

Committee:	Dated:
Community and Children's Services Committee	3/11/2022
Subject: Commissioning Update and Departmental Contracts Register	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1, 2, 3, 4
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of funding?	N/A
Has this funding source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Clare Chamberlain, Executive Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information
Report author: Greg Knight, Head of Commissioning, Commissioning and Partnerships	

Summary

This report provides Members with highlights of current activity, successes, issues and priorities for the Department of Community and Children's Services (DCCS) Commissioning Team.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the contents of the report and the DCCS contracts register (see Appendix 1).

Main Report

Background

1. The DCCS Commissioning Team leads on the key activities and procurements for most contracts within the department. The team manages all elements of the commissioning cycle, including the analysis, planning, implementing and reviewing of services.
2. The team is responsible for the completion and management of sourcing plans, commissioning timelines and maintaining the service's contracts register. The team proactively manages contract performance against key performance indicators to deliver the service area aims. In doing so, it seeks to secure effective services and cost efficiency for the City of London Corporation and those who use and receive its services.
3. There is a Service Level Agreement between the Commissioning Team and Commercial Services: the Commissioning Team leads on

procurement activity under £100,000. Commercial Services lead on tenders above this threshold, within the DCCS Category Board governance process.

4. The Commissioning Team currently manages 144 contracts, not including social care placement contracts, with a total value of £25,474,612. Of those contracts, 89 (62%) are under £100,000 and 55 (38%) are over the £100,000 threshold.

Commissioned services highlights

5. This section provides highlights of the current activity, successes, issues and priorities for the Commissioning Team and its work programme.

Children's and Young People's Placements

6. The team continues to use the Commissioning Alliance's Care Place framework to source placements for looked-after children and young people. This allows access to a wide range of care provision areas such as fostering, residential care, special educational needs, and 16–25-year-olds' semi-independent accommodation. Use of the framework has resulted in gaining access to market-leading prices and delivering £160,000 savings per annum since its implementation this financial year. This represents a 34% saving on the previous average weekly placement costs.
7. The team continues to review placement processes with a view to improving service quality and outcomes. The team's contract monitoring and management approach, which includes a senior management visitors programme, is designed to dovetail and supplement the Commissioning Alliance's own programme and processes. The monitoring approach will be expanded further to include a young inspectors programme in partnership with City Children in Care Council.

Adults and Children's Social Care – Out of Hours provision

8. The City's Service Level Agreements with Hackney Council – to provide the Adults and Children's Social Care Emergency Out of Hours Duty Teams – is in the process of being extended. The extension of both elements will enable service continuity in the short-to-mid-term while the Commissioning Team undertakes a service review and market exploration exercise.

Universal Youth and Play Services

9. Society Links, the City's Universal Youth and Play Service provider have made excellent progress in increasing engagement in inclusive provision and supporting the development of young people, since being awarded the contract in April 2022. The service is expanding its core programme of weekly sessions delivered from Golden Lane and Portsoken Community Centres, to

include activities four days per week. The additional offer provides targeted sports and female-only sessions, in addition to a programme to support Afghan children and young people who are part of the resettlement programme. Society Links also managed a successful community fun day at Golden Lane estate in the summer, which was attended by 180 residents.

Holiday Activities and Food Programme

10. The Holiday Activities and Food Programme, which provides healthy food and activities for children and young people eligible for free school meals, ran over the summer holidays. Activities took place at the Aldgate School and at Golden Lane Leisure Centre and resulted in six eligible children attending 72 sessions. The Christmas programme is currently being finalised and will consist of a sports programme from Golden Lane Leisure Centre and provision delivered from the Portsoken Community Centre by Society Links.

City Youth Forum

11. The newly appointed Member of Youth Parliament (MYP) and the Deputy MYP for the City delivered campaigns throughout the summer holidays, in support of their manifesto commitments to improve the mental wellbeing of young people living, working and studying in the City of London. The campaign consisted of a series of talks and workshops delivered by mental health professionals, social media campaigns, sports and creative sessions at Golden Lane Leisure Centre, and a social gathering for the City Youth Forum. Prospects, the service provider, the MYP and the Deputy MYP are in discussions with the Commissioning Team to arrange a meeting with the Lord Mayor and Members to share successes and discuss future plans.

Homecare, Reablement and Rapid Response Services

12. Following the contract award in July 2022, the mobilisation phases for both the Homecare service, and the Reablement and Rapid Response services, are now complete, with the respective providers, Hartwig Care and OneCare. The team ensured that the commissioned services are fully operational by working with the providers and colleagues in Adult Social Care to ensure a seamless transition for residents using the services. The team are in regular communication with the providers and will complete the first quarterly contract monitoring in November 2022. Service users were given the choice of which care they receive throughout the implementation, with four people opting to receive direct payments and obtain their Homecare from alternative Care Quality Commission registered providers.

