

Object Lessons 5

You are worth it! How to charge for/get the funding you deserve to work with children and young people who deserve it

Firstsite Colchester 10am to 4pm, 8 February 2018

Commissioning

What is commissioning?

Commissioning is the process by which Local Authorities and other Public Service providers decide how to best use their resources to improve outcomes for people

Commissioning has been in place for many years in areas such as adult social care and health and is now widely used to deliver outcomes for children's services and learning and skills among other public services. Outcomes may be linked to a wide range of areas encompassing, for example, health and wellbeing (both physical and mental), education (in particular the local offer for children with SEND), and for looked after children. The commissioning will be in response to local needs identified by research (sometimes called a Gap Analysis).

Commissioning doesn't just happen at a strategic level by local authorities but increasingly at an individual level where parents, carers and service users can choose self-directed support via direct payments and individual budgets (personalisation).

Commissioning differs in every area of the country but if you are looking for more information and support it's worth bearing in mind that there are generally four sets of functions for those involved in commissioning

Governance- This is the level key strategic partnerships such as the Children's' Trust or the Health and Wellbeing Board. These boards are responsible for decision making, setting priorities, identifying resources and are accountable for outcomes for the community. There will often be sub groups for different outcome areas.

Management – This level consists of directors and their teams who have the responsibility for developing the strategy, accountability for managing the budget and for the delivery of services. These teams will also have accountability to elected members and for delivering local political priorities.

Joint commissioning –Within council directorates there will be staff designated to commission services in partnership with others. They will be responsible for the process of strategic commissioning.

Support – This level is the ‘nitty gritty’ and includes developing policies to deliver strategies, undertaking needs analysis and assessment, information management, data analysis, performance management, procurement, financial management, legal services and workforce planning.

No two areas handle commissioning in the same way so some research is needed to establish who you need to talk to and what the key outcomes for your area are.

Case Study- University of Cambridge Museums

The University of Cambridge Museums (UCM) work with local Authority Commissioning in three ways

- Through Cambridge City Council on bespoke arts projects with targeted groups, for example using anti-poverty funding
- Through ‘My Cambridge Local Cultural Education partnership’ (Local Authority commissioning on behalf of the LCEP)
- Arts Pioneers Funding through Short Breaks, English National Statutory provision

Arts Pioneers is run through the ‘Short Breaks Statutory Provision’. There is a range of legislation underpinning short breaks for children including the Children and families Act (2014) and SEND (Special educational Needs and Disabilities) reforms (Jan 2015). These include a requirement to publish and maintain a “Local Offer” of education, health and social care provision that the local authority expects to be available to children with SEND. This includes short break provision. Authorities must consult locally on what the offer should contain. Information about the Local Offer in an area is available online and should show what the offer looks like locally and will contain links to further information about the Short Breaks offer.

What are Short Breaks?

Short breaks form part of a range of services, which support disabled children and their families to give:

- disabled children and young people enjoyable experiences away from their primary carers, contributing to their personal and social development and reducing social isolation
- parents and families a necessary and valuable break from caring responsibilities
- families with disabled children support to enable them to do more things together as a family

Short Breaks can include holiday play schemes, clubs, sports groups, cultural activities and activities designed to support young people to develop skills needed in adulthood.

The University of Cambridge Museums developed ‘Arts Pioneers’ which is a monthly out-of-school provision delivered on one Saturday a month at the Fitzwilliam Museum. It is designed for young people aged 11-15 who have a disability but do not need to access specialist services. The young people work with artists and are helped by support workers and the

sessions were created in consultation with the participants. There is an opportunity to work toward an Arts Award and to take part in a Holiday Club to work across 8 University of Cambridge Museums and the Botanic Gardens. The UCM had identified that children and young people with disabilities were under represented in their audience and that there was a gap in targeted provision for this group across the University partnership. The County Council had also identified a gap in their Local Offer of arts and culture provision. The County Council needed to develop an offer in partnership with children and young people and the UCM have the expertise and experience in supporting young people to take the lead.

Having identified the shared priorities and an opportunity to tender for the provision of a service as part of the 'Short Breaks Duty' UCM registered as a supplier on the procurement portal service- in this case <https://www.lgssprocurementportal.co.uk/> although some councils manage the tender process themselves. Guidance is available on what the scoring process for tenders will be and what kinds of documents and information will be needed. Some answers are a straight yes/no such as 'do you have a health and safety policy' and if you give the wrong answer your application will be eliminated. Other questions are weighted and this weighting should be clear in the guidance notes. A budget for the provision and an outline of what the programme will offer will be needed at this stage.

The selection criteria used by Cambridge County Council split into two areas- selection criteria (practical assessment) and Award criteria (more detailed information about the programme)

Selection Criteria questions asked for evidence of

- Registration with either the Care Quality Commission or Ofsted (E)*
Financial status, compliance with Equality Act, Health and Safety (E)
- Insurance documents: Employer's Liabilities, Public Liability, Professional Indemnity (E)
- Document showing structure of the organisation, and any parent companies (E)
- Details of three examples of similar contracts awarded in the last three years (10%)
- Environmental policy or evidence of working to improvement (5%)
- Equality policy and evidence (15%)
- Quality Assurance, eg Quality Management System (5%)
- Economic, social and environmental wellbeing benefits of previous contracts (15%)
- Technical Capacity and Capability, eg details of Child Protection policy etc (50%)

*(Although Ofsted registration is shown here as essential a discussion with the council proved that this wasn't actually the case and UCM recommend talking to relevant people for clarification and support.)

