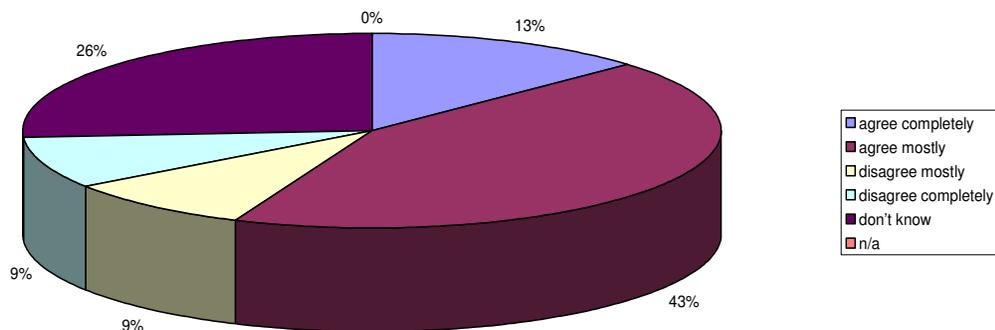
When asked if they thought whether or not carers were listened to when they were unhappy the results were as follows. 29% (2) agree completely, 4% (1) agreed mostly 4% (1) said they disagreed mostly, with 43% (3) answering that they did not know.

Activity (1h): By making effective use of new technologies within client's homes to ensure efficient working practice and minimise risk within the home.

Staff Responses

Responses to the statement 'I feel that Crossroads makes effective use of the technologies in client's homes' included; 13% 'agree completely', 43% 'agree mostly', 9% 'disagree mostly', 9% 'disagree completely' and 26% 'don't know'. All respondents answered this question and therefore there were no 'N/A'. Overall staff believe that they do currently make use of the technologies available in clients' homes wherever possible. However the majority answered 'agree mostly' which would suggest that more can be done in relation to technologies used and perhaps training issued to use technologies within the house and to gain staff views on how this could be achieved.

Activity 1h Staff Responses to I Feel That Crossroads Makes Effective Use Of Technologies In Carers Homes



Results from others including Commissioners/Referrers

When this group were asked to indicate how much they agreed with the following statement that South Cheshire Crossroads makes effective use of technologies within carers homes the results were as follows 4% (1) agreed mostly, 4% (1) disagreed mostly and 72% (5) said that they did not know. The results would indicate that further work needs to be done in this area to raise awareness amongst this group.

Qualitative Comments from all Stakeholders on Objective 1

Where comments have been put into this set of accounts, they have been selected at random as representative views. Not all of the comments collected from stakeholders were included in this years accounts. In next years accounts we will attach comments as a separate appendix.

There were 7 respondents who chose to include additional information in response to this objective and activities. Below are listed comments.

- I feel that Carer Support Workers need to be trained better, more consideration needs to go into the rota's- e.g. I am expected to sit outside a clients house late at night (in the dark on my own) as the travelling times are often wrong. Also when I mentioned this on numerous occasions to which I have not been listened to, it still hasn't changed. Also when overtime is needed to be covered and you're contacted ask if the Carer Support Worker can do it rather than saying 'you have to do it', being polite.
- Develop interaction with clients and colleagues during work activities.
- The organisation has to be more pro-active in guaranteeing, overseeing and consistency in staff hours.
- I have had the support of manager to develop my skills as a worker and have enjoyed the freedom and encouragement to work with carers and their families to develop new services.
-
-

- Difficult to answer some questions in earlier sections as I felt they were for carers going to peoples homes whereas I do not work in this area I work with the young carer's project.
- I feel more care could be taken when arranging rota's to avoid prolonged periods of Carer Support Workers sitting in cars. There are many clients who use Crossroads who live a very short distance away from each other yet we are given 15 minutes travelling time in order to travel a few streets away. Not all clients appreciate Carer Support Workers arriving early. If travelling times were managed more effectively it would limit the amount of time we spend sitting in cars. This is time we do not get paid for- perhaps we should be offered payment for travelling time or at the very least excess time i.e. anything over minutes.

Narrative for Objective One

South Cheshire Crossroads Caring for Carers core business is the provision of respite support services to carers and their families. On average, the organisation provides over 600 respite hours per week to over 240 families across South Cheshire. In this accounting period South Cheshire Crossroads have delivered a total of 25708 hours of respite services to carers and their families and 2884 hours of group respite to families across South Cheshire. The organisation has worked with 311 families all of whom received an assessment at the point of referral.

In this accounting period there have been two formal complaints made to the service. For each complaint, as well as recording details of the complaint, information is also recorded about the feedback given to the complainant and any outcomes and/or action taken. These records are then inspected under Commission for Social Care Inspection regulations and findings recorded in South Cheshire Crossroads Inspection report. There are clear policies and procedures that govern the provision of respite services and these are monitored in a range of ways. For example, all clients have to have a care plan in their home. This guides the work of the Carer Support Worker and means that the organisation meets the national minimum standards in terms of providing care within the home to vulnerable people. Failure to comply with this policy would result in severe penalties from the Commission for Social Care Inspection.

In terms of achieving consistent staffing levels, this is not always possible for a variety of reasons. There are often staff shortages

which make this virtually impossible. Furthermore, occasionally it is important to move staff around to work with other families as it could be that the family are developing a dependency. Commission for Social Care Inspection guidelines suggest that whilst a consistent service is important, this does not mean always having the same worker allocated to a family.

In terms of delivery of social care services, the Care Standards Act became effective from April 2002 and established wholesale reform of the registration and inspection of a range of social care providers. The Regulations establish the minimum care standards that a domiciliary care agency must follow in order to comply with the law (CSCI). The Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) was established as a single, independent regulatory authority that aims to work on behalf of service users to ensure that the National Minimum standards are met. Whilst the standards have raised the quality of delivery of services, there is evidence to suggest organisations such as Crossroads, who exceed the minimum standard are now being penalised as too expensive by commissioners due to the considerable investment in service development and workforce development.

Whilst currently the use of technologies in clients home is limited, it is an area that South Cheshire Crossroads would like to develop and therefore the activity was included in the consultation process. Clearly some work needs to be done by office staff to improve the way the rota system is put together. Unfortunately sometimes cancelling work or giving staff work at the beginning and then the end of the day is unavoidable, as staff are attempting to cover

sickness or holiday absences. However communication has been mentioned as a problem several times and therefore it would seem there are significant areas of improvement to be made.

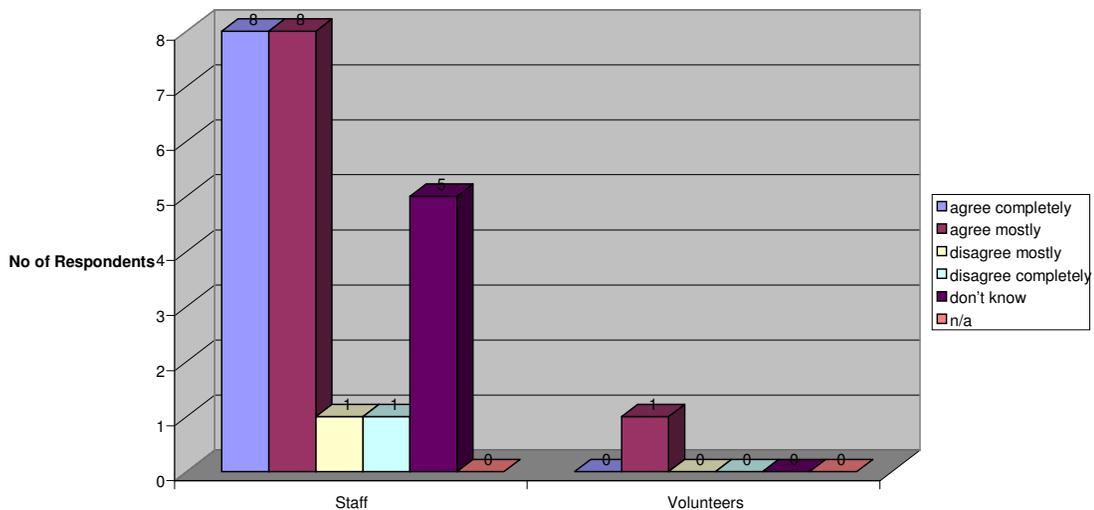
Objective 2: Develop specialist services for group of carers with similar needs e.g. young carers.

Activity (2a): By working with partner agencies to deliver bespoke services in response to identified need.

Staff Responses

Results show that 34% (8) chose 'agree completely', 37% (9) 'agree mostly', 4% (1) 'disagree mostly', 4% (1) 'disagree completely', 21% (5) said they did not know with no-one answering that they thought the question was not applicable. Results would indicate that the majority of staff believe that Crossroads does work with partner agencies in this way. These results also imply that more needs to be done in relation to communication within the organisation itself.

Activity 2a Staff Responses to, 'I feel that crossroads works with other agencies to provide services in response to an identified need'



Results from others including Commissioners/Referrers

South Cheshire Crossroads Caring for Carers Social Accounts April 2006-March 2007

When asked about their views on this statement the results were pleasing with 70% (5) saying that they agree completely and 30% (2) saying they agree mostly.

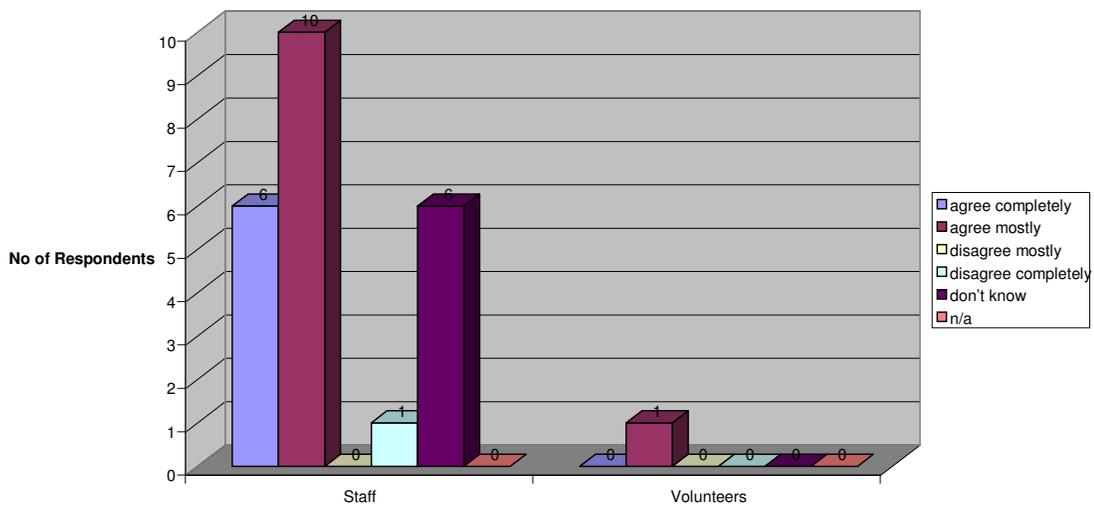
Activity (2b): Through carrying out research to identify areas of unmet need for carers that can be developed by South Cheshire Crossroads

Staff Responses

Staff response to the statement 'Crossroads carries out research to identify where new services can be developed' were as follows; 25% (6) chose 'agree completely', 45% (11) 'agree mostly', (0) disagreed mostly, 5% (1) 'disagree completely', and 25% (6) replied that they 'don't know'.

There is a high percentage of respondents who chose 'don't know' which would suggest that there is not enough information being given within the organisation about work being done to achieve this activity.

