

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE BOARD COMMISSIONING SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held at LB31 - Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG on 16 July 2014 from 2.01 pm - 2.21 pm

Membership

Present

Councillor Alex Norris (Chair) - Portfolio Holder for Adults, Commissioning and Health

Councillor Jon Collins - Portfolio Holder for Strategic Regeneration and Schools

Councillor Dave Liversidge - Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Housing and Voluntary Sector

Councillor Dave Trimble - Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture

Absent

Councillor David Mellen (Vice-Chair) - Portfolio Holder for Children's Services

Non-voting Members

Present

Helen Kearsley-Cree - Nottingham Community and Voluntary Service (NCVS)

Absent

Safdar Azam - Nottingham Equal

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Irene Andrews	- Market development Programme Manager)	
Joy Chambers	- Placement Manager)	
Katy Ball	- Head of Early Intervention and Market Development)	
Candida Brudenell	- Strategic Director of Early Intervention)	Children and Adults
Antony Dixon	- Strategic Commissioning Manager)	
Bobby Lowen	- Lead Commissioning Manager)	
Holly Macer	- Lead Contract Officer)	
Steve Oakley	- Head of Quality and Efficiency)	
Zena West	- Constitutional Services Officer	-	Resources

Call-in

Unless stated otherwise, all decisions are subject to call-in and cannot be implemented until **28 July 2014**.

13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

15 MINUTES

The Sub-Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held 11 June 2014 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

16 VOLUNTARY SECTOR UPDATE

Helen Kearsley-Cree of Nottingham Community and Voluntary Service (NCVS) provided an update for the Sub-Committee on the following issues:

- (a) Voluntary Sector Research – NCVS has recently produced a report which profiles the smaller BME groups and details the type of support they are accessing from NCVS. The State of the Sector survey, which informs a report on the 'health' of and issues faced by the voluntary sector has just closed. The Report will be available late summer. A refresh of a previous piece of research into the Value (both economic and thematic) of the voluntary sector is currently underway.
- (b) Stronger Together Group – this has developed from an initial meeting of the Area Based Grant Leads and also involves VCS (Voluntary and Community Sector) Support Services Providers (infrastructure) and Communities of Identity Grant Leads. Recently, NCVS held a combined meeting with Advocates and are supporting the group to develop as a VCS Leadership group.
- (c) Looking After Each Other – NCVS have worked with City Council colleagues to align VCS support services to this agenda, and there will be an emphasis on growing and developing the role of the voluntary sector within prevention and early intervention activities.

17 WORK PROGRAMME

Antony Dixon, Strategic Commissioning Manager, presented a Work programme for the Sub-Committee, covering the period September 2014 to April 2015.

RESOLVED to note the provisional agenda items shown below:

**10 September 2014: Children in Care Semi-Independent Accommodation Commissioning;
Residential Care Commissioning and Contracting Arrangements;
Hucknall House Transitional Arrangements;
Better Care Fund Resubmission;
Public Health Contracts and Budget Allocation;**

**15 October 2014: Voluntary Sector Infrastructure Contract Commissioning Intentions;
ICELS Commissioning Model;**

12 November 2014: (No items planned yet);

- 10 December 2014:** **Residential and Nursing Care Non Standard Elements; Right Place Right Time Commissioning Intentions;**
- 14 January 2015:** **Financial Vulnerability Advice and Assistance Commissioning Intentions;**
- 11 February 2015:** **Better Care Fund Plan 2015/16; ICELS Commissioning Arrangements;**
- 11 March 2015:** **(No items planned yet);**
- 15 April 2015:** **(No items planned yet).**

18 NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL PROCUREMENT PLAN 2014-18

Steve Oakley, Head of Quality and Efficiency, introduced the latest version of the Council-wide procurement plan for 2014 to 2018. Procurement and commissioning will potentially be aligned with other partners such as Health, and will be reflected in the plan. Procurement will be dealt with on-merit, on the basis of what the sector is able to respond to, with a focus on encouraging working with local businesses.

RESOLVED to note the details of Nottingham City Council Procurement Plan 2014 to 2018, and to note that it is indicative of planned activity and timescales, and may be subject to change.

