City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee: Community and Children's Services Committee	**Dated:** 30/06/2026
Subject: Department of Community and Children's Services Commissioning and Contract Management Arrangements	**Public report:** For Information
This proposal: • **delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes** • **provides statutory duties**	Diverse Engaged Communities, Providing Excellent Services
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	NA
What is the source of Funding?	NA
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	NA
Report of:	Judith Finlay, Executive Director of Community and Children's Services
Report author:	Greg Knight, Head of Commissioning, Community and Children's Services

Summary

The Community and Children's Services Commissioning Team is responsible for most of the Department's commissioning and contract management activity. It delivers a comprehensive approach to quality assurance, ensuring commissioned services are safe and effective, achieve value for money, deliver against performance indicators and intended outcomes. The approach is proportionate to the City of London's small resident population and relatively low volumes. It enables oversight, the development of strong relationships with providers, and a responsive approach to complaints or performance issues. Quality assurance is achieved across the full commissioning cycle, including the analysis, planning, implementation and review of services. Clear governance and reporting arrangements are in place to senior management and Committees.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. This report has been produced at the request of Members of the Community and Children's Services Committee (CCS). It provides Members with the requested details on how the Department's commissioning arrangements ensure quality and value for money within services, including the rationale for ceasing contracts. It also provides relevant wider context on the team's work, including established processes and governance arrangements.

Current Position

Commissioning Team Overview

2. The DCCS Commissioning Team leads on key commissioning activities and procurements for most contracts within the Department. The team's work extends to all elements of the commissioning cycle, including the analysis, planning, implementation and review of services.

3. In overseeing these requirements, the team uses a range of established processes, standardised documents and tools. Notable tracking approaches, which provide strategic oversight, include the use of the Departmental sourcing plan, commissioning timelines, contracts register, dashboard and risk register.

4. The Department secures services through a combination of competitively procured contracts, spot purchasing, service level agreements with other local authorities, and regional commissioning initiatives. The arrangements are proportionate to the City of London's scale and relatively low volumes.

Social Care Placements Brokerage

5. The team's brokerage function procures residential and care placements within adults' and children's social care settings, securing services with providers either through frameworks or directly, rather than through large block booking arrangements. This approach ensures flexibility and personalisation, enabling an appropriate response to low volumes, which are varied and often complex.

Procurement and Value for Money

6. Sign off on expenditure and the award of contracts is governed by the Procurement Act 2023 and the Corporation's Procurement Code, which set out the rules and governance requirements for all procurement activity. This ensures market transparency, compliance with legislation, appropriate oversight, value for money and service quality.

7. Value for money is assured throughout the commissioning cycle, starting with benchmarking and preliminary market engagement to assess service feasibility and respond proactively to market feedback.

8. Clearly defining service requirements and outcomes, using appropriate price and quality weightings within evaluation criteria, and varying contracts where necessary to ensure services continue to meet users' needs are further approaches used to secure value for money.

9. Additionally, the team works collaboratively with neighbouring local authorities, including through representation at various working groups and forums, to stay informed of the wider service context and market dynamics.

Contract Monitoring

10. Quality assurance is embedded across the commissioning cycle, including through structured contract monitoring meetings held on a quarterly basis as standard. As appropriate, the frequency of these meetings is reduced proportionately on a risk and size basis.

11. A standard agenda is used to measure performance against service specification requirements, safeguarding, complaints, finance, workforce, responsible procurement and partnership working.

12. Performance is monitored against clearly defined Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), including outcomes and equality measures. Service-level data is reported at contract monitoring meetings, with Officers responsible for managing performance.

13. Monitoring information, service user feedback and inspection findings are used to inform service improvement actions, service redesign and future commissioning decisions, all with the aim of delivering continuous improvement.

Cessation of Services

14. In addition to routine performance monitoring, the team's Poor Performance Process supports the management and escalation of issues, including to the point of contract cessation, if necessary.

15. Other ways services may cease include upon the natural end of the contract or following a detailed review and decision. Decisions are informed by performance, demand, risk, value for money and equality considerations through the completion of Equality Impact Assessments, with appropriate senior management or Committee oversight, where required.

16. In cases where services are ceased, an orderly exit is completed, including consideration to service continuity and communications, the transfer or disposal of data, staffing and other operational requirements.

Safeguarding and Quality Assurance

17. As standard, commissioned providers are required to hold and maintain up to date safeguarding, equality and diversity, health and safety, and complaints policies. Safeguarding policies must align with City and Hackney Safeguarding Boards and the Corporation's safeguarding processes. Compliance with statutory duties and contractual specifications is a key requirement of all service providers.

18. Safeguarding is a standing item at all monitoring meetings. Quality Alerts, incidents, issues and complaints are logged, investigated and tracked through to resolution. Learning is shared with service providers and internal service leads to support improvements.

Governance and Oversight

19. Oversight is provided through regular engagement and reporting to relevant Departmental management and leadership teams. Updates to Committees are provided as required, including through Commissioning Update Reports.

Strategic implications – The report details how the team's work contributes to Departmental, Service and Corporate Plan outcomes, notably Diverse Engaged Communities and Providing Excellent Services.

Financial implications – The commissioning approaches used to secure value for money, from procurement and competitive market testing through to contract and performance monitoring against established KPIs, are detailed in the report.

Resource implications – The resource implications associated with the report are addressed within the structure, finances and resources of the Commissioning Team.

Legal implications – None.

Risk implications – Risk is managed through contract monitoring, oversight of the team and Departmental risk registers, and appropriate governance arrangements.

Equalities implications – Services are commissioned and delivered in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty 2010. Equality Impact Assessments are routinely completed to consider the effects of service changes on protected characteristics, inform decision-making, and ensure equalities requirements are met.

Climate implications – None.

Security implications – None.

Conclusion

20. The Commissioning Team provides a proportionate approach to overseeing quality, performance, safeguarding and value for money across commissioned services.

Appendices

None

Background Papers

Commissioning Update. Community and Children's Services Committee, 16/03/2026

Greg Knight
Head of Commissioning

T: 020 7332 1173
E: greg.knight@cityoflondon.gov.uk