Activity 2a Staff Response to 'Crossroads carries out research to identify where new services can be developed



Results from others including Commissioners/Referrers

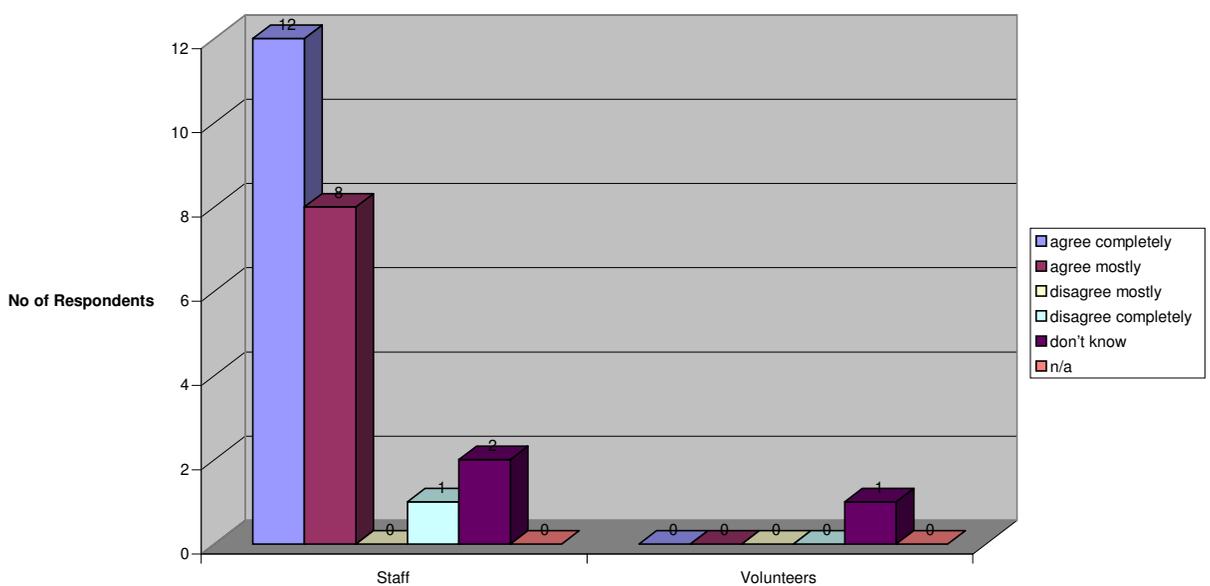
The other group consulted on this activity gave results as follows
90% (6) agreed completely and 10% (1) indicated that they did not know.

Activity (2c): By linking into local, regional and national strategy relating to the delivery of health and social care services.

Staff responses

Staff's response to the statement 'Crossroads links in with nationally agreed standards relating to social care services' were as follows; 50% (12) of respondents 'agree completely', 33% (8) 'agree mostly', (0) disagreed mostly 5% (1) 'disagree completely' and 12% (3) said they 'don't know'. There is a high percentage who agree completely with this which would suggest that staff feel that Crossroads works well to achieving this activity

Activity 2c Crossroads links in to nationally agreed standards relating to social care



Results from others including Commissioners/Referrers

The other group consulted gave results as follows 70% (5) agreed completely 15% (1) agreed mostly and only 15% (1) said they did

South Cheshire Crossroads Caring for Carers Social Accounts April 2006-March 2007

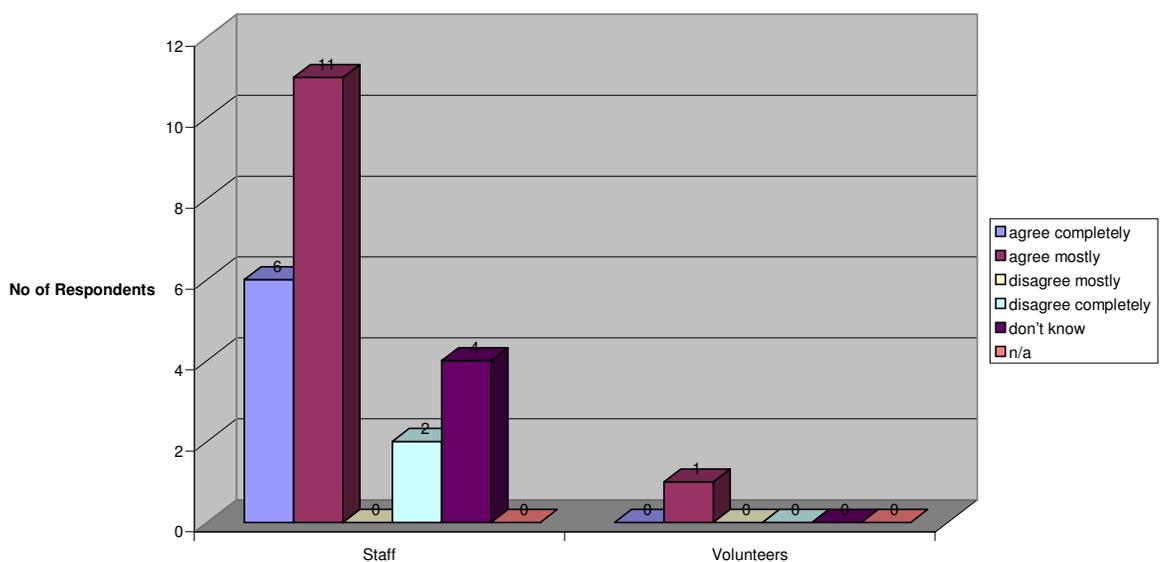
not know which again would indicate that Crossroads are working well to achieve this activity.

Activity (2d): By involving carers in the development of new initiatives.

Staff response

Staff response to 'Crossroads includes carers in suggesting new ideas for services' were as follows; 25% (6) 'agree completely', 50% (12) 'agree mostly', (0) disagree mostly 9% (2) 'disagree completely' and 16% (4) saying they 'don't know'. The majority of responses were positive with a low % who disagreed with the statement. However 16% (\$) of respondents selected 'I don't know'. There are two actions that could follow this response. It could be that more work is required in terms of engaging with carers and their families in the development of new services. Work also needs to be done in terms of informing staff about this work. A newsletter could be distributed to improve the situation.

Activity 2d Crossroads involves carers in the development of new services



Results from others including Commissioners/Referrers

The results from the other group consulted were as follows, 88% (4) agreed completely, 4% (1) agreed mostly, 4% (1) disagreed mostly and 4% (1) saying that they did not know. More work could be done around finding out how this group of respondents think Crossroads could improve on this activity.

Comments from all Stakeholders about Objective 2

There were some interesting comments about the new services that South Cheshire Crossroads could develop. These include the development of a database of clients who may wish to purchase the service privately.

Staff had a range of ideas. These included;

- A few of my clients have often asked me to take them food shopping as they rely on others to do so but feel they could do it if a Carer Support Worker accompanied them.
- Shopping, social activities.
- From calls recorded from carer- shopping and cleaning, short term emergency cover i.e. when coming home from hospital or when carer is unwell.
- Most of our clients go into respite for a break; it would be nice for us to have the opportunity to visit St Luke's or other organisations which our clients use. So we know for ourselves what they are like and what they do.
- As above, Carers café supported living assistive technology, residential respite.
- Working with housing providers in utilising new technologies to assist clients in the home.
- More training.
- Free respite for parent carers of a child with a disability.

Comments on this objective from Commissioners/Referrers in terms of developing new services included;

- Developing an Aspergers social skills group/social skills group for children
- Emergency respite in own home.
- Aspergers Social skills groups for children.
- Look at ways to support Carers of Adults with mental illness,
- Increase capacity overall
- Assistive technology response service to monitor and respond to alarms/ sensors when carers are out.
- Social skills groups for children (after school clubs etc)
- Holiday groups for young people returning from residential colleges

When carers were asked what new services they wished to see South Cheshire Crossroads provide the following suggestions were made;

- Car driving
- Not at present
- Emergency cover.
- I have visited the stroke club in Nantwich with a view to my husband attending on Tuesday mornings but, unfortunately he will not attend without me, I may need further help in trying to persuade him to go.
- No x 4.
- I am not aware of exactly what other services you have in mind.
- Occasional evening care would be much appreciated.
- None that I can think of at the moment.

- I like to know more about respite care.
- A little housework if possible.

In terms of carer involvement, the following suggestions were made by members of the board of trustees;

- ❖ Regular newsletter would be good and regular meetings and networking days.
- ❖ Carer representative on the board of trustees
- ❖ Newsletter to carers (printed or recorded).
- ❖ A local carers panel for South Cheshire Crossroads

Staff made the following suggestions;

- ❖ Carer's newsletter produced monthly for carers by carers.
- ❖ More interactive website.
- ❖ Better use of IT.
- ❖ Circulation of monthly newsletter/updates.
- ❖ New projects/services introduction updates, although this may be available information through the monthly team meetings attended.
- ❖ Newsletter, monthly.
- ❖ Team meetings-more communication.
- ❖ Newsletter on a regular basis.
- ❖ It would be good to have a newsletter.
- ❖ It would be good to have more carers involved as trustees; also we need to monitor the numbers of staff we have that are carers.

Narrative to Objective 2

- ❖ Work has been undertaken over the past year to share information across the team. There is a challenge in terms of engaging staff across the team, particularly when they do not have any involvement in that particular project. However, it is crucial that all staff understand both the core business as well as the specialist projects. Referrals may come into the organisation though all staff, particularly those in the front line.
- ❖ Whilst one of the comments that came back was that South Cheshire Crossroads ought to establish its own carers panel – it is worth noting that Crossroads has a regional carers panel and also a sub regional panel and some carers who receive a service from South Cheshire Crossroads are already actively involved. Information for the carer's panel is fed back on a regular basis.
- ❖ During this accounting period there have been a number of new developments in terms of generating income via trade. They include; This year funding has been generated via new trade to support the following projects; Aspergers Social Skills Project funded by Cheshire County Council, Young Carers Project featuring drug & alcohol misuse mentoring scheme funded by Cheshire Drug and Alcohol Action Team, Palliative Care Project funded by Eastern and Central Cheshire Primary Care Trust, supporting the South Cheshire Alzheimer's Society Luncheon Club with trained staff
- ❖ The number of staff who are carers themselves is now recorded using our equal opportunities monitoring system.

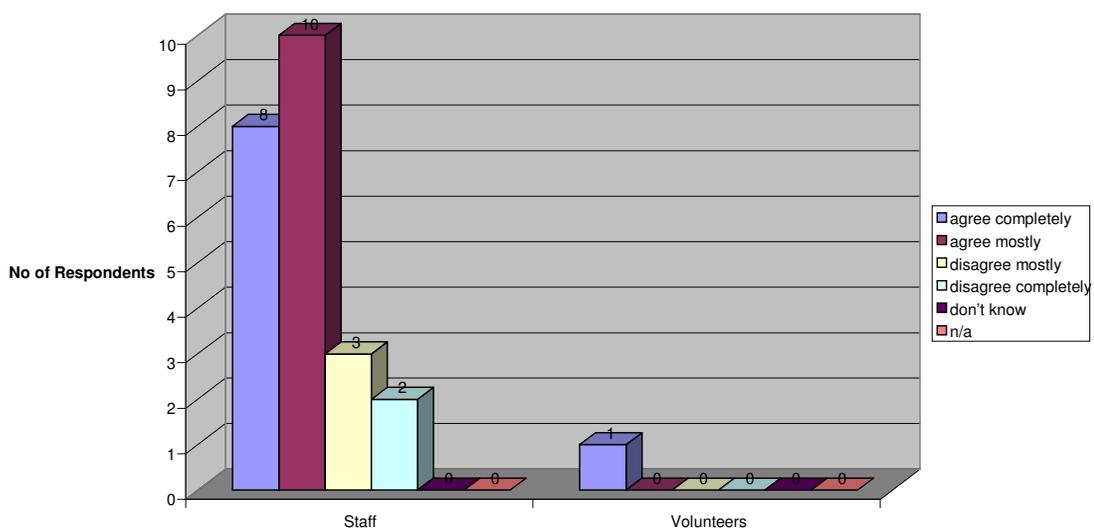
Objective 3: To have a well trained work force with low staff turn over

Activity (3a) by offering appropriate training and development opportunities to all employees and volunteers within the organisation

Staff Responses

Results show that 38% (9) chose 'agree completely' to the question of whether they have had opportunities to develop within their role. 41% (10) 'agree mostly', 13% (3) for both 'disagree mostly' and 8% (2) 'disagree completely'. There was no score for 'don't know' or 'N/A'.