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping

13. The team are supporting the significant work programme within the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping service. Services being commissioned include elements funded through the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities' Rough Sleeping Initiative. The team have recently commissioned and mobilised a coproduction and consultation development

project to increase service user participation, a tri-borough service with Hackney and Tower Hamlets Councils to provide psychotherapy support to rough sleepers, and a mobile intervention service which provides support to service users who have moved away from the streets to a range of temporary accommodation settings.

14. The team is progressing with the procurement to appoint a service provider for the new assessment service at Snow Hill Court and supporting the mobilisation of the High Support Hostel for single homeless adults, which is due to open imminently.

Registrar Service

15. The Registrar service is managed by the London Borough of Islington through an agreement with the City of London under section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972. The Proper Officer is appointed by each local authority to manage the registration service, and they have overall responsibility for the delivery of the statutory registrations of births, marriages, and deaths. The post of Proper Officer should be held by a senior officer in a position to make decisions and influence the provision of the local registration service at all levels, and is generally held by the Director of Community and Children's Services, or an Assistant Director under the Scheme of Delegations. The Home Office has agreed that, during the period of recruitment for the new Director of Community and Children's Services, the Director of Public Protection and Regulatory Services in Islington will fulfil this role on a temporary basis. Regular monitoring of the service will continue to be undertaken by the Commissioning Team.

City Connections Carers Pilot

16. A new nine-month pilot service for City Carers commenced on 17 October 2022. The service is led by the Carers Centre Tower Hamlets and includes weekly drop-in sessions, one-to-one support, and a new fortnightly carers group. It is one of the key actions from the Carers Strategy implementation group. The outcomes and uptake of the pilot will inform the future commissioning of the City Connections Service. Additional information on the pilot can be found on the City Connections website at: <https://cityconnections.org.uk/are-you-a-carer/carers-support-information/carers-connections>.

Healthwatch

17. The Healthwatch City of London contract has been extended for one of the possible two years and includes a one-off uplift in costs to enable the retention of additional staff. Additional funding opportunities are being sought to facilitate the continued funding envelope for the contract for the final potential year. Healthwatch England are in discussion with the Department of Health and Social Care regarding the funding of all Healthwatch offices on an ongoing basis. Recruitment for a new General Manager was completed in October.

Golden Lane Leisure Centre

18. The team is exploring the implications and potential of a contract extension with Fusion Lifestyle for the management of Golden Lane Leisure Centre beyond 31 March 2023. The extension will need to provide adequate time for the Corporation's new sports strategy to be completed by the Town Clerk's Department throughout 2023, in order to inform the long-term vision for sport in the City, and the service at Golden Lane.
19. A contract extension may have additional revenue implications for the department, with provisional discussions identifying the need for the City to underwrite the financial risk of future energy prices. There may also be capital funding needs to renew mechanical and electrical equipment including the plant supporting the swimming pool. It may be that such investment aligns with the ambitions – and potential funding streams - of the Climate Action Strategy.
20. A report will be presented to this Committee in January 2023, setting out the options and implications of a contract extension with Fusion Lifestyle, and seeking Members' decision.

New Responsible Procurement Requirements

21. The team will ensure that the recent policy changes within the Procurement Code are embedded within working practices from 1 January 2023. The changes include an increased 15% weighting allocated to responsible procurement within tenders, increased consideration to economic, environmental, climate and social aspects to minimise the negative impacts and maximise the potential benefits including social value.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

22. The Commissioning Team's sourcing plans and work plan are centred around the delivery of the Corporate Plan and Departmental Business Plan objectives, most notably the aim to 'Contribute to a flourishing society'.

Financial implications

23. The Commissioning Team's work will continue to focus on delivering value for money and savings within the department's budget in the financial year 2022/23.

Resource implications

24. Not applicable.

Legal implications

25. Not applicable.

Risk implications

26. Not applicable.

Equalities implications

27. Equalities considerations are included throughout the commissioning and management of services. Providers are required to report on the service's key performance indicators and assess the take-up and use of services from target groups.

Climate implications

28. Not applicable.

Security implications

29. Not applicable.

Conclusion

30. The team continues to implement a strategic approach to commissioning, prioritising workload and effective partnership working across the range of services and contracts. The team aims to manage service performance and ensure high-quality outcomes for City residents.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – DCCS contracts register (Non-public)

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