

Commissioning in practice: The LAC Sufficiency example

Process for joint planning & commissioning

Look at outcomes for children and young people

- Actual outcomes of LAC since 2009 helped inform our Sufficiency Strategy
- Accurate needs assessment and distance travelled measures for individual LAC is essential to inform analysis of needs and outcomes for the whole LAC population

The Council is subject to a 'sufficiency duty' that requires us to do more than simply ensure sufficient beds for **Looked After Children**. The accommodation must also meet the needs of children.

- Needs analysis shows we need:**
- Reduce reliance on agency fostering
 - Reduce the need for institutionalised care
 - Increase quality and quantity of 16+ accommodation

The council spends over **£8million per year on in-house and external placements**. Reprioritising some of this resource on different service models will **achieve better outcomes for LAC and reduce overall costs**

Look at particular groups of children and young people

Develop needs assessment with user & staff views

Identify resources and set priorities

Plan pattern of services and focus on prevention

- Influence in-house foster carer recruitment strategy to **deliver 20+ new carers by 2017**
- Design HIPS** (Herefordshire intensive placement support service) to prevent residential placements

Decide how to commission services efficiently

Commission – including use of pooled resources

Plan for workforce and market development

Monitor and review services and process

- Involving operational colleagues in contract monitoring
- Reflecting the voice of the child
- Announced and unannounced provider visits
- Data and intelligence informs the commissioning cycle

- Looking at evidence of good practice for 16+ accommodation
- Engage with providers
- Design a Herefordshire model that can be procured or delivered in-house

- Develop **service specification** for new HIPS-TISS service
- Procurement process to **evaluate tenders** from providers against set criteria
- Award contract**, valued at £1.5m

- Consider whether to '**make or buy**' services.
- Different delivery options considered for the **new HIPS model**. Procurement of an experienced provider was the best option

Commissioning

Did you know?

- Commissioning, procurement , and contracting are **not the same things!**
- Commissioning is about understanding the **needs of a population**, understanding **what services models work**, setting priorities, deciding whether to **make or buy** services, and **monitoring progress** towards strategic objectives
- Procurement is about **buying** goods and services from **external providers**
- Contracting is about the **agreements** between the buyer and provider and the **monitoring** of service quality and performance
- All of the above are part of the '**Commissioning Cycle**'
- The Directorate has a small team involved in the strategic commissioning of:
 - Sufficient accommodation for LAC and those with complex needs
 - Services for children with disabilities
 - Early help & family support
- The commissioning team can be contacted on 01432 38 3073/3619 or by email at childrenscommissioning@herefordshire.gov.uk