Activity 3a Staff Response to 'I feel that I have had opportunities to develop within my role



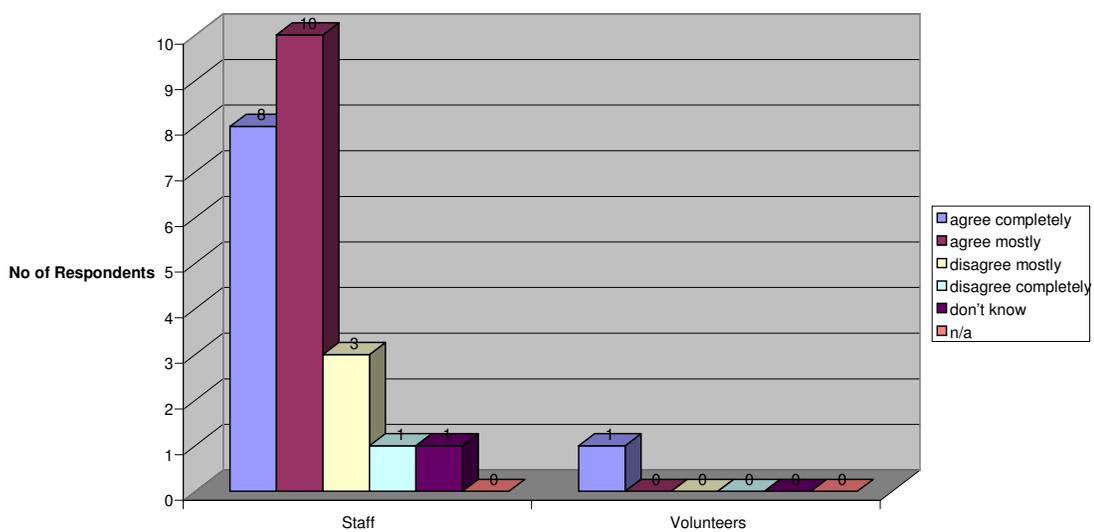
Overall the results are positive with over 50% of staff choosing 'agree completely' and 'agree mostly'. However, there is work to be done to identify with the staff team how we could improve the results.

Activity (3c) By adopting and implementing an effective equal opportunities policy

Staff Responses

Staff responded to the following statement 'I feel I have been treated fairly and with respect as an employee' in the following ways; 37% (9) agreed completely, 41% (10) said they agreed mostly, 12% (3) who disagreed mostly, and 5% (1) said they disagreed completely and 5% (1) who said they did not know.

Activity 3c Staff response to 'I feel that I have been treated fairly and with respect as an employee'



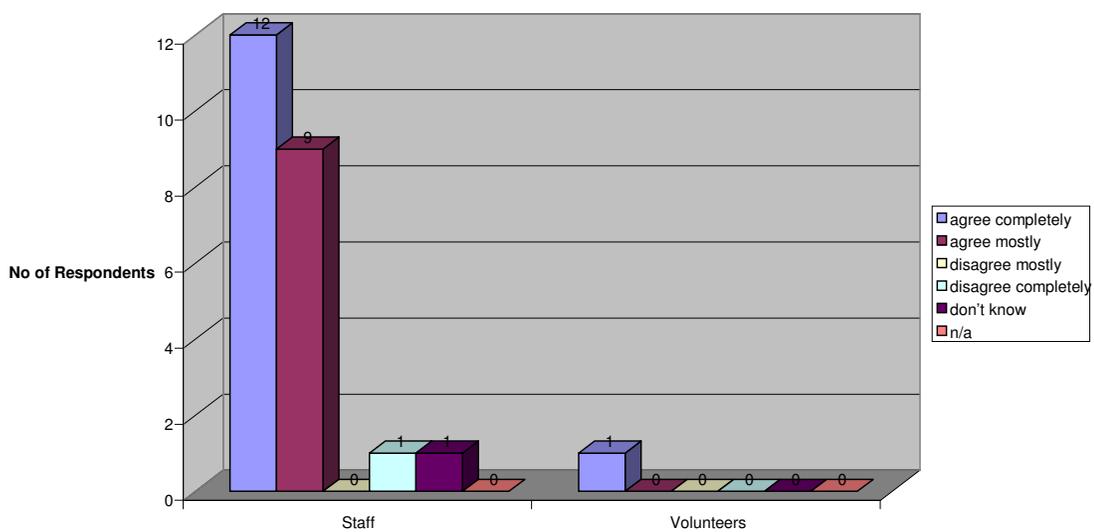
Although these results are mainly positive it is concerning that a member of staff felt that they have not been treated in this way. This situation will be addressed over the coming months in staff supervision sessions and team meetings.

Activity: (3d) By adopting and implementing an effective health and safety policy.

Staff Response

In response to the question relating to staff awareness of the health and safety policy and whether they feel that it is adequate generated the following results; 54% (13) said they agreed completely, 37% (9) said they agreed mostly (0) said they disagreed mostly, 4% (1) said they disagreed completely and 4% (1) said that they did not know.

Activity 3d Staff Response to ' I am aware of the health and safety policy and feel it is adequate



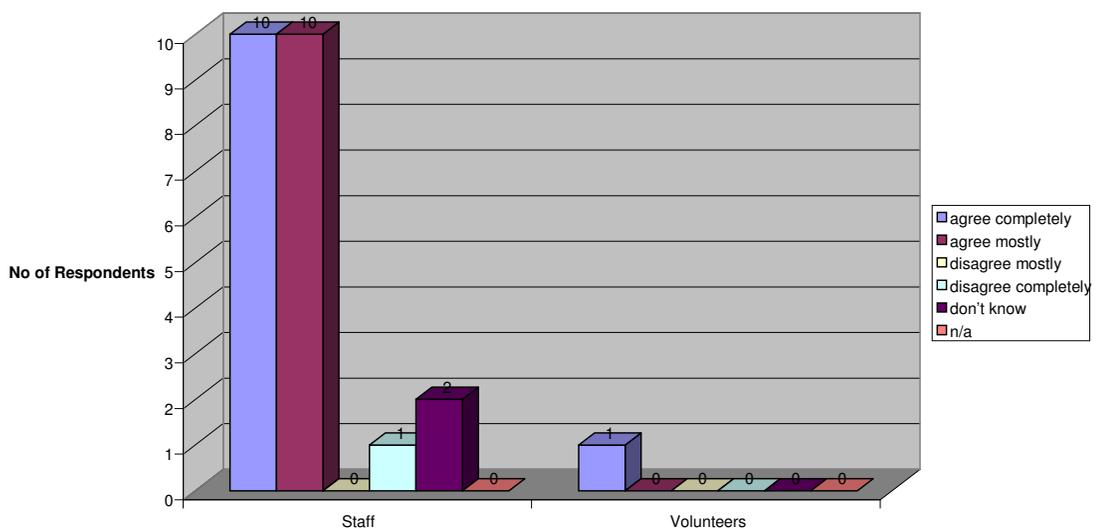
Although these results are mostly positive with a high % indicating they were aware of the policy and felt that it is adequate, it may be that more regular training updates on this policy need to be provided as it would be better for all staff to have agreed completely.

Activity (3e) 'By respecting the importance of employee's private lives'.

Staff Response

Staff response to question 'I feel that my private life has been respected by the organisation' was as follows; overall a positive result is shown in relation to the activity and therefore the objective. 46% (11) of respondents agree completely 42% (10) agreed mostly, 4% (1) 'disagree completely' and 8% (2) 'don't know'. From these results it would be fair to say that South Cheshire Crossroads is working well towards this activity. The small % who indicated that they did not know may have not understood the question being asked to them.

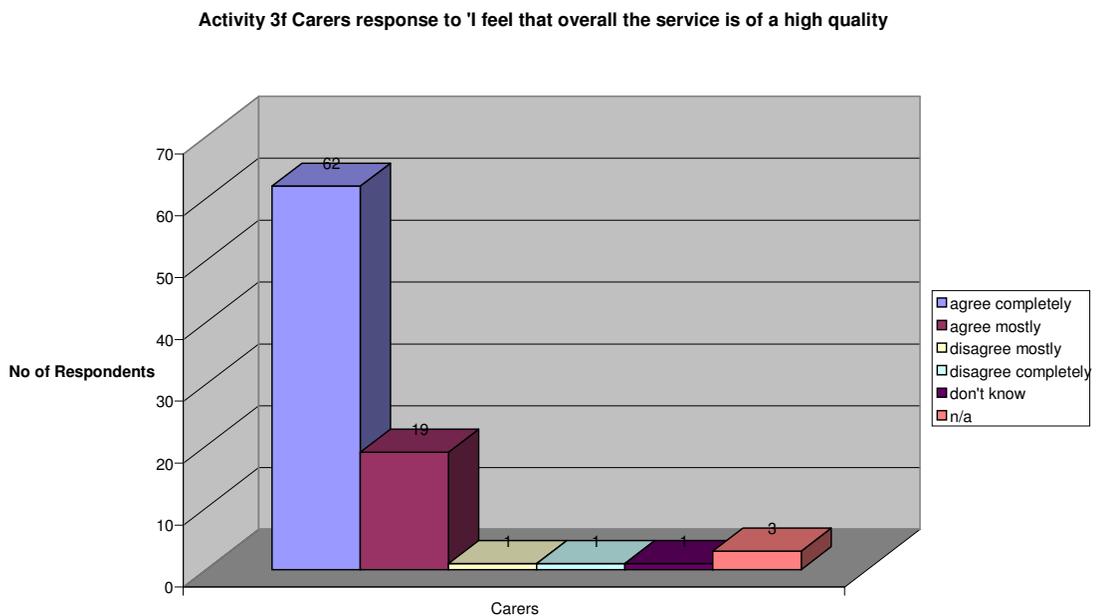
Activity 3e Staff Response to 'I feel that my private life has been respected by the organisation



Activity (3f): 'By expecting high performance standards of paid staff'.

Carers Responses

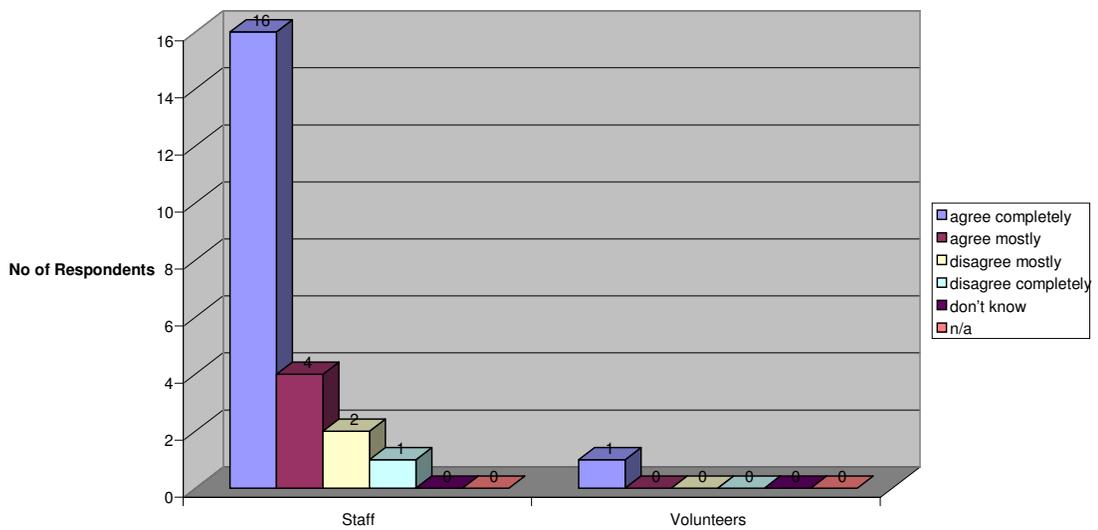
There were a number of questions put to carers relating to the quality of staff that supported them in terms of attitude, level of competence, and overall manner and attitude. When asked about the overall quality of the service that results were as follows. 71% (62) agreed completely, 22%(19) agreed mostly, 1% (1) disagreed mostly, 1% (1) disagreed completely 1% (1) who said they didn't know and 4% (3) who thought the question was not applicable to them. These results would suggest that clients are generally happy with the way in South Cheshire Crossroads is delivering its services.



Staff Responses

Responses to the statement ' I feel that the company expects high standards from its paid staff' were that 70% (17) of staff chose 'agree completely', 16% (4) 'agree mostly', 8% (2) 'disagree mostly' and 6% (1) who said they 'disagree completely'. The chart shows that staff generally feel that South Cheshire Crossroads expects high standards.

Activity 3f Staff Responses to I feel that crossroads expects high Standards from its staff



Comments from Stakeholders on Objective Three

Comments from trustees about what they like best about being part of South Cheshire Crossroads included the following;

- Opportunity to make a small contribution to a worthwhile cause.
- Making a real contribution to the lives of a section of the community to which government organisations pay lip service, but help little.

