

**Enfield's
Schools and
Children's Services
Commissioning
Strategy 2013-16**

Forward

It is my pleasure to support this Commissioning Strategy which has been developed as a result of colleagues coming together across the Schools and Children's Services Directorate. Staff from across the Directorate with an interest in commissioning, were invited to take part in several commissioning seminars. These were held to gain an understanding of commissioning activity across SCS, to develop a consistency of approach and develop economies of scale where possible. This led to a revised Commissioning Framework and the development of this Commissioning Strategy.

The Commissioning Strategy and Commissioning Framework are high level strategic documents which act as overarching umbrellas for commissioning activity. They set out guiding principles and methodology for commissioning in a clear and straight forward manner. I therefore commend these documents to you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Fraser', written in a cursive style.

Andrew Fraser
Director
Schools and Children's Services

Commissioning Strategy – Services for Children and Young People

Introduction

This commissioning strategy covers all services to children and young people. This document sets out the strategic intentions and principles for the commissioning of services for children, young people and their families in Enfield for the next three years (2013-2016).

The commissioning strategy has been designed to complement and support a range of national and local policy drivers and to create a clear pathway for service provision for children young people and their families.

It sets out how all agencies in Enfield will work together more effectively and make the best use of all available resources in order to deliver high quality services to children and young people in the borough. This will signal for all of us a new way of working where commissioning is the driver of change.

The commissioning strategy supports the long term commitment by Enfield to focus on prevention and early intervention together with more integrated and holistic services delivered by multi agency teams around the family, therefore underpinning our resolve to “build resilience” in our children and families. Commissioning in Enfield reflects the commitment to provide preventative services at the earliest appropriate opportunity.

Vision

The vision for Enfield’s children and young people is that we commission services where improving the outcomes for children and young people is at their heart: that we commission services that are needs led, efficient, effective and child centred across universal, targeted and specialist provision, making the best use of resources.

Strategic Commissioning Intentions

Strategic commissioning attempts to work at a higher level than traditional commissioning activity and will involve a wider range of stakeholders and partners for services to children and families. This work will be led by the Schools and Children’s Services Directorate of Enfield Council.

The Integrated Commissioning Service will lead in the development of commissioning and reviewing commissioned activity to ensure that it delivers against our identified priorities. The Integrated Commissioning Service will endeavour to deploy resources aligned to meet new priorities and provide sufficient flexibility to respond to changing needs.

Partners will work together to harness their influence and their investment to deliver better outcomes for children young people and their families. If commissioning is to meet these outcomes it can only meet them through service improvement and partnership working and work towards achieving:

- A shift towards personalised services that are designed around individual need;
- A reorientation towards promoting health and well-being;
- Commissioning interventions across agencies and services to promote social inclusion, and tackle health inequalities;
- An emphasis on prevention and early intervention, to reduce the demands on acute services.

Over the next twelve months we will work with our partners to ensure we:

- Build capacity and capability in a new integrated commissioning team to ensure effective commissioning.
- Target the right point in a child or young person's pathway to ensure that universal and specialist resource is used most effectively and efficiently, for example through early intervention.
- Review speech and language therapy services.
- Refocus and re-align services to deliver in relation to current priorities.
- Improve our use of commissioning and procurement mechanisms.
- Develop joint service specifications using an outcome based approach and review and report on performance in an open and transparent way.
- Use the framework to identify needs and gaps in service provision, setting priorities and evaluating options including market development. Looking at how best to deliver outcomes including drawing in a wider variety of service providers to widen options and increase efficiency and flexibility.
- Develop a portfolio of qualified and registered service providers which can deliver clear objectives and measurable outcomes.
- Use a robust needs analysis, building on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, including full consultation with children, young people and parents to inform our priorities.

Definition of Commissioning

Commissioning involves measuring and agreeing need, understanding expectations, agreeing priorities and plans, planning and commissioning activity, monitoring and reviewing performance, and holding providers to account in order to improve outcomes.

Commissioning is making things happen by working with and through others, by 'developing an overall picture of children's needs within an area and developing provision through public, private, voluntary and community sector providers to respond to those needs'.