19 FINANCIAL VULNERABILITY ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE STRATEGIC COMMISSIONING REVIEW PROGRESS UPDATE

Antony Dixon, Strategic Commissioning Manager, and Bobby Lowen, Lead Commissioning Manager, introduced a report to the Sub-Committee, providing an update on the progress of the Financial Vulnerability Advice and Assistance Strategic Commissioning Review (FVAA SCR):

- (a) The FVAA SCR is linked to work on employment and welfare support. Evidence suggests that demand for assistance from citizens experiencing financial difficulty has increased, and more needs to be done to meet the Council's commitments. Key drivers of demand include poor employment terms and under-employment, along with additional difficulty experienced by some citizens linked to recent welfare reforms.
- (b) The first analysis stage is complete. Nottingham City is high on indices of multiple deprivation, and evidence suggests that a high proportion of Nottingham's citizens have unmanageable debt. Experiences of financial difficulty are linked to associated problems of poor health, increased crime, lower educational attainment, inter-generational connection and families entering a cycle of poverty.
- (c) A number of opportunities to improve the use of resources to assist citizens in avoiding or recovering from financial difficulty have been identified through the initial analysis. Further research and planning is being taken forward in partnership with stakeholders, to explore these opportunities further and to

work towards commissioning intentions which will be shared with the Executive Board Commissioning Sub-Committee at its meeting on 12 November 2014.

RESOLVED to note the results of the first analysis stage, the key lines of enquiry for further investigation, and the revised timescales for the conclusion of the review.

20 BLOCK CONTRACT FOR CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL CARE - KEY DECISION

Katy Ball, Head of Early Intervention and Market Development, and Holly Macer, Lead Contract Officer, presented the report to the Sub-Committee, highlighting the following points:

- (a) Nottingham City Council's Children in Care Placements and Sufficiency Strategy was agreed in March 2014, signalling the drive to further increase the number of children placed within 20 miles of the City, and continuing to improve outcomes and value for money.
- (b) There are approximately 55 children in external residential provision at the moment, with a plan for blocking 20 places. The spaces will not be fixed in one place, but flexible to enable choice in meeting needs. Data going back to 2008 shows a consistent number of residential placements of between 50 and 60.
- (c) The plan will make savings and focus on high quality. The advantage for the providers is that there will be guaranteed business.
- (d) In line with Nottingham City Council's Procurement Strategy, local providers will be used if possible.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) undertake a procurement process to commission a block contract of 20 children's residential care placements, with two external providers, within a 20 mile radius of the City Centre;**
- (2) agree a maximum annual spend on the contract (as detailed in exempt appendix 3), from the existing External Placement budget;**
- (3) grant delegated authority to the Strategic Director for Early Intervention to agree the outcome of the tender and award the contract, and to delegate authority to the Head of Quality and Efficiency to sign the contracts arising from the tender process once the tender outcome is agreed;**
- (4) note the options for collaborative tendering with Nottinghamshire County Council are being explored.**

Reasons for Decision

- (1) The recommended block contract will address current market challenges by ensuring increased local capacity and greater choice for the City's children and young people. It will also enable the Local Authority to significantly reduce the current spend on residential care placements.
- (2) All local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure sufficient accommodation for its Looked After children and young people.
- (3) The proposed block contract aims to address current gaps and weaknesses in the placement market, which are preventing the Strategy's aims from being achieved. Weaknesses include insufficient availability of local placement provision and continued local authority financial pressures, which require innovative solutions to ensure that the City sufficiently and efficiently meets demand. Planned regional commissioning developments will further impact upon the local placement market (e.g. neighbouring local authorities planned block contracting arrangements).
- (4) The procurement process to commission a block contract of 20 local children's residential care placements will ensure compliance with the Council's Financial Regulations and Contract Procedure Rules. The proposal will meet the Council's aims to ensure value for money, quality and variety of services and will support the modernisation agenda.

Other Options Considered

- (1) Continue to spot purchase residential care provision under the current commissioning arrangements. This would deny the local authority the opportunity to make a significant financial saving and enable an increased number of children and young people to be placed locally. For this reason, this option was rejected.
- (2) Increase internal provision. This would incur a greater cost than external provision delivered via a block contract. The capacity required could not be developed within the timescales required. Further risks are involved in internal provision, including absorbing the costs of vacancies and being committed to specific locations. Block contracting will provide better value for money. For these reasons, this option was rejected.

21 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining agenda item in accordance with section 100a(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the basis that, having regard to all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

22 BLOCK CONTRACT FOR CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL CARE - KEY DECISION - EXEMPT APPENDICES

As minute 20, above.