Comments from staff and volunteers about what they liked best about working for Crossroads included;

- The clients and my colleagues, the Carer Support Worker's
- Opportunities for development, working for an organisation that has the potential to go places.
- Crossroads understand the fact that there are single parents and will work hours out to support them to enable them to go back to work and they are there to talk to and give advice when needed towards work.
- Crossroads has a good reputation for high standards of service I am proud to say I work for Crossroads.
- Having the feeling of satisfaction within my job knowing I am trying my best to provide a service that is appreciated by my clients.
- As a young carers volunteer I enjoy every session I attend. Crossroads has provided relevant training to ensure I understand my role and responsibilities. All staff have been helpful and informative..... I don't know too much about the running etc of the rest of Crossroads so was not able to answer some questions.

- Going out and meeting the clients and their families I feel that my job as a carer is very rewarding.
- The way it helps carers have a break from their care roles helping people have a better life.
- I like being out and about and meeting and helping people.
- As an organisation Crossroads delivers the highest care to client.
- Most people are willing to help and work together as a team.
- The variety of work and diversity of clients.
- Interacting with the client.
- Good relationship with the clients and co-workers delivering good quality care.
- I think all my clients are brilliant they make the job very enjoyable.
- All clients without exception are very appreciative of what we do to help them remain independent.
- Providing a service for carers to make their lives better.
- I enjoy the variety of tasks involved in my role, plus the level of responsibility I have and the freedom to influence the strategic decision making process.
- I like the way we are passionate about carers needs and not driven purely by large grants or contracts. Staff will always go that extra mile.
- Being involved in all aspects of the young carers group not treated any different being a volunteer I find it a fun challenge!

Narrative for Objective Three

This year South Cheshire Crossroads has engaged 25 new staff, 1 new office volunteer, hosted 4 student placements, including a final year BA (Hons) student, and recruited 3 new trustees. During this accounting cycle all of the staff recruited and employed by South Cheshire Crossroads were European Caucasian. This is a trend which is being monitored by the senior management team and the board of trustees. All of these recruits have received induction training appropriate to their role. All Carer Support Workers have received common induction standards training, which have included Crossroads policies and procedures as well regular updates on mandatory modules such as first aid, food hygiene, equal opportunities, moving and handling, child protection and the protection of vulnerable adults.

Training for trustees has been patchy and new recruits have not received a robust induction package. This is an area which is currently being reviewed and improved by the Scheme Manager, who is pulling together a comprehensive induction pack, as well as hosting some training sessions later in the year. The Board of trustees have also developed a sub group structure which will enable trustees to contribute their specific skills and experience to the organisation.

During this accounting period the staff turnover rate was 40%, which is very worrying. Human resources information states that a turnover of 15% presents a problem and that one over 20% is a major deterrent to a quality service. This is all the more so in a

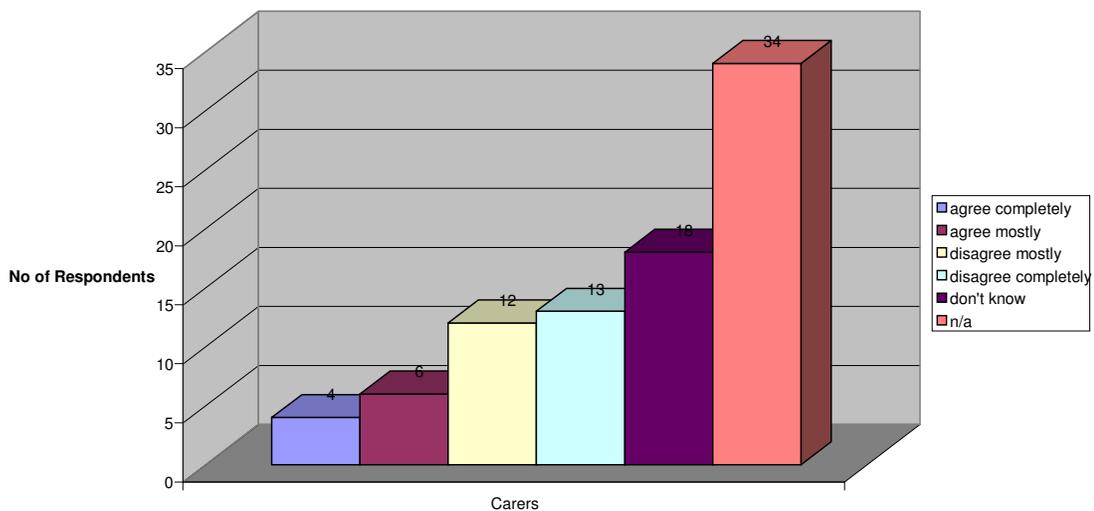
sector where relationships are key and the tasks are personal and intimate. The turnover rate for care workers in a domiciliary care setting is 28% (Skills for Care; First Issue of NMDS-SC Briefing Launched August 2007). Our staff turnover rate is therefore higher than the national average.

Activity: (4d): By keeping the local community, in particular Carers and their families informed about the work of the company and involving them in its future direction.

Carers Responses

Carers were asked if they would like to feel more involved in this area and here were the results. The results as shown below indicated that 4% (4) agreed completely, 7% (6) agreed mostly, 14% (12) disagreed mostly 15% (13) disagreed completely, 21% (18) said they didn't know and 39% (34) said that this was not applicable to them.

Activity 4d Carers response to I would like to feel more involved in the future management and direction of Crossroads

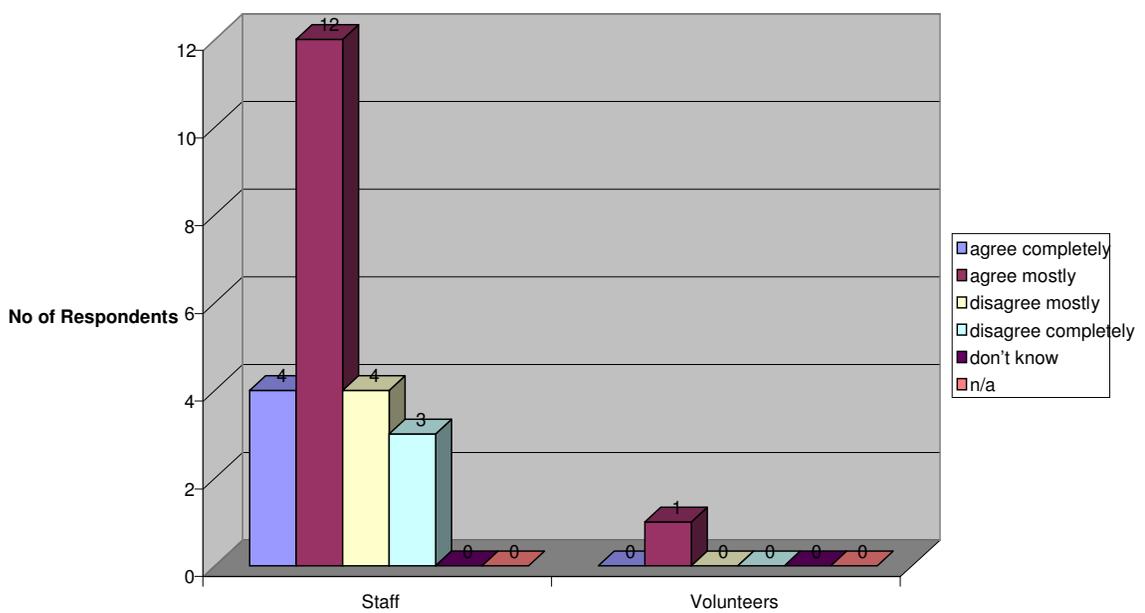


There are a number of conclusions which can be drawn from these results although it will be difficult to target those who are more interested from those who are not due to confidential nature of the questionnaire. Issues for action will be discussed further in the narrative section.

Staff Response

Staff responses to 'I feel that South Cheshire Crossroads is good at involving carers in the management and decision making of the service' were as follows; 16% (4) of respondents chose 'agree completely'. 54% (13) 'agree mostly', 16% (4) 'disagree mostly', 14% (3) who said that they 'disagree completely' and 0% said they 'don't know' and 'N/A'. Overall the results for this activity are good with the majority of staff agreeing that the organisation involves carers in the decision making of the organisation.

Activity 4d Staff response to Crossroads involving carers in management and future direction of Crossroads



Results from others including Commissioners/Referrers

When this group were consulted on whether or not Crossroads was meeting this activity the results were as follows; 30% (2) agreed completely, 10% (1) agreed mostly, 30% (2) disagreed mostly, 30% (2) who said they did not know.

Qualitative Comments from Commissioners and referrers

These following comments are concerned with how South Cheshire Crossroads could engage with carers and their families;

- engage with carers who are not currently using Crossroads services
- utilise links with projects like mine (database of carers across county)
- continue to share information about service developments with partner agencies, so that they can promote via their respective networks
- news letters, poems and mutual support groups
- Newsletters- sent via other organisations with there own new letters (Parent Partnership, National Autistic Society, disabled children's database etc...)

Narrative for Objective Four

Currently the legal form used by South Cheshire Crossroads is fit for purpose. In terms of income generated by the organisation, the majority of income is generated via public sector financed service level agreements with a limited amount consisting of commercially generated income. However, the introduction of individual budgets for clients may impact on future income streams, and may mean that a change in strategy is necessary.

Within the social economy sector, a tension can develop in terms of governance between wishing to run democratic, open and transparent organisations where trustees can become involved because of their passion for the issues involved, but also that groups attract and retain trustees with the professional knowledge and expertise to enable survival within a highly competitive market driven climate. For South Cheshire Crossroads, this presents a challenge to the company in that there remains a commitment to deliver the social aims of the group, and involve service users in governance, but also that South Cheshire Crossroads remains competitive within the social care field. This view is backed up by the Strategy for Success document produced by the Department of Trade and Industry.

In this accounting period, South Cheshire Crossroads has actively co-ordinated a recruitment campaign for new trustees and three have been successfully recruited. In order to increase public awareness of the organisation, a website has been developed thanks to the commitment and time of a local volunteer. Literature about the organisation has been distributed on a regular basis and

training sessions have taken place with partner agencies including health professionals. The Scheme Manager is in the process of developing a marketing strategy that will link with the social enterprise business development strategy and will enable to organisation to move forward with developing public awareness of the services provided.

Commissioners were asked whether they felt the objectives were still relevant and the majority of respondents said they were. One commissioner said that the key priority should be 'carers needs, all that benefit carers', and that the reason they had commissioned with South Cheshire Crossroads was because of their good reputation. Further comments on why commissioners chose to buy services from South Cheshire Crossroads included;

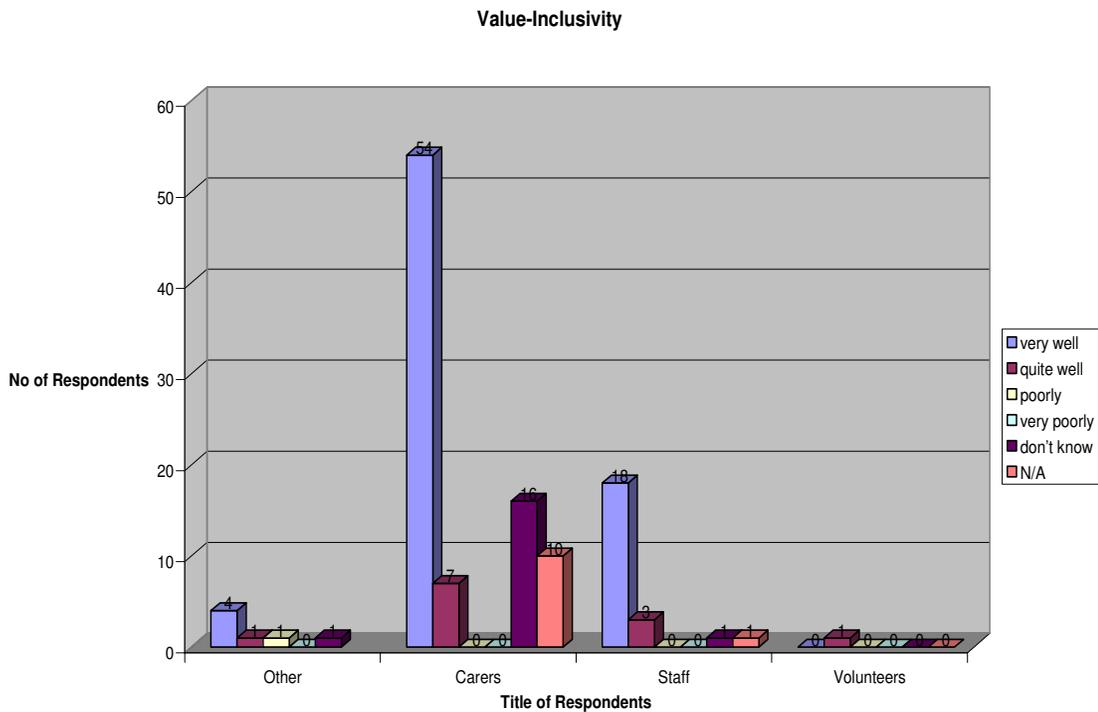
- Good feedback/evidence of quality service for young people
- Information given to us on a quarterly monitoring forms
- Managers progressive thinking means Crossroads can respond to users needs
- Provides an excellent service

Values: The underlying principles which South Cheshire Crossroads runs by to successfully complete the task of providing support to carers and their families.

