

The Commissioning Process A FACTSHEET FOR GROUPS IN H&F

This information should be read with the article in the March 2009 CaVSA newsletter entitled: Commissioning and the Third Sector in LBH&F which can be downloaded from www.cavsa.org.uk
The process from a public sector body involves four key performance management elements:

Analysing

Identifying needs. Quality information from the local community benefits any assessment of need. A service that consistently engages with service users – either directly, or through voluntary organisations, provider forums or other specialist networks, is more likely to result in appropriate, responsive and effective services.

Planning

Designing services. Public sector bodies can draw on the expertise and reach of the third sector in designing new services, or remodelling existing ones. This will help facilitate a culture of trust and partnership between third sector organisations and public sector partners.

Knowing the market. Knowing the market means encouraging as many potential high quality third sector providers as possible to bid for contracts. A wider supply base, inclusive of the third sector, means that there is a greater opportunity to find the right provider and achieve the right service at the right price.

Commissioning approach – grants or contracts. There are different ways of commissioning a service, a project a piece of work and the most suitable approach will be informed by the outcomes that are to be achieved. Primarily, the choice is likely to be between taking a grant making approach or contracting through the competitive procurement route.

Doing

Procurement options. How a contract is shaped, and how a tendering process is undertaken, can have a significant impact on the ability of local third sector organisations to compete for contracts. If small or medium-sized third sector organisations are to be encouraged to bid then the contract and procurement process has to be accessible.

Contract and payment terms. When agreeing the contract and payment terms the local authority needs to be aware of the impact these could have on third sector providers.

Reviewing

Contract management. Involving the third sector in agreeing contract management arrangements can reduce frustration on both sides and lead to increased efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery.

Barriers faced by third sector organisations in this area include over-complex reporting requirements, inadequate notice of changes to service requirements and undue expense or difficulty in implementing such changes.

More information?

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