Delivery

Cambridgeshire County Council promotes the activity as part of the Short Breaks provision through the Self Directed Support Price Guide. Families buy into the provision using their allocated personal budgets and are referred to the museum which then manages the relationship with the families and keeps records and case notes. The Museum receives payment based on the number of participants registered each term. The contract has been extended for an additional two years after the initial two year contract.

Practicalities and tips

- It is possible to negotiate to changes in timings and delivery. The offer was first made in an after school slot but was changed to a more successful Saturday slot. The council are keen to make the offer work and are happy to discuss changes and adaptations
- Think about what you can realistically offer and build from there
- Starting can be slow and Arts Pioneers was delayed as there were few participants registering at first
- Be realistic in terms of how many young people can benefit from the project- 12 young people is the realistic maximum for this project
- Be aware that there is no guarantee of how much money you'll get. The offer goes into the Self Directed Support Price Guide and parents choose accordingly and pay per quarter and you have no guarantee of take up. Consider whether you need to factor in a minimum number of participants or subsidise the programme in its early stages
- Being part of the commissioning programme gives you access to support, advice and training
- Make sure you have all the relevant documents before starting
- Ask questions: UCM discovered that they didn't need to provide Ofsted registered provision, despite it being stated as essential on the tender
- You don't have to score well on every point, 61% overall was enough to win the tender
- Be prepared to invest time in reading guidance documents and national duty statements
- The length of tenders varies between local authorities (Some a year, some more)
- The number of providers varies from LA to LA: some contracts are awarded to one supplier so you might need to join a consortium while others have multiple suppliers (as in Cambridgeshire)
- Find out what contracts are available: <https://procontract.due-north.com/Opportunities>

Outcomes

Participants have attended other events at the Museums and some have undertaken work experience. There is an increasing understanding and awareness of inclusion across the museum.

Links by area

County	Local Offer	Tenders and procurement	General information on commissioning or procurement
Bedfordshire and Bedford	https://sendguide.bedford.gov.uk/	https://in-tendhost.co.uk/centralbedfordshire.aspx/Home http://www.bedford.gov.uk/business/tenders_and_contracts.aspx	https://www.bedford.gov.uk/health_and_social_care/help_for_adults/joint_commissioning_strategies.aspx
Cambridgeshire	https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/local-offer/	https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/business-with-the-council/providing-goods-and-services-to-the-council/	https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/local-offer/about-cambridgeshire-s-local-offer/joint-commissioning/ https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/council/council-structure/senior-managers-and-structure-charts/people-and-communities-directorate/
Essex	http://www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk/	https://www.essex.gov.uk/Business-Partners/Supplying-Council/Pages/default.aspx	http://www.essexinsight.org.uk/mainmenu.aspx?cookieCheck=true&JScript=1
Hertfordshire	https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/the-hertfordshire-local-offer.aspx	https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/Business/Doing-business-with-us/Doing-business-with-us.aspx	http://www.enhertscg.nhs.uk/send
Luton	http://directory.luton.gov.uk/kb5/luton/directory/lo_info.page	https://www.luton.gov.uk/Business/Doing%20business%20with%20the%20council/Pages/default.aspx	https://www.luton.gov.uk/Business/Doing%20business%20with%20the%20council/Pages/default.aspx
Norfolk	https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/children-and-families/send-local-offer	https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/business/supplying-norfolk-county-council/tenders-contracts-and-procurement	https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/children-and-families/send-local-offer/about-the-local-offer/joint-commissioning
Peterborough	http://fis.peterborough.gov.uk/kb5/peterborough/directory/localoffer.page?familychannel=8	https://www.peterborough.gov.uk/business/supplying-the-council/	https://www.peterborough.gov.uk/healthcare/adult-social-care/commissioning/commissioning-news/
Southend	http://www.southend.gov.uk/info/200225/children_with_disabilities/594/local_offer_-_send/1	http://www.southend.gov.uk/info/200358/procurement_and_contracts	http://www.southend.gov.uk/southendchildren/ http://www.southend.gov.uk/southendchildren/info/18/commissioning/15/commissioning_framework
Suffolk	https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/localoffer.page;jsessionid=5BF6BB0F004B9D9C1A3B9AED4231835E?localofferchannelnew=0	https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/business-jobs-and-careers/tenders-and-supplying-us/	https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/childrens-trust-joint-commissioning-group/
Thurrock	http://www.askthurrock.org.uk/kb5/thurrock/fis/localoffer.page	http://thurrock.g2b.info/	http://www.thurrocktradedservices.co.uk/Services/3122

Other useful links

Arts and Cultural Commissioning Toolkit

<http://www.artscommissioningtoolkit.com/index.php>

A Beginner's Guide to Partnerships and Commissioning (mostly refers to the NHS)

<https://museumsandwellbeingalliance.files.wordpress.com/2015/09/guidance-for-museums-final.pdf>

Understanding commissioning: a practical guide for the culture, tourism and sport sector

<http://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/our-improvement-offer/culture-and-sport-improvement/understanding-commissioning>

Cultural Commissioning

<https://knowhownonprofit.org/funding/commissioning/cultural-commissioning/cultural-commissioning#>

<https://knowhownonprofit.org/funding/commissioning/cultural-commissioning/practicalities-of-cultural-commissioning>