All stakeholders were consulted with about all of the organisations values. There were a total of 118 responses from a range of stakeholders.

Inclusive 'the service aims to be accessible to carers and their families'

Overall the results for this value are very positive with 56% (68) of respondents choosing 'very well', with 8% (9) choosing quite well. Although this is very good, a moderate amount of respondents chose 'don't know' in relation to this value. To improve on this South Cheshire Crossroads could perhaps introduce a newsletter to ensure the organisation becomes more accessible (See table below).



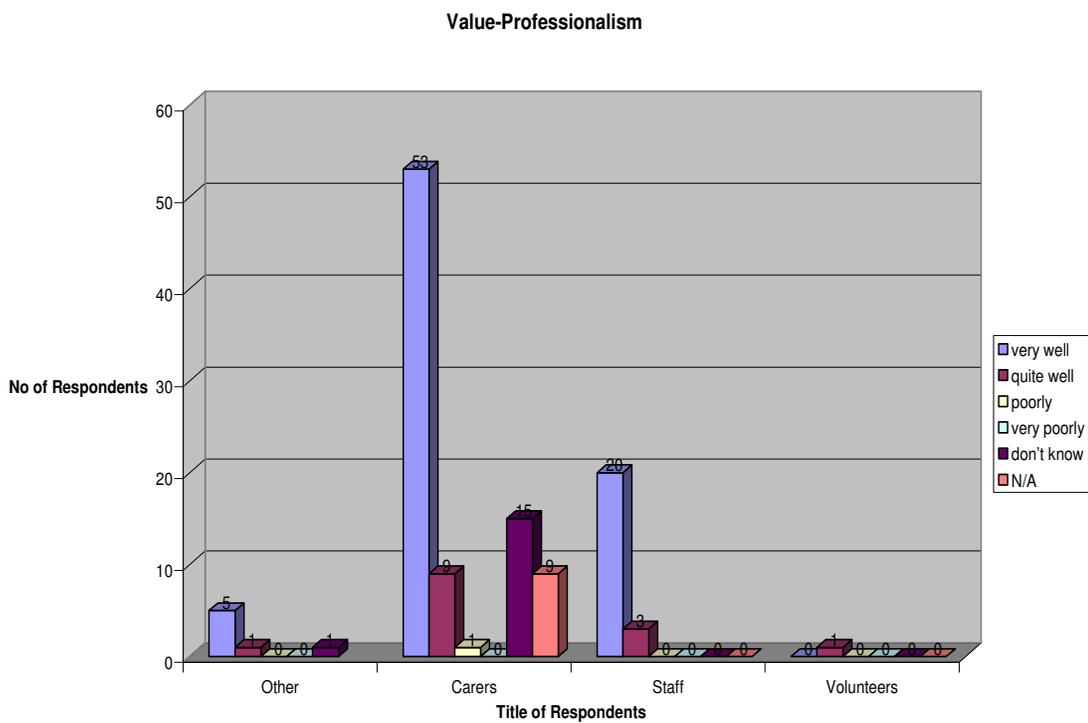
It needs to be considered however that funding may be an obstacle to how accessible the service is to everyone, there are only a limited number of subsidised or free places allocated, and these get taken up extremely quickly. The threshold for accessing the free service tends to be higher than in previous years, as we are working to the National 'Fair Access to Care' criteria. In 2002 the Department of Health issued guidance to all local authority Social Services departments, on how to set their eligibility criteria (Fair access to care) for service provision for adults and older people. Community Services will only provide or arrange social care services for people who meet the eligibility criteria. Cheshire County Council's Eligibility Criteria (which is what one of our key contracts is based on) means that only clients with critical or substantial needs are eligible for social care services. Again, this

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change reflects the economic context in which the organisation exists, budgets are tighter and thus eligibility criteria become higher.

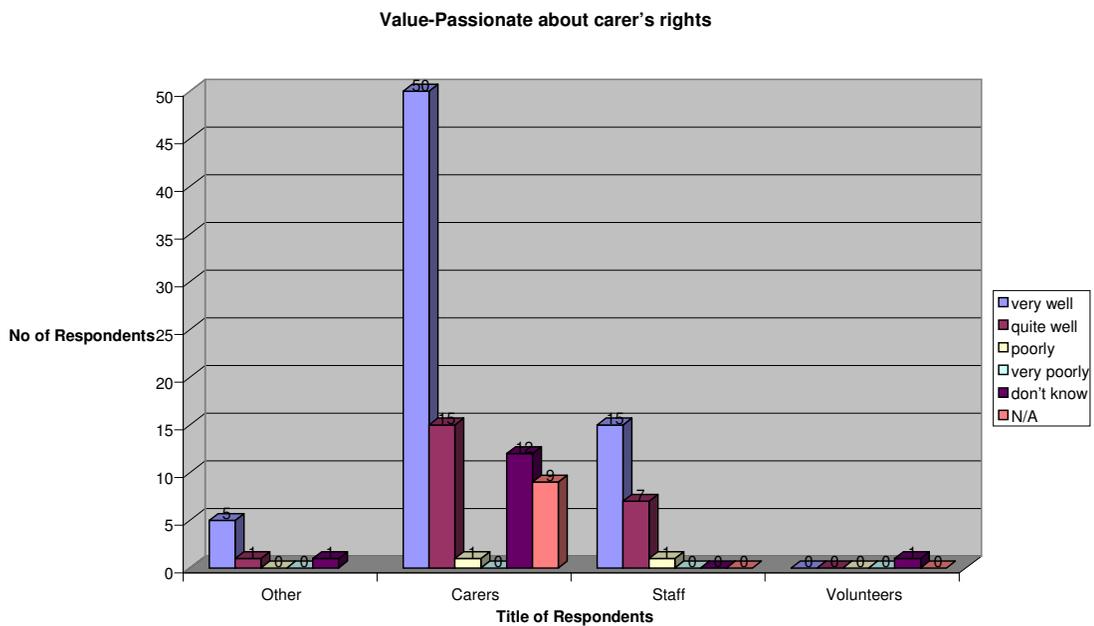
Professional - Our service aims to exceed national guidelines relating to good practice

Overall results are very good with a 90% (78) of respondents choosing 'very well' in relation to the value questioned. Over 17% (15) of respondents chose 'very well'. From these results it seems that South Cheshire Crossroads abiding by this value at a high and efficient standard which is acceptable to all sectors of public and work force.



Passionate: about carer’s needs and their right to a break.

The results from this value are very positive with the majority of respondents 60 % (70) selecting ‘very well’ and 20% (23) choosing ‘quite well’. Results from this social accounting process demonstrate that staff at South Cheshire Crossroads are very passionate about the work they do, and that carers can see this. Overall South Cheshire Crossroads is maintaining this value well.

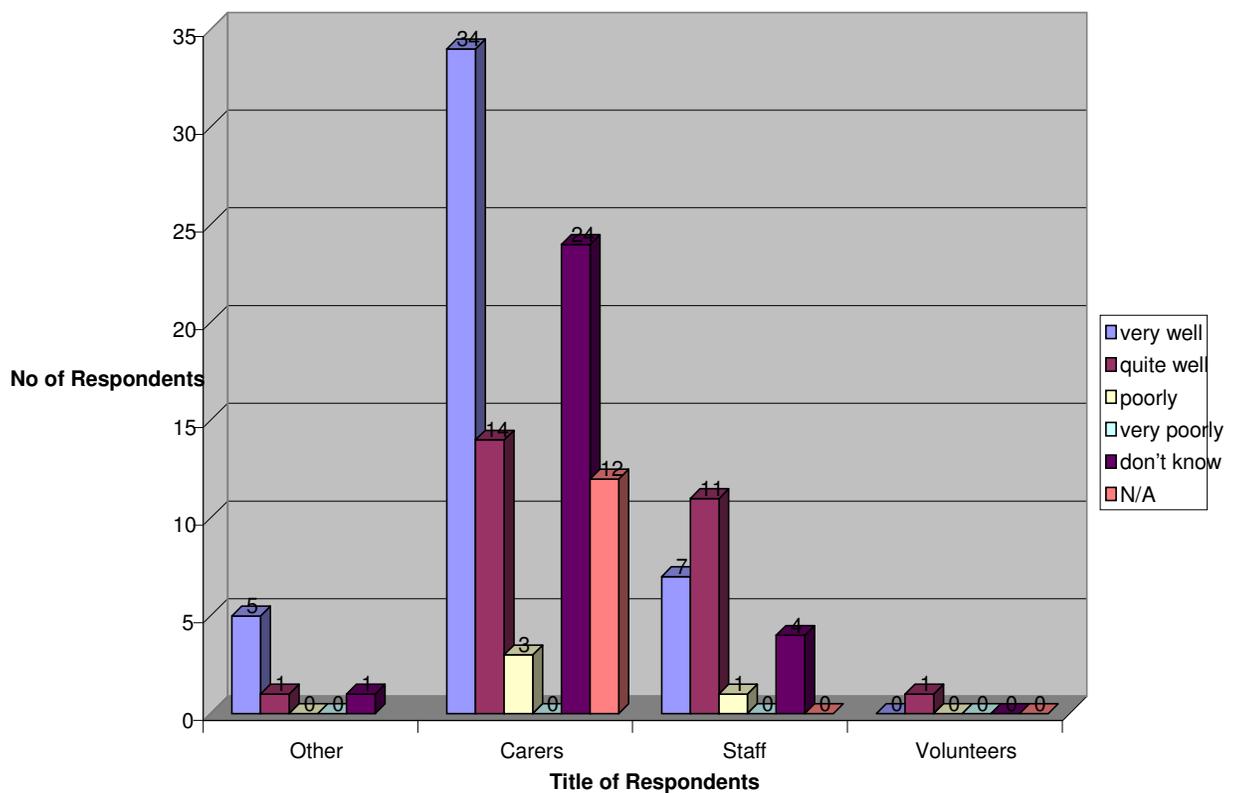


Adaptable, progressive and enterprising

Overall the results from this value are positive, with the majority of respondents 39% (46) choosing 'very well' and 23% (37) saying 'quite well'. As before there are still a number of respondents 25% (29) who chose 'don't know'. This implies that either they do not know about this value in relation to their personal needs or do not understand the value, and therefore cannot comment on it.

