

## Appendix 2

### A Case Study in Contract Management of Commissioned Services

- The Strategy and Commissioning team in Public Health commissions and manages a range of contracts that provide services for vulnerable people, primarily to support them to live independently or to provide support around drug and alcohol misuse. Commissioning on behalf of Public Health, Environments and Housing, Adult Social Care and Children's Services, the team manage numerous contracts with multiple providers across the city with a value of circa £20m per annum
- In order to ensure that good services are provided that meet the needs of vulnerable people the team adopt a robust and comprehensive contract management process which is centred on relationship building with commissioned providers. Building good relationships is vital to understand the service, the context and pressures, ensuring the correct links with other providers are in place and it enables the early discussion of any potential problems.
- Contract management however is not a stand-alone activity. Contract managers are involved in the whole life cycle of commissioning: using knowledge from contract management to review services and inform future decision making; writing specifications for new services with a clear understanding of need; working with providers during a mobilisation period before a new service is up and running; managing the contract to ensure performance and outcomes during the contract period; assessing quality and the changing needs to inform future reviews.
- In terms of the day to day contract management, contract managers use the specification as the framework for discussions as this contains the service targets, outcomes and expected ways of working. Providers report against this every quarter as a minimum and a face to face meeting takes place to discuss progress any problems or barriers for example.
- Depending on the nature of the service there will be much more regular reporting, for example accommodation void levels might be reported weekly; details of those people rough sleeping 3 or 4 times a week; outcomes for those accessing drug and alcohol treatment are reported quarterly.
- Contract managers use the knowledge that they have of the service and its performance to carry out on-going risk management which provides managers with an at a glance risk rating across all of our commissioned services. The risk rating looks at quality, performance and governance and rates any potential impact of a concern in these areas for service users, the Council's priorities and reputation and the organisation delivering the service.
- A key component of the approach around contract management is the evaluation of service quality. A Quality Assessment Framework is used for which providers self-assess and then a validation of this assessment is carried out by contract managers. Part of this ongoing process ensures that providers are aware of current standards and initiatives for example around Child Sexual Exploitation and Safeguarding or linkages

to new initiatives like the Domestic Violence and Abuse Breakthrough Project or the recently successful Innovations Fund bid.

- Contract managers are aligned around particular themes, eg Young People, Domestic Violence, Mental Health etc. and will manage all of the projects in their theme area. This enables them to develop a good strategic overview, helps ensure the right links are in place, enables participation in relevant forums and steering groups and provides the opportunity to bring providers together to discuss issues around a common theme.
- Good contract management is beneficial to our commissioned providers as well. The approach used by the Strategy and Commissioning team ensures that providers have a clear understanding of how service performance will be measured and how the delivery of the service will be monitored. This enables them to plan how the service should be delivered and respond to changes in service demand.