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| Committee: | Dated: |
| Community and Children's Services | 02/11/2018 |
| Subject: Commissioning Update | Public |
| Report of: Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children's Services | For Information |
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Summary

The Department of Community and Children's Services (DCCS) Commissioning team leads on the commissioning and procurement for most contracts within the DCCS. This report provides Members with a summary of current activity, issues and priorities.

Recommendation:

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The DCCS's dedicated Commissioning team was formalised in 2016. The team leads on the key functions of the commissioning cycle (analysis, plan, do, review) and procurement functions for most contracts within the DCCS. The team produces a contract register and commissioning timelines that scope out the commissioning activity required for each of the service areas. In doing so it seeks to secure both effective services and cost efficiency for the City Corporation and those who use and receive its services.

Current Position

Placements

2. The commissioning team has been working toward the implementation of a residential placements function for the department. A placements review (for both adult and children's social care) was conducted in 2016 to identify opportunities to improve the delivery of this function. In 2017 a short term pilot demonstrated effective outcomes in terms of cost and quality of placements, which has enabled the team to secure funding for a 12-month fixed post. The post – currently being recruited – will embed improved commissioning arrangements for placements within the wider team to secure continuing efficiencies, quality and a resilient service.

Commissioned Services:

Early Intervention and Prevention Services

3. The priority project for this year has been the procurement of the Early

Intervention and Prevention Services – a range of services supporting the independence of adults with additional needs. The procurement will rationalise a number of disparate small contracts to create more effective and joined up services for residents, that are attractive to a wider market of specialist providers. Members received a paper on the project's intentions last year, and Health and Wellbeing Board Members received a paper detailing the project last month. The project is on track to deliver new services by April 2019.

Substance Misuse

4. An extension on the current alcohol and substance misuse contract, delivered by Westminster Drug Project, has been agreed in partnership with the City of London Police. Plans for re-commissioning the service are being developed in preparation for the end of the contract in August 2020.

Leisure Services

5. The team has been working with the City's current provider of sports development at Golden Lane leisure centre, Fusion, to resolve some issues and concerns regarding the service. This includes ensuring that key maintenance work has been carried out. The City Corporation has also undertaken works it is responsible for in order address leaks into the building and repair associated damage. Fusion has recently invested in a range of new gym equipment as part of a plan to attract increased membership and usage.

Youth Services

6. Extensive work has been conducted to develop an improved youth and play offer in the Square Mile. This has included market development, partnership working with London Borough of Tower Hamlets and London Borough of Islington Youth Commissioning teams and the production of a summer brochure. Copies of the summer activities brochure and publicity for the City Youth Forum were distributed to all DCCS Committee Members and publicised in Members' briefings. A paper outlining the youth services is on the agenda for today's committee meeting.

Healthwatch

7. Section 130 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 requires each local authority to have a local Healthwatch. The Healthwatch service must be run by an independent social enterprise and work with communities to influence commissioners to design and provide better health and social care services.
8. The first contract to host and support a Healthwatch ended in March 2018 and the commissioning team worked with Healthwatch members, service users and professionals to design a refreshed service specification. This was competitively tendered in early 2018 and awarded to Hackney Healthwatch who commenced a three-year contract in April 2018.
9. Since taking responsibility for this contract, Hackney Healthwatch has experienced a number issues that have impacted on their ability to fully support the City of London Healthwatch Board. The commissioning team has worked with the provider to identify improvements in the service, and provided additional support to the Board to deliver of the Annual General Meeting. The team continues to monitor this contract closely and meets regularly with the provider and City's Healthwatch Board.

City Living Wise

10. Reed Momenta have been delivering this service since October 2016, comprising health checks, exercise on referral and weight management services. The number of completed NHS and community health checks has been lower than anticipated. An action plan has been agreed to improve performance and this is being closely monitored by the team.

Information Technology (IT)

11. The Department's IT contracts have been collated to form one of the Commissioning team's cluster areas of work to enable shared learning between contracts. The Commissioning team conducted an audit in early 2018 to clarify the number and scope of IT contracts. A new IT steering group meet quarterly to oversee the governance, project planning, risk management and technical aspects of any upcoming procurements.

Partnership Working

12. The team is currently undertaking a joint procurement exercise for Short Breaks provision with the London Borough of Hackney. It has also supported the City Corporation to join a regional adoption agency with four other boroughs – Harrow, Redbridge, Slough and Bromley – for the procurement of a new adoption contract.
13. At a strategic level the team is working with colleagues in the City and Hackney Clinical Commissioning Group and London Borough of Hackney to inform the development of the commissioning plans and approaches of the Integrated Commissioning Board.

Risks and Challenges

14. There are limited venues available for the delivery of youth services within the square mile. This challenge has been further impacted on by the temporary closure of Artizan Street Library, the roof leak at Portsoken Health and Community Centre and the delay in the opening of Golden Lane Community Centre. The Commissioning team has contributed to the cost of a new roof at Portsoken Health and Community Centre.
15. Our commissioned service with London Borough of Hackney for the delivery of our out-of-hours service has been affected by challenges with IT access to City of London systems. A learning review has been conducted and an action plan has been drawn up to resolve the access issue.
16. Changes in the staff team, combined with an increase in commissioning activity, has resulted in a lack of resources at times. It is intended that recruitment for new staff members will be concluded by the end of October 2018.
17. Due to small numbers and low-value contracts, the market for high-quality providers who are willing to deliver in the Square Mile is challenging for some services. The Commissioning team intends to address this challenge over the coming year in the following ways:
 - conduct more activities to support market development
 - invest in the development of a voluntary sector forum
 - be more creative with procurement models
 - seek more opportunities for joint working with other local authorities (as outlined above).

Corporate & Strategic Implications

18. Outcomes-based specifications and Key Performance Indicators are being developed to meet the outcomes and priorities stated in the Corporate Plan and DCCS Business Plan (2017–2022), as well as the Department's outcomes framework and Children and Young People's Plan.
19. The Corporation's 2% efficiency savings target is considered in all procurement and service re-commissioning.
20. Commissioning intentions for public health and adult social care services are being developed with consideration of the Integrated Commissioning agenda. The DCCS has representation on the five Integrated Commissioning work streams and holds internal Integrated Commissioning group meetings.
21. The Commissioning team has identified their 2% savings from the Commissioning budget for 2019/20. The work of the team in the current year has also significantly reduced the number of waivers in the department – which are currently half the number of those seen at the same point in 2017/18.

Conclusion

22. The department's commissioning team continues to develop a more strategic approach to commissioning and effective partnership working. It is also managing a wide range of contracts and robustly tackling poor performance. The team remains committed to securing more integrated, effective and efficient service delivery.

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