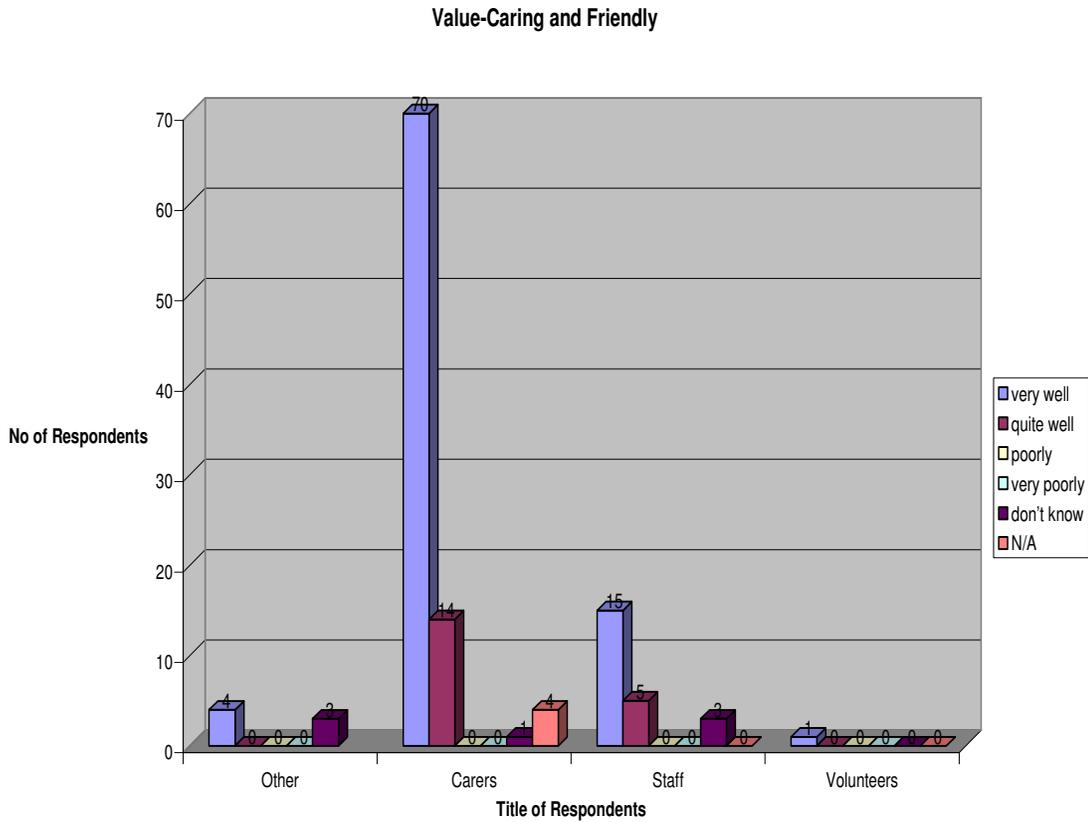
However this suggests that in future, South Cheshire Crossroads would need to either change this value or improve awareness about it to achieve a more positive response rate.

Values-Adaptable, Progressive and Enterprising



Caring and friendly

Overall the response to this value was very positive with the majority of respondents choosing a positive answer. 76% (90) chose 'very well', 16% (19) of respondents chose 'quite well'. It could be argued from these results that South Cheshire Crossroads is achieving this value and staff, carers and other stakeholders feel that the service is delivered in a caring and friendly way.

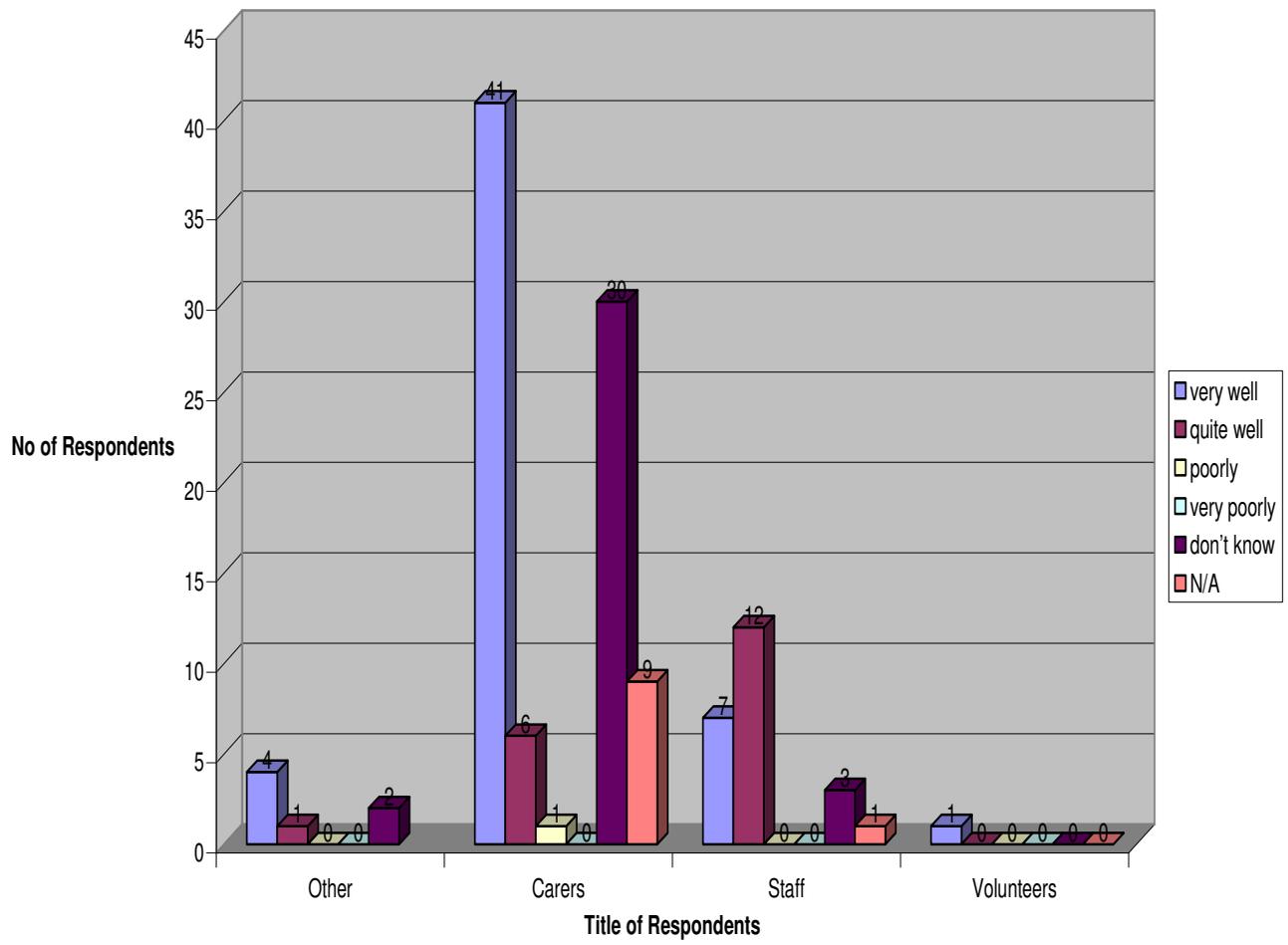


To be a good employer

The overall results for this value are average. Although 45% (53) of respondents responded positively saying 'very well', and 16% (19) responded by saying 'very well', a significant number of respondents, 30% (33) replied that they did not know whether this value statement was true or not so commented 'don't know'.

These were mainly carers themselves. This is a point for further discussion in the narrative section of this document. The fact Carer Support Workers are employed on a zero hours contract (i.e. they only get paid for the hours they work and are not guaranteed any of those hours) is clearly an obstacle to staff believing South Cheshire Crossroads is a good employer. The reason zero hours contracts are issued is because the scheme cannot charge its key funders for hours that are not actually delivered. In other words, if a client cancels a break, then South Cheshire Crossroads cannot subsequently charge a funder for those hours, and in effect cannot then pay staff for them. This is a problem which the Scheme Manager is attempting to resolve but which is proving difficult.

Value-To be a Good Employer



ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

As well as the questions about the extent to which South Cheshire Crossroads is meeting its agreed objectives and activities, all stakeholders were asked about the best things about South Cheshire Crossroads (or working for South Cheshire Crossroads) and also where they feel there are areas of improvement that could be made. In terms of making improvements to the organisation, the following comment was made by a trustee;

- Find non-government (local and national) means of financing our expansion.

Staff made the following suggestions;

- Pay and conditions
- Communication could always be improved.
- Continuity where possible for the Carer Support Worker and client.
- I feel that sometimes there is a breakdown in communication this is an area that could be worked upon.
- More information on new clients.
- Keep clients informed of changes to their care time and letting them know of time changes and introducing new carers into their homes before they go in to do the job. Stop confusing clients by sending so many different carers into a client so as a client can build on a working relationship with carer. Informing clients of changes of carer going in.
- Staff turning up or arriving late, a pay that reflects the work we do and decent mileage money paid.
- For new carers more shadowing and more time initially at

clients to read notes and discuss care with carer and client.

- Hours need to be more consistent.
- No
- Think communication with the office needs to improve I am aware that there are many very unhappy Carer Support Workers. Things need to change or more staff will be lost.
- Increased involved with carers and increased private purchase market.
- For new carers more shadowing and more time initially at clients to read notes and discuss care with carer and client.
- More training
- Hours need to be guaranteed without that the staff can't plan for their own needs.
- Pay needs to be improved.
- I would also appreciate rota's 2-3 weeks in advance rather than 3 days- this would enable Carer Support Workers to organise our personal lives better.
- To be asked if you will work out of your availability instead of just putting it on your rota and expecting you to do it.
- Communication is poor.
- Meetings are infrequent.
- No introduction/information regarding new clients.
- Reporting structure vague.
- No accountability.
- I would request a maximum of up to 20 hours per week only please maintain a no work time period for Monday and Wednesday mornings up to 12 noon until further notice.
- Christmas rota's were received by Carer Support Workers far too late 2 weeks beforehand is not adequate time to

organise personal outings over the holiday period. All other caring organisations I have worked for in the past, both residential and domiciliary have always managed to complete Christmas and New Year rota's by the end of November at the latest.

Carers felt that the best things about the Crossroads service are:-

- No charge
- Providing much needed respite from caring.
- Reliability and people that work for Crossroads have been very supportive.
- Always ready to help and give advice.
- The same people when visiting this is very good.
- Giving me the time for myself as a carer which I look forward to weekly.
- Lovely girls.
- Having 3 hours off duty.
- Personalities of services personnel. Friendly and helpful.
- Dependable, capable and excellent carers. Also affordable.
- As I stated in 4.1 Reliable, high quality, friendly, flexible, helpful etc.
- The carer has been matched to my husbands needs and I don't have to worry when he is with her.
- The attitude of both management and carers, also the helpfulness.
- If I was a carer on my own unable to get out then the Crossroads carers could 'baby-sit' for a few hours to allow me out shopping etc.
-

- Enables live in carer to attend to shopping and other exciting jobs outside the home.
- The friendly, helpful and pleasant manner of the carers, the flexibility available.
- People's understanding- and doing what they say they are going to do!
- Reliability, friendliness and flexibility.
- The ability for the carer to get respite time.
- The sheer relief when someone just takes over for six hours.
- Never let me down very reliable.
- Mostly sufficient.
- Looking forward to the break I get and being able to switch off for a while.
- It gives me a much needed break.
- Genuine care and reliability.

Carers felt that the following could be improved about the service;

- Satisfied with the service/ no ideas for improvement/ think service is good
- Increase number of hours of care received/ weekend visits
- Emotional support
- Continuity of carer
- Additional jobs- housework
- More regular contact with senior workers, care plan reviewed
- It suits our needs at present.
- Emotional not required at the moment.
- Haven't really had any visits from senior workers that I can remember but all is fine.

- May be a weekend visit. Respite care in own home so carer could take a weekend off would be wonderful.
- Service is excellent.
- I am very satisfied no need for improvement.
- It is a very good service.
- I can't, very satisfied.
- Extended allocated number of hours.
- Encourage carers to actively take part in the care
- Driving of cars.
- More/longer visits- 3 hrs is tight to do shopping etc!
- None
- The communication in the phone last week 27/3/07 when I rang to say my husbands hospital admission was cancelled and the person involved said she would sort time for my husband this Friday 6/4/07 and has not.
- There isn't.
- Extended allocated number of hours.
- Encourage carers to actively take part in the care
- Increase frequency of visits.
- More job usefulness in addition to sitting as carer.
- More suggestions regarding things which could be done to interest the 'cared for' person and add variety to their life.
- Don't know
- The help that I currently receive is very welcome in my present situation.
- Confirmation that a scheduled visit will take place
- If you do not have any day care one more session would be more helpful.
-

- By undertaking additional jobs in addition to care e.g. ironing, washing up etc.
- I feel very happy with the help I have received from Crossroads personnel.
- Don't think anything really.
- I think you are very good.
- Very pleased and happy with your help. Thank you.
- Carry on the good work.
- No, I am completely satisfied that all the care, attention and understanding is more than I expected.
- I am happy with the service.
- In this case very little
- Trouble with car driving
- Due to work etc the cover provided every other Saturday didn't really allow me to sort my own admin.
- It is hard to know at what time of the day help may be needed.
- N/A
- I had several carers come to the house all of which I felt were not prepared to take an active part in the actual caring but felt their role was one of companionship only.
- The service personnel are continually changing and often insufficiently trained.
- When Commissioners were asked whether South Cheshire Crossroads objectives were still relevant the majority of respondents said they were. This reflects that South Cheshire Crossroads' objectives and activities are still current. One commissioner commented that; I realise by

completing this form I do not know enough about Crossroads and the work undertaken. A member of Connexions staff has now become a board member and this should enhance communication. Our main involvement is the young carers group the form covers the more Generic role of Crossroads.

