

**REPORT:** Executive Board

**DATE:** 15 December 2011

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director Children and Enterprise

**PORTFOLIO:** Children, Young People and Families

**SUBJECT:** Commissioning Support for Cheshire West and Chester

**WARDS:** Borough-wide

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

**1.1** This report provides a summary of the commissioning support to be offered to Cheshire West and Chester (CWAC) Commissioning Team and outlines the proposed charge for this work. It also seeks permission to commence work on the development of a shared Children's Commissioning Service across the two authorities.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDED THAT:**

**2.1** The commissioning support arrangements are approved;

**2.2** The proposed charge of £500 per person per day is approved;

**2.3** Work can commence on exploring the development of a shared commissioning service across the two authorities.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND**

**3.1** Children's Commissioning in Halton was recognized as Outstanding in the recent OFSTED inspection. As a result the team have worked with a number of authorities on a range of projects over the last 8 months. CWAC have now formally approached the authority to request dedicated commissioning support for their team.

**3.2** As a result of the meetings which have taken place between the lead officers from the two authorities it is proposed that there are two separate areas of work. The first area is a support package. The second element is to explore the opportunity to develop a shared service for commissioning across the two authorities with Halton as the Lead.

3.3 The support package will focus on areas to assist with the introduction of foundations that will ensure a collective understanding of commissioning and what it can deliver. This will include:

- A scoping exercise on current practice and services;
- A self-assessment exercise;
- Bespoke commissioning training;
- Specific training packages
- Mentoring; and
- Sharing of practical tools around key areas of commissioning.

3.4 Once the initial scoping exercise has been undertaken a detailed plan of support can be finalized. The initial scoping will be undertaken by the Operational Director and Divisional Manager. Work will then be undertaken by the most appropriate Commissioner e.g. One of the team is qualified to deliver the Commissioning Support Training. (*Appendix A provides an example of the self assessment and commissioning training element*)

3.5 It is proposed that the cost per day per person is £500. Initially this is likely to be the Divisional Manager and two Commissioners however the whole team will be involved in the delivery of some aspects of the training and support.

3.6 The second area of work is to explore the development of a shared service for commissioning between the two authorities with Halton as the Lead. It is envisaged that this approach will not only strengthen the approach to commissioning but also provide efficiencies for both authorities. The shared service option could be explored in 2012 with a view to implementation from April 2013.

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Although the numbers of days cannot be finalised until the scoping has been completed it is estimated that there will be between 20 to 30 days support bringing additional income of between £10,000 and £15,000.

4.2 The development of a shared service between Halton and CWAC will provide the opportunity for both authorities to make efficiencies.

#### **5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

##### **5.1 Children & Young People in Halton**

Working together with CWAC will strengthen the Commissioning and partnership arrangements in both authorities.

**5.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

N/A.

**5.3 A Healthy Halton**

N/A

**5.4 A Safer Halton**

N/A.

**5.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

N/A

**6.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

6.1 The scoping exercise will identify the level of support required. This work can then be distributed as appropriate between the commissioning team. Monthly reviews will be undertaken to monitor the work and progress and ensure that there is no detrimental impact on the work within the Borough.

**7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

7.1 The equality impact assessments developed in Halton for assessing commissioned services will be shared with CWAC.

**8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

<b>Document</b>	<b>Place of Inspection</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>
Business Proposal	1 <sup>st</sup> Floor Eccleston Block – Grosvenor House	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Children's Organisation and Provision

## Appendix A

### Self Assessment and Commissioning Training

The aim is to support the commissioners so that they can lead change, by providing them with an understanding of the skills, and an appreciation of the support and challenge required for a strong commissioning approach. The approach will use external resources sparingly to ensure better long-term value for money. It will emphasise that changes are led by those accountable for their success, which in turn ensures ownership, understanding and commitment, and therefore the implementation of more appropriate and sustainable solutions.

The purpose of this exercise is through self assessment, to identify the maturity of local commissioning arrangements and the challenges the area face. From this self assessment, a change plan and support agreement will be developed to respond to the identified needs. The Self Analysis and Planning (SAP) exercise will consist of:

- A facilitated self-analysis of the commissioning arrangements and capacity for improvement based on 12 broad commissioning standards
- Completion of a change plan setting out a programme of work to be undertaken by the local area to address the areas requiring priority attention

The 12 SAP standards relate to aspects of a strategic change in which resources are deployed to meet the needs of children, young people and families. They are divided into three broad areas:

1. Commissioning, Governance and Framework standards deal with the underpinning structures needed within a local area to establish the strategic arrangements needed to deliver effective change through commissioning.
2. Commissioning Activity standards reflect the key commissioning activities within a local area
3. Commissioning Capacity and Capability standards deal with the capacity and capability of those who lead, and contribute to the local area's commissioning arrangements

Cheshire West and Chester can measure how far they have progressed towards meeting each of the 12 standards by assessing themselves against a five-level scoring framework where:

Score 1: We have no clear agreement about what is needed to move forward

Score 2: We do agree what is needed, and have begun to move forward

Score 3: We are making progress towards meeting the standard

Score 4: We are making very good progress towards meeting the standard

Score 5: The standard is fully achieved across the Children's Trust

Following the self assessment exercise Halton will support Cheshire West and Chester formulate an action plan over a 12 month period that will show clear goals and milestones in order to measure progress.

### Commissioning Training

This four day development programme will be open to commissioners and other key partners. The training will offer the opportunity to share knowledge and experience in the leadership of commissioning with peers and to test practical applications in commissioning good practice.

The aim of training is to explore the emerging commissioning agenda for children and young people. To understand the essential elements of commissioning and purchasing good practice and to share knowledge and compare practice. This training will help explore and define the attributes of effective commissioners which are;

To be effective, both individually and collectively, commissioners will need a range of skills, experience and training so that:

- They can be effective leaders and managers with improving outcomes
- They have the ability to develop good relationships with delivery partners from all sectors and are capable of adapting to new circumstances and needs
- They are able to champion continuous improvement by remaining tenacious, open minded and challenging.

Practically speaking the training will cover some of the below areas:

- The national agenda
- What is commissioning?
- Needs analysis and systems mapping,
- Market mechanisms
- Procurement and purchasing,
- Outcome-based commissioning
- Decommissioning
- Service user engagement