

Committee(s)	Dated:
Safeguarding Sub Committee	02/06/2016
Subject: Safe Commissioning Minimum Standards	Public
Report of: Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information
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Summary

The City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board (CHSCB) developed a set of minimum standards for recruitment, which is now embedded in contracts for all services which are commissioned for children and young people.

The City completed an audit of the safeguarding mechanisms in place for commissioned services. The outcome of the audit demonstrated there were good mechanisms in place, although some recommendations were made for additional measures. These recommendations have now been implemented.

As part of this work, the CHSCB has also developed a set of minimum expectations for safe commissioning. The standards are designed for partners and providers which commission or decommission external services for children and young people in the City or Hackney, and all contracts and specifications which are developed for this purpose.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board (CHSCB) developed a set of minimum standards for recruitment which is now embedded in the contracts for all services which are commissioned.
2. The commissioning team carried out an audit to consider the effectiveness of commissioning and safeguarding in July 2015 and the findings were reported to the CHSCB City Executive. The report concluded that there were robust mechanisms in place to ensure that service users were safeguarded effectively, including:

- standard contract clauses regarding compliance with CHSCB policies/DBS checks
 - DBS checks where providers are asked to send records of DBS numbers for their staff
 - cascade of information from the CHSCB
 - commissioned services invited to Children's Executive Board (CEB)-led induction days
 - S11 audits (a statutory audit for a number of agencies)
 - safeguarding alerts on standard monitoring agenda
 - spot-checks of services
 - Local Authority Designated Officer guidance
 - an agreed monitoring schedule for all services based on risk and value.
3. The assessment also made some recommendations, which are shown below, in addition to the progress made in implementation:
- a. The 2015 DBS check is carried out by the commissioning team on all children and adults contracts (except for Local Authorities and consultants employed through Comensura) in August 2015. **Completed with e. below**
 - b. The commissioning team agrees a mechanism by which to update the CHSCB on changed/new/amended contact details. **Agreed – details to be sent quarterly**
 - c. The standard monitoring meeting agenda is reviewed to ensure a set of standard items, including safeguarding. The standard items can then be supplemented with subject/team/contract specific items. **Implemented**
 - d. That the organisations with front-line responsibility for working with children or handling children's data are included within the CHSCB S11 list. **Under way as part of the CHSCB S11 audit process**
 - e. An interim policy compliance check in 2015 be undertaken by the commissioning team. **Completed with a. above in October 2015**
 - f. The commissioning team receives routine feedback from trainers on those organisations which attend a CEB induction day to check for any gaps. **Completed**
 - g. The additional questions from the safeguarding audit tool be considered for inclusion in the CHSCB S11 audit tool. **Considered by CHSCB and forms updated**
 - h. For the City procurement team to consider requiring all relevant organisations (see recommendation 1.4) to complete a S11 audit at tender stage as a baseline and that the resource implications of this be considered (including deciding who would review the submission). **City procurement has agreed this can be implemented. No contracts have been let where this can be included**

Current Position

4. Whilst the CHSCB was reviewing the progress made against the recommendations, it was agreed that a set of minimum expectations for safer commissioning would be developed to mirror the safer recruitment standards.
5. This set of minimum expectations has been developed in order to provide some clarity of expectation to commissioners and contractors of services. Additional requirements may be necessary and suitable for some services dependent upon the nature of the service provided and to which users.
6. The standards (shown in Appendix 1) have been developed in consultation with partners and use best-practice techniques applied by those partners (such as the clinical Commissioning Group and using legal and procurement advice.
7. The standards do not specify how the expectations are to be met as this will vary across organisations but commissioners must satisfy themselves that the standards are being applied. It is anticipated that the implementation of the standards is reviewed after six months and agencies share best implementation practice at that point.

Proposals

8. Although the minimum standards relating to children and young people have been developed by the CHSCB, they can be amended to be used for adult services and will be taken to the Adult Safeguarding Board for discussion.

Implications

9. The Comptroller and the City procurement team have been consulted in the development of the standards and support them. The standards have been used in two draft contracts and the wording has been approved by the Comptroller.

Conclusion

10. The expectations form part of the City of London Corporation's ongoing commitment to safeguarding children and young people.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Safe Commissioning Expectations

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