Trends from carers and their families

Out of the 187 questionnaires which were sent out to carers 87 were returned, which is a 47% return rate. Below are a number of trends which have been identified for each qualitative question which was asked.

2.5 If they do not meet your needs, please advise why not?

Out of the 12 responses that were provided it was possible to establish 3 trends. Those trends were that the Carer Support Workers need to take a more active role in the care which they provide and perhaps try to stimulate the client more throughout their visit. There also seems to be the notion that there is a lack of flexibility regarding the ability to make advance requests and so forth. Lastly, the service of care is an area of concern for some clients as one client believes the Carer Support Workers are insufficiently trained to care for the client also again a comment about Carer Support Workers taking an active role was mentioned. A further comment made was more a suggestion into whether the Carer Support Worker could help with household tasks, which is an area which could be looked into by South Cheshire Crossroads.

2.7 Do you have any suggestions as to how we could improve our assessment procedure?

From this question 3 suggestions arose which recommended that a more in-depth procedure was needed and more time was needed to be spent carrying out the assessment. One respondent felt that the procedure was good and 5 answered no to this question.

However 77 carers left the question blank which may suggest that they do not have any major problems with the procedure.

3.9 Have you contacted the scheme within the last 12 months? If so for what reason?

31 clients responded to this question however some clients put more than 1 answer which accounts for there being more than thirty one responses. 20 of these clients said that they telephoned South Cheshire Crossroads to cancel, rearrange or discuss visit times. A further 7 rang to notify of an appointment that the client had or of holidays that they have booked which coincide with visit times. Re-arranging or initial arrangement of carers and complaints regarding staff were further trends which were recognised.

3.16 In relation to the response you have given in this section, how do you think we could improve our services in general?

Of the 39 responses a main trend established was that the clients are satisfied with the service and think that the service provided is of a good standard. Repeated suggested areas for improvement are an increase in the number of hours provided, the provision of emotional support, continuity of Carer Support Workers and more regular contact with Senior Carer Support Workers. Lastly, as was mentioned in a previous section some clients mentioned if the Carer Support Workers could help with additional jobs such as housework.

3.17 Are there any services that are not currently available that you would like us to provide?

17 clients believed that there are no services which they currently require which are not already available to them through South Cheshire Crossroads. 4 clients were unaware of what other services were provided by South Cheshire Crossroads. Suggestions for services were evening and emergency cover, leisure activities and transport for clients. Housework again was a suggestion that was made by clients.

4.4 In my opinion the best things about the South Cheshire Crossroads service are-

There were 60 out of 87 responses to this question and the general themes were that the friendly, reliable staff and the break with the knowledge that the person they care for is well looked after were the best things about South Cheshire Crossroads. Further comments made were that the service is free of charge and that there is continuity of staffing.

4.5 I feel that an area for improving South Cheshire Crossroads service could be.....

There were 5 general themes which materialised from this question. One of these was that longer, more frequent visits were required. Again more active care is recommended to give clients variety, similarly continuity of care and further consideration of clients feelings when allocating a Carer Support Worker to them.

Furthermore an improvement in communication between South Cheshire Crossroads and their clients is recommended.

In conclusion there are a number of themes which have been identified and now need to be addressed by the South Cheshire Crossroads team. From these themes a number of suggestions to improve the service have arisen such as the Carer Support Workers providing support with household tasks, and providing stimulating active care for the clients. There seems to be a distinct lack of knowledge about the other services which are offered by Crossroads which suggests that perhaps more publicity is needed for the organisation which may attract more clients and more funding. Furthermore it seems a general concern also is about the initial assessment, as many clients believe that the assessment procedure is not thorough enough and should be regularly reviewed and updated. A positive aspect outcome of the questionnaires is that the majority of the clients believe that South Cheshire Crossroads provides a good service which they are satisfied with and that the staff are the best thing about the service as they are friendly, reliable and caring.

Clearly the funding sources used to finance the scheme at present are having a significant influence on the scheme both in terms of general access to clients and also in terms of the amount of respite that can be offered to families. The reality is that unless the scheme can find ways of financing expansion outside of current funding streams, the access/amount of respite offered will remain the same for clients receiving a service free at the point of delivery.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The organisation has worked closely this year with Cheshire County Council who have produced an 'eco audit'. The results of the audit are included as an appendix to this set of accounts.

The good practices identified within the eco-audit already undertaken by South Cheshire Crossroads were;

- There is an Environmental policy in place
- The boiler is on a 7 day timer, so it is off when the office is closed, and all radiators have TRV's
- There are individual water heaters for each tap
- All computers and monitors are switched off when not in use – although some laptops remain switched on
- The photocopier and some printers are new and have power saving shut down modes
- Double sided printing is carried out where possible and scrap pads are made. Printer cartridges are returned to HP
- Waste paper is recycled
- Spent fluorescent tubes are segregated and old computers are recycled or disposed of at the local waste disposal centre.
- There are good levels of natural light in the majority of rooms, reducing the need of lighting
- Local shops and tradesmen are used when possible
- The pool care was leased with consumption in mind
- 2 staff members car share

The key action points that came out of the eco-audit were;

- The environmental policy is not put into practice and there is no environmental emphasis in purchasing
- Bleach is used in the cleaning
- The boiler is older than 10 years and needs to be replaced for a more efficient model
- The hot water heaters remain on 24/7 and are not switched off at the weekend
- There is only one light switch on each room. The kitchen and upstairs corridor lights are left on when the office is open
- There are still some old T12 strip lights which are being replaced for more efficient T8's, but the start up gear is old, low frequency and inefficient
- There is poor insulation in the building, especially the loft, and the windows are single glazed
- All other waste produced apart from paper and toner cartridges are placed in the general waste bin
- There are no tap aerators in place
- Recycled office and toilet paper, 'green' energy, less harsh cleaning materials and Fair Trade products are not purchased
- Meter readings of utilities were being taken but it is not sure if this is still the case

Next year the scheme will work towards integrating policy into practice, using the guidelines and actions outlined within the eco audit.

Whilst South Cheshire Crossroads does not have a specific environmental objective, it has an environmental policy and next year will work towards integrating the policy with practice.

The organisation is taking steps to put the policy into practice, and last year introduced a programme of recycling. Fair Trade products were tried approximately one year ago, but were not taken up on a permanent basis. It is hoped that taking part in Fair Trade Fortnight 2008 may help raise awareness and re-ignite the drive to trade fairly within the company.

8 ECONOMIC IMPACT

Q - How many people does the organisation employ?

A - 37

Q - How many new jobs have been created in the last twelve months?

A - No new positions created but Crossroads has ongoing recruitment of staff.

Q - What is the total value of wages paid annually by the organisation?

A - Total value of wages paid £420,000

Q - How many of the workforce live locally (defined in this case as the charities area of benefit - South Cheshire)?

A - All except two.

Q - What is the value of the tax and national insurance contributions paid by the organisation on behalf of the workers?

A - Approximately £52,962

Utilising Volunteers

It is possible to use accepted rates to calculate the £s value of (monetise) volunteer work. Acceptable rates run from £5 per hour for labouring work for example, through £5.46 for clerical work for £13.85 for managerial work. The rate used in calculations should relate to the work done as a volunteer, not to the normal work of the volunteer. Thus a manager doing labouring work may be counted at £5 per hour.

Q - How many hours of volunteer work does the organisation use for its own benefit?

A - 41 hours per week = £223.86

Q - How many hours provide services to its beneficiaries and the community?

A - 41 hours per week

Training

Q - How much (and what) training does the organisation provide and/or pay for its workforce, its volunteers, its board/management committee members or for others in the community?

A - All new staff receive induction training, mandatory update training including first aid, health and safety, disability awareness etc. All staff within the organisation are engaged in some form of training including an MA in social enterprise, a Registered

Managers Award, basic IT training etc. South Cheshire Crossroads provides specific training for different client conditions as well as, specialist task training which is both general and case specific.

Q - What is the cost in £s of providing this training?

A - This years spend has been £6,505

Inward investment

Q - How much finance has the organisation attracted into the community for its own enterprises projects and programmes? (E.g. as grants, as loans or as other forms of investment)

A - The organisation has generated £478,231 via trade, charitable trusts and donations.

Q - How much finance can the organisation claim to have helped pull into the area on behalf of, or in partnership with other organisations and agencies?

A - South Cheshire Crossroads has generated £155,000 in partnership with other agencies.

Purchasing Policies

Q - Does the organisation have a local purchasing policy?

A - Not at present. although in practice goods and services are commissioned locally wherever possible.

Q - What percentage of the annual spend goes to local suppliers?
And how much to regional, national or international firms?

A - None to international.

80% to national suppliers – most of the expenditure is utilities (gas, electricity, phone line etc), 20% to local suppliers.

Q - Does the organisation have an ethical purchasing policy? (i.e. buying from fair-trade or from other social economy firms)?

A - Not at present although this is under discussion

In relation to the financial systems employed by the scheme, audited accounts are produced annually, and are available as an appendix to this set of social accounts.

Key points are that whilst South Cheshire Crossroads made a slight loss this year, the scheme is financially robust. The directors are formulating a reserve policy at this present time, principally with a view to creating a dissolution fund, which will be a designated fund, set at a level such that, in the event of the Trustees' deciding that the activities of the charity should cease, the fund will be used to pay redundancies and the expenses of running the charity whilst it is wound up. The Directors have reviewed the major risks to which the charity is exposed and are satisfied that systems have been established to mitigate those risks.

9 COMPLIANCE REPORTS

Compliance standards and reports that are available on request include; CSCI Inspection Report 2007, Charity Commission, Health & safety, Equal Opportunities, Data Protection, Complaints.

As a member of the Crossroads national network, South Cheshire Crossroads subscribes to an intranet system which gives access to a range of policies and procedures. These are maintained and updated by Crossroads Association and are then adopted at a local level by individual organisations. The policies are agreed in partnership with the Commission for Social Care Inspection, so are fully compliant with current legislation relating to the delivery of social care services. When new staff join South Cheshire Crossroads they are given a full set of policies as part of their induction training. They are required to sign each policy stating they have understood it and will abide by it. This includes the General Social Care Council Code of Practice. A similar practice applies to board members who must read and sign policies as they are issued.

As members of Crossroads Association South Cheshire Crossroads adheres to an internal system of quality assurance which is called CROQUET. The organisation is audited by Auditors from Crossroads Association.

In addition to this internal quality assurance programme South Cheshire Crossroads also adheres to the standards for domiciliary

care produced by the Commission for Social Care Inspection, the Kings Fund Quality Standards for local Carer support services, and the General Social Care Councils' Code of Conduct for Social Care Workers and Employers of Social Care Workers. Copies of these documents are available on request.

10 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Summary of Financial Activities

Reserves Policy

The directors have formulated a reserve policy, creating a dissolution fund of £110,000, which is a designated fund, set at a level such that, in the event of the Trustees' deciding that the activities of the charity should cease, the fund will be used to pay redundancies and the expenses of running the charity whilst it is wound up.

Risk Management Policy

The Directors have reviewed the major risks to which the charity is exposed and are satisfied that systems have been established to mitigate those risks.

Statement of Directors' and Trustees' Responsibilities

Company and charity law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the surplus or deficit of the charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the directors have:

- selected suitable accounting policies and then applied them consistently;
- made judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- stated whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- Prepared the financial statements on the going concern basis.

