



Newcastle Partnership – Commissioning Prospectus
Report to Finance, Resources and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee - Sept 2015

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Purpose of the Report

Following changes previously made to the governance of the Newcastle Partnership which focused on expanding the scope of the then Partnership Delivery Group (PDG) to include the commissioning role and being re-named as the Partnership Commissioning and Delivery Group (PCDG) in agreement with the Newcastle Partnership Strategic Board in September (chaired by the Leader of the Borough Council) and endorsed by Cabinet in October 2014; Further reports were subsequently presented to and approved by Cabinet in February and March 2015, to enable the Borough Council to become the accountable body for the Newcastle Partnership and to authorise the transfer of funding from the County Council to the Borough Council for the purposes of locality commissioning.

This report is intended to presents an overview to Members of the Finance, Resources and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee highlighting the progress on the delivery and ongoing development of the Newcastle Partnership Commissioning Prospectus 2015-17.

Background

The Newcastle Partnership recognises that more can be achieved by working together as partners than individually. Working in this way is not always easy, but over the years it has been extremely successful in terms of delivering positive outcomes for the Borough. As a result the Partnership has enjoyed reductions in levels of crime, including anti-social behaviour; improvements in the health of the Borough; and a range of different initiatives aimed at improving the local economy.

To further develop partnership working, the Newcastle Partnership agreed to pool a number of existing separate funding streams and commissioning procedures into a single practice, and to instigate a locality commissioning process. The Partnership launched the *Newcastle Partnership Commissioning Prospectus 2015-17* in December 2014, which set out a number of 'lots' and service outlines, inviting local service providers to submit delivery proposals to address two commissioning priorities, within the Borough:

- Enhancing economic growth
- Tackling vulnerability

These priorities and subsequent lots were developed by the Partnership having considered a range of data available and local information from partners. The sources of this data include Newcastle's Health and Wellbeing Profile, Enhanced District Profile (www.staffordshireobservatory.org.uk), Local Alcohol Profiles for England, District Physical Activity and Nutrition Profiles and the eJSNA (www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk) Newcastle Borough Community Safety Indicators 2013/14, Newcastle-under-Lyme Police and Crime Plan 2014-17.

Progress to date

The closing date for the submission of service proposals to address the identified priorities within the 'Commissioning Prospectus' was 4th February, with the Partnership receiving a total of 55 applications across the 12 lots established. The total value of the applications received totalled £785,529 across 10 lots, as no applications were received for 2 of the 12 lots.

Following the co-ordination of a series of panel evaluations and subsequent moderation, a total of 16 projects were awarded, totalling £279,331.46 from an overall available budget of approx. £500k. An engagement process has been undertaken with each of the successful providers, where KPI's have been established; monitoring frequencies agreed and payment schedules in line with each communicated. This information along with the successful providers service proposal have all been appended to formal contracts which commenced from the 1st April 2015 and a complete list of these services is available on request.

As part of the Commissioning exercise there have been a number of 'lessons learned' by Officers, which have been recorded and captured as the process has progressed and will be used to inform improvements for the process in the future. For example, of the unsuccessful applications received, the main reason for proposals failing was the identification of shortfalls in project delivery against the published service outline or that the amount quoted by the prospective provider had exceeded the amount available, this is one particular area that the Partnership is keen to provide additional guidance on and support to prospective providers, as Officers begin future stages of the commissioning process.

Next steps

A multi-agency working group, co-ordinated by the Borough Council, continues to meet on a fortnightly basis to ensure that services from Round 1 (above) are delivered and are monitored effectively. The working group are also;

- Reviewing the lessons learned log;
- Reviewing the budget, including housekeeping of partners' contributions, expenditure to date, available budget for Round 2 and whether there is any further funding available or additional partner interest;
- Co-ordinating the contract monitoring arrangements and roles and responsibilities;
- Co-ordinating the contract monitoring reporting, which is to be collated by the Borough Council and reported by exception to Partnership Commissioning and Delivery Group.

The working group consists of Borough Council representatives from Business Improvement, Partnerships and Housing and Regeneration, the County Council District Commissioning Lead (DCL) and Public Health representatives. Support is also provided to the group by the Finance team at the Borough Council.

The working group is also responsible over the coming months for co-ordinating the second round of the Commissioning Prospectus, using the remaining budget of approx. £220k. In particular the group has;

- Identified future commissioning intentions/priorities for Round 2 and the timescales for use of this funding;
- Drafted the project plan and timescales;
- Made arrangements for the resourcing for delivery and;
 - Nominated a lead officer to co-ordinate queries
 - Modified the Application pack, eliminating any ambiguity and repetition, using lessons learned to inform amendments;
 - Agreed a standard approach to the scoring element linked to price;
 - Engaged with the market prior to launching the next prospectus.
- Launched Round 2 of Commissioning Prospectus 15/07/15;

The working group will also;

- Co-ordinate the evaluation on receipt (closing date 21.08.2015) of applications to deliver services;
- Negotiate terms and award contracts;
- Establish and agree performance management and monitoring.

- Prepare for the second year of the Commissioning Prospectus in terms of contract extensions if applicable and further commissioning opportunities for 2016-17 and beyond where funds are available.