

Commissioning Task and Finish Group Report 2 **Commissioning for Transformational Services**

Background

This group is one of six work stream groups, part of the 'task and finish commissioning group' set up to enable the co-production of a joint programme of work between SCC and VCF sector to enhance and improve commissioning capability. The public sector is moving away from a grants based approach to a commissioning and procurement culture and this will have huge implications for both commissioners and the VCF sector. SCC/ NHS (and some other commissioners) have signalled their intention to move towards a co-commissioning process based on quality, outcomes and value for money.

The current financial situation facing the public sector and changing national policy around encouraging a greater diversity of provision, means that the current ways of providing services will not be sustainable or even possible in the future. Both commissioners and providers need to think carefully about how outcomes are delivered, perhaps in radically different ways than at present. This raises some key issues for commissioning activities, not least how innovation and new thinking can be used to drive transformation through a commissioning cycle.

This paper proposes some key principles and questions to be asked by commissioners to ensure that transformational thinking around service delivery is appropriately included as part of a commissioning cycle. The key principles are designed to be considered broadly in order.

For each key principle, a number of questions and tools and techniques have been identified to help commissioners.

Key principles:

Principle	Explanation	Questions for Commissioners	Suggested Tools, Techniques and Resources
Needs analysis	An excellent understanding of the needs (and existing assets) of the customer is a critical starting point for transforming services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do we know about the problem at the moment? • Who are your customers? What do you know about them? • What do we know about how that problem impacts on different communities and groups of customers? • What assets are currently in place that we could make use of? • What gaps are there in current service provision? • Who can you talk with to get a better understanding of how needs are felt on the ground – can you engage current providers or service users to get this picture? 	<p>SCC Knowledge and Research Team can assist in the production of needs analyses – contact Andrew.walshaw@sheffield.gov.uk</p> <p>Local Area Statistics Online System (LASOS) – www.lasos.org.uk</p> <p>State of Sheffield – www.sheffield.gov.uk/stateofsheffield</p> <p>Make use of existing needs analyses including Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA), Housing Market Assessment, Child Poverty Needs Assessment, Local Economic Assessment – all available on SCC website</p>
Identification of outcomes	Following on from needs analysis, it is important for commissioners (and involving providers as	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What ‘good’ are you trying to achieve? • How does this link to 	Sheffield City Strategy – www.sheffieldfirst.net

	<p>appropriate) to consider what outcomes you are looking to deliver</p>	<p>service outcomes and the strategic outcomes of the organisation (as set out in the Corporate Plan)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does this link to the City Strategy outcomes, shared across the Sheffield First Partnership? • How do you join up locality based outcomes (e.g. from Community Plans) with city wide outcomes? 	<p>Outcomes Star – www.outcomesstar.org.uk</p> <p>SCC Corporate Plan www.sheffield.gov.uk/acityofopportunity</p>
<p>Virtual decommissioning</p>	<p>When thinking about transformation, it is usually helpful to start from a 'blank piece of paper' – this essentially means disregarding the services and activities that are currently provided, and thinking about what services you would want to see in place to help achieve the outcome that you have identified</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What services are currently delivered? • How much do they cost? • What benefits do they bring (including indirect benefits to other outcome areas)? • What would be the impact on need if they were not in place? • If you didn't have the current services in place, what would you do better or differently? • Think about the outcome from a customer perspective – what is their journey through the 	<p>NHS Sheffield Decommissioning Services Report - here</p>

		<p>system? What could be better or more effective?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How might you join up with other services or providers? What about other funders who commission for the same outcome – how could you pool funding under outcome areas? 	
Learning from others	Learning from what's worked well elsewhere can be a valuable approach in commissioning very different sorts of services or activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you know about what's been successful from other places? This could be other parts of the Council or local public sector, other local areas in this country, or internationally? • Where could you find out more about new and successful approaches? • What do providers know about other types of approach? • What were the main issues encountered in establishing new approaches elsewhere? • What didn't work well? Why not? 	Local Government Improvement and Development – www.idea.gov.uk
Developing new	Once you have all this information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you evidence how any 	Commissioning Transformation report:

<p>approaches</p>	<p>about what you're trying to achieve and what has worked well in other areas, then you can begin to develop new approaches.</p>	<p>new approach will meet need better (more effectively) than current provision?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can you build in co-design of services – pulling in the ideas and expertise of a wide range of stakeholders including users and providers? • How can you integrate with other services that are working towards a shared or complementary outcome • Can you make use of new technologies or new ways of doing things? • How can you demonstrate value for money and effectiveness of new approaches? • Would adopting a more commercial mindset be helpful i.e. trying to spot new opportunities or gaps in the market? 	<p>here</p> <p>The Government's Modernising Commissioning Green Paper</p> <p>Unshackling Good Neighbours report</p>
<p>User and provider engagement</p>	<p>Meaningful consultation with a range of stakeholders will be vital for any service that is being</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you identified who your stakeholders are – users, providers (both 	<p>SCC commissioners should contact the Governance and Involvement team for more information on consultation:</p>

	<p>transformed. You should have already engaged some providers and users during needs analysis and design, but good consultation will mean that you can get a picture of likely issues or concerns with the proposals and get buy-in and engagement with proposed new services</p>	<p>current and potential), other interested parties (e.g. Members, Community Assemblies etc)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you considered how you will consult, which questions you will ask, how you will encourage responses, how you will feed back what's changed as a result? Have you thought about when is the most appropriate point in the process to consult? • How will you encourage dialogue with stakeholders (i.e. wider and broader than pure consultation) – perhaps for the more difficult or intractable issues 	<p>Michael.bowles@sheffield.gov.uk</p>
<p>Evaluation</p>	<p>A proper evaluation mechanism is important for any service or project to enable both commissioners and providers to understand its effectiveness. This is particularly the case for transformational services where it will be important to demonstrate that new approaches both meet</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will you establish a baseline? • What will you measure as part of your evaluation? • How will you gather information? • How will you undertake analysis of the information you have? 	<p>The Evaluation Trust – useful introduction to evaluation</p> <p>More technical information available here</p> <p>In the City Council, Knowledge and Research Team can provide more information about conducting effective</p>

	the desired outcome and are value for money. Effective evaluation needs to be built into the start of a service in order that a baseline can be developed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will you report this back and feed into future commissioning processes? 	evaluations: Andrew.walshaw@sheffield.gov.uk
Failure is OK	One of the most important points about commissioning for transformational services is that trying new things means that they will not always be successful. Innovation implies that sometimes things won't work as expected. Commissioners should not welcome failure but they should be allowed to take risks and should not be punished by the organisation if things don't work out as hoped.		

Produced on behalf of the Sheffield Commissioning Task and Finish Group by James Henderson Director of Policy, Research and Partnerships Sheffield City Council

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