The directors have overall responsibility for ensuring that the charity has appropriate system of controls, financial and otherwise. They are also responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 1985. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 5 April 2007

Income	£	2007 £	£	2006 £
Funding				
Carers Grant	88,452		84,879	
Central				
Eastern	55,022		59,022	
Cheshire PC				
CCC Adult				
Community	65,605		62,955	
Services				
Young Carers Grants	7,032		0	
Cheshire D.A.A.T.	5,991		2,880	
YMCA Children's fund	13,580		16,566	
CCC Carers Grant (Children	<u>22,311</u>	257,99	<u>15,733</u>	242,035
		3		
Private contracts		208,02		203,203
		7		
Donations		3,096		1,907
Miscellaneous income		1,341		2,178
Bank deposit interest				<u>7,501</u>
		<u>7,774</u>		
Total income		478,23		456,824
		1		
Expenditure				
Salaries and NIC				
Scheme and Area Managers	56,794		38,461	
Administration and clerical	43,317		39,221	
Carer support workers	<u>269,86</u>		<u>254,900</u>	
		5		
		369,97		332,582
		6		
Travel expenses				<u>58,748</u>
		<u>58,946</u>		
		428,92		391,330
		2		
Recruitment, training	6,506		22,800	
meetings				

South Cheshire Crossroads Caring for Carers Social Accounts April 2006-March 2007

Carer support workers equipment and clothing	2,553		572	
Young carers expenses		445,452	<u>8,723</u>	
	<u>7,471</u>			423,425
Rent and services of offices	7,238		8,531	
Rates and water	1,475		1,542	
Heat and light	2,058		1,953	
Insurance and affiliation fee	9,038		3,860	
Telephone and fax	3,377		4,562	
Computer expenses	3,801		2,337	
Printing, postage and stationery	4,742		6,456	
Lease of photocopiers	1,926		1,103	
Recruitment advertising	-		7,455	
Sundry office expenses	882		675	
Professional fees	1,815		1,951	
Repairs and renewals	380		3,491	
Trustees expenses	-		-	
Audit fee	1,500			
			1,045	
Bank charges	-		7	
Depreciation of fixed assets	<u>3,404</u>		<u>1,117</u>	
		41,636		46,085
Total expenditure		487,088		469,510
Excess of Income expenditure/ (expenditure over income)		<u>(8,857)</u>		<u>(12,686)</u>

11 HIGHLIGHT THE ISSUES FOR ACTION – AND ACHIEVEMENTS.

Overall the responses have been positive, with the majority of carers and their families feeling that the service meets their needs and is delivered professionally by caring staff. Commissioners who took part in this social accounting cycle have been equally positive in their responses and generally feel that the objectives outlined by the organisation are right for South Cheshire Crossroads as well as their own needs.

Securing funding for our specialist project, the social skills group for adults with aspergers syndrome has been a real achievement in the year. As has registering as a provider under the In Control initiative. Taking part in this project has encouraged South Cheshire Crossroads to analyse its costs and look at how it could provide services differently to clients. For example, clients wishing to commission their own services may not want to purchase the standard £14.79 respite hour that South Cheshire Crossroads has traditionally provided. Instead they may wish to employ their own Personal Assistants but purchase employment advice and training via South Cheshire Crossroads. This is now possible.

There are several actions that will now be undertaken by the scheme in response to information gathered via the social accounting process. These are listed as follows;

- Next years social accounts cycle will involve extensive consultation with members and also possibly members of the general public.
- With hindsight it would have been extremely useful to have produced a pilot questionnaire for respondents to complete. Unfortunately due to the pressures of time and resources this was not done. A pilot study could have provided useful information in terms of highlighting any ambiguous questions and would have allowed the questionnaire design to be improved.
- Consistency of staff is an issue that needs to be addressed. Recruiting staff will help with this so greater flexibility can be offered to clients.
- The results show that the majority of staff believe that clients are listened to when there is a problem. There is still some work here to be done though in terms of improving communication between staff and clients.
- In terms of making use of technologies within the home, clearly more needs to be done in this area. This is a new area for South Cheshire Crossroads and work is underway to engage with partner agencies to undertake this type of work.
- We could explore the options surrounding the introduction of guaranteed hours for staff so they know their rota in advance.
- One option in terms of staff wanting guaranteed hours is to charge clients for late cancellations.
- With regard to lone working and personal safety concerns that were raised during the accounting process, one option that may assist in improving staff safety may be to ask all

- staff to phone the on call service when they arrive home safely.
- Communication between Carer Support Workers & office staff needs to improve. This will be picked up in a staff meeting and there may also be a need for some training for office staff in terms of communication skills.
- It is necessary to look at our master rota to see if split shifts can be avoided.
- South Cheshire Crossroads has explored the payment of travel time to staff and feel this it is not possible to implement it at the moment as it would increase the hourly cost by £2.00 per hour. The service cannot afford this increase at the present time.
- It is necessary to improve the way the services engages with carers about new services & existing services. It could be that more work is required in terms of engaging with carers and their families in the determination of new services. Secondly, work needs to be done in relating to informing staff about this work. Possibly regular reports could be sent out to improve the awareness of changes within the organisation.
- Potentially South Cheshire Crossroads could begin to explore the possibility of offering additional services to client's i.e. shopping, housework, and ironing.
- There is a demand for emergency respite. South Cheshire Crossroads is exploring with partner agencies the New Deal for Carers finding that is due to come on stream, which will involve the provision of emergency respite to families.
-

- Whilst the scheme would love to provide free respite for parent carers of a child with a disability, this cannot be implemented at the present time due to funding restrictions.
- South Cheshire Crossroads will definitely look to produce a quarterly newsletter in the future.
- Some additional work is needed in relation to recruitment and retention of staff. The current turnover levels mean that the scheme is making a massive investment in recruiting and training new staff.
- The scheme needs to find ways to involve carers and their families in the governance and operational running of the scheme. It is hoped that carers can join the board of directors, and also apply to become members of the various sub groups that exist.
- South Cheshire Crossroads needs to develop and implement a marketing strategy. Steps in this direction are being taken.
- There is a clearly an action to increase the take up of private purchase clients whether through private income or direct payments/individual budgets. Plans are in place to ensure this happens (refer to '200 hours' business plan).
- Pay and conditions are under a review at present – clearly the wages paid to Carer Support Workers was raised as an issue.
- Care Administrator staff have been asked to look at our rota system to see whether the rota can be produced further in advance. Staff will be kept informed of these developments
- Staff meetings are infrequent at the moment, this is because of staff sickness/absences well as a shortage of staff which means staff are out in the field covering respite breaks and

subsequently unavailable to attend meetings. The meetings however will be resurrected and recruitment of new staff should make it easier to call them.

- One comment was that the reporting structure was vague. This was an interesting point. The Scheme Manager will discuss this at future staff meetings to clarify any confusion.
- Many of the Carers requested additional respite hours. This came up several times & highlights how important the service is to people
- The induction provided to board members needs to improve. One board member said the process of completing their questionnaire highlighted their lack of knowledge about the work of South Cheshire Crossroads so clearly this needs to improve.
- Carer Support Workers need to take more of an active role in the care which they provide and perhaps try to stimulate the client more throughout their visit.
- Clearly the assessment process needs a review as comments were made by families about improvements that could be made.
- The fact that the service is free of charge (to some carers at the point of delivery) was noted as being important. Whilst in an ideal world the organisation would like to deliver a free service to all carers and their families who may benefit, the reality is that as funding streams get fewer and eligibility criteria gets tighter this is not possible.
- There is now a commitment to try Fair Trade products during Fair Trade fortnight.

12 STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE SOCIAL ACCOUNTING PROCESS

Clearly social accounting and audit is an organisational change process. It could be argued that the practice of social accounting and audit should not be undertaken by organisations unless they are comfortable to implement any results. The exercise was invaluable for South Cheshire Crossroads. Almost immediately, changes were made at an operational level. The final report highlights areas for improvement and these will be incorporated into the next year's strategic social enterprise development plan.

The social accounting process was useful in pointing out areas of 'weakness' and in focusing Trustees and staff's vision for the organisation. It assisted the organisation to focus on its value base, key objectives and on what makes the enterprise 'different'.

The auditing of the accounts has arguably brought a sense of credibility to the information gathered during the consultation process, as it was conducted independently. The feedback from staff, and other stakeholders was honest and constructive and this has allowed the organisation to work towards identifying what its successes and failures were.

One of the assessments that has been made of the social accounting and audit model is that whilst stakeholder engagement is central to the social accounting model, many organisations utilising the model do not clearly identify who their stakeholders are. Moreover, they do not involve their stakeholders when

determining which stakeholders to consult with during the accounting process, or what the scope of the accounts will be. In order for the process to have legitimacy, it is essential that stakeholders are involved at every stage of the accounting process.

The voluntary nature of social accounting has led some researchers to question why companies undertake the process. There are increasing pressures on not for profit sector organisations to measure and report on their performance. Furthermore, these demands are set to increase. It is therefore worth considering whether or not social accounting will be made or indeed should be made part of a mandatory monitoring and evaluation process undertaken by not for profit sector groups in order to justify their use of public funds.

It could be argued that social accounting at the current time is hampered by the rudimentary toolkits available to social economy organisations. The methods of consultation can tend to rely on stakeholders completing questionnaires, which are not necessarily the only or most suitable method to use. It is argued that practicing social auditors must agree a set of standards or benchmarks against which the quality of the accounts and the methods applied during the accounting process can be measured. This is difficult to implement when there are so many variations that organisations can choose to apply when following a social accounting model such as AA1000. For example, allowing an organisation to determine for themselves the scope of the accounts means that comparisons with other similar enterprises

becomes a challenge. The autonomy allowed to organisations participating in the Community Business Scotland (CBS) model of social accounting and audit, means that identification of stakeholders can be sometimes limited, so that organisations may choose to omit a particular group of stakeholders whose views may be less than complimentary.

Within the social economy sector, it could be argued that an agency relationship exists between organisations and the verifier appointed to audit the social accounts. The fact that the principle (the organisation) appoints (and presumably pays) an external auditor (the agent) to verify the accounts may potentially call in question the legitimacy of the accounts produced as potentially the verified could be seen as biased.

A further limitation with the Community Business Scotland model of social accounting is that there is no standardised method of collating and subsequently presenting the information contained in the accounts, thus making comparisons between sets of accounts problematic. Standardisation of the practice, in the same way that there are accepted concepts and conventions of financial accounting, and the development of a consistently applied framework would assist with this problem. Accredited training in social accounting and possibly a kite mark illustrating compliance to the standard would allow some consistency across the board. The Community Business Scotland model of social accounting and audit does not provide any guidance on how to analyse the data gathered. This could be regarded as a weakness of the model.

In conclusion, it could be argued that one of the strengths of the social accounting and audit process is that it encourages a range of stakeholders both from within and external to an organisation to feel some degree of ownership of the direction of travel taken by the organisation. The ownership and understanding of the audit and accounts within all levels of the organisation will be crucial to the successful implementation of any changes to practice. Clearly, one of the further strengths of the social accounting process is that it is a process that needs to be carried out by the organisation itself, rather than paying an external consultant to come in and carry it out.

13 PLANS FOR THE NEXT CYCLE

The organisation plans to undertake social accounting and audit on an annual basis. When the accounts are carried out next year, staff will need to ensure that the questions asked on the questionnaires, clearly correlate with the organisations mission, values, objectives and activities. This will ensure that analysing the data gathered via the consultation process is far easier.

Consultation may be carried out using alternative methods for example face to face interviews and focus groups, as opposed to simply using questionnaires.

In essence South Cheshire Crossroads would like to continue to consult on all four of the agreed objectives. As well as the mission and values. The process has been an extremely interesting journey and staff have learnt a good deal about the social benefit of work carried out but also achieved some clarity about the organisations mission. In future accounting cycles it is hoped that the board of trustees would be more engaged in the accounting process (the consultation response rates were disappointing). There was also some cynicism about social accounting at the beginning of the accounting process from some staff on the team. They were worried that the accounting process duplicated work that was already undertaken. Hopefully the production of the accounts this year may have enabled those staff to develop an understanding of why social accounting is important and the benefits it can bring.

14 PLANS FOR DIALOGUE WITH STAKEHOLDERS, AND FOR PUBLICATION AND DISCLOSURE

The accounts are going to be launched at this years AGM, on the 25th September 2007. Damian Lally, Senior Social Enterprise Officer at Cheshire County Council will present the accounts and copies will be made available to members and other stakeholders.

A copy of the full social accounts will be circulated to a wide range of key stakeholders including staff and trustees. Copies of the summary will be circulated to carers and their families, and full copies will be made available on request. The summary of the accounts will be posted on South Cheshire Crossroads website, as well as the Social Audit Network website. Copies of the full set of accounts will be made available on request for a small administration fee.

The social accounts will be discussed at the next few team meetings and Board meetings, and the actions identified will be followed up. Copies of the summary will be sent to our key funders and commissioners.

The Scheme Manager has offered to talk to other Managers within the Crossroads network about adopting the model of consultation and is happy to share South Cheshire Crossroads experience of the social accounting process.

15 APPENDICES

Please see attached;

Appendix One; Key Stakeholders Consultation Worksheet

Appendix Two; Stakeholder Consultation Matrix

Appendix Three; Stakeholders Questionnaires

Appendix Four; Transcript of interview with young carer's family