The DfE Commissioning Support Programme (September 2010) sets out commissioning as the process for deciding how to use the **total resource** available for children young people and parents and carers in order **to improve outcomes** in the most **efficient, effective, equitable** and **sustainable** way. Commissioning is the overall process by which needs are identified, services are planned and delivered in order that:

- Partners work together effectively to understand and meet the needs of their communities

- There is a clear understanding of the existing and potential future needs of children young people and their families based on reliable quantitative and qualitative evidence
- Services are strategically planned and designed to meet the needs with the involvement of both service users and potential providers including those from the third sector and a strong evidence of what is effective and what delivers value for money. Partners anticipate potential issues/problems and mitigate these by focusing on preventative services and early intervention
- Service delivery is secured from the most appropriate provider regardless of whether they are from the public private or third sector through robust arms-length arrangements
- Commissioners take steps to develop a diverse provider base in order to ensure that there are sufficient potential providers from the Third and private sectors
- Service delivery is continuously monitored for performance against expected outcomes with providers being held to account and where necessary challenged on their performance. Where services are no longer required or do not deliver value for money these should be de-commissioned in a timely way.

In order to work effectively as partners we need to have a common definition of commissioning and provide consistent language and arrangements that will underpin our effective joint working. We need to establish a pathway that promotes common streamlined commissioning arrangements, effective working relationships, good communication, and good data analysis across organisations and effective strategic decision making.

Commissioning Principles

This strategy articulates commissioning as a way in which partners work together to improve outcomes through the following commissioning principles

- Embedding preventative solutions – commissioning services to support children at the earliest opportunity to prevent needs escalating.
- Strategic commissioning driven by identified need – consistent performance management approach across services needs sign up
- Working together to promote positive outcomes
- Families receive services appropriate to their needs
- Making the best use of the resources across all Children’s Services
- Consistent approaches to collating data across partner organisations – using data and information sharing protocols.

Needs of the user first

- Arrangements should reflect the needs and aspirations of all service users.
- Service users should be actively involved at the earliest opportunity and where appropriate, assist with service review, commissioning decisions, etc.
- An inclusive approach demands an explicit and transparent commissioning process which promotes and values the contributions of all stakeholders.
- Engagement of users necessitates an understanding of their needs and preferences and aspirations. This should not be limited to present users but should embrace potential future service users and their carers.

- Arrangements for effective commissioning will ensure that systematic processes are in place to engage users and stakeholders involved in the commissioning and purchasing processes.

Led at the highest level

- Commissioning is a priority that should be overseen by Directors and Assistant Directors, whilst being managed by heads of service and senior managers.
- Commissioning activities in each sector should be coordinated and scrutinised to ensure the policies and strategies are developed and implemented as planned.

Work in partnership

- Commissioning should be based upon a commitment to partnership working with allied agencies including education, health, children's and adult social care and other community services.
- The focus of working together should always be to produce better outcomes for users.
- Partnership working necessitates developing professional relationships between the different services and departments.
- Embedding outcomes based accountability in our approach. This means ensuring a link between improving services and improving outcomes. We will focus on joint planning and deploying resources to support an outcome driven approach.

People have the right skills

- Arrangements must ensure that an appropriate level of skills, expertise and capacity in commissioning is available to support commissioners.
- There must be a commitment to the development of commissioning competencies across the wider workforce with work taking place both internally and with partners.

Work constructively with providers

- The arrangements to develop and implement commissioning strategies should be as open and transparent as possible and designed to build and maintain good long-term relationships with providers.
- There should be a commitment to working in partnership with a broad range of stakeholders including all provider organisations.

Develop a long-term view

- All services must develop an approach to ensuring that they meet relevant strategic objectives for each client group which take a longer term view of their potential needs.
- The approach to commissioning should increase choice for users and ensure greater responsiveness to needs.
- Any growth in, or changes to, approaches to commissioning should be planned in response to measures of need, gaps in supply and the desire to offer choice.
- Commissioning should be based upon a comprehensive mapping of existing services against forecasts of future demand in terms of capacity and quality as well as type of service.

Continuously evaluate and develop

- Those responsible for commissioning should be committed to the principle of continuous improvement and should monitor the quality and performance of services against nationally and locally determined targets.
- Arrangements must ensure that contracts are managed effectively, monitored regularly and reviewed to inform future commissioning.
- There should be a core set of performance indicators to monitor the progress in achieving the desired outcomes and these indicators should focus specifically on user outcomes rather than process measures.
- There should be a commitment to sharing key information with partners. This should include the sharing of benchmarked data. There should be an agreed approach to collecting data sets that should be shared as a matter of course.
- There should be a commitment to review opportunities for commissioning with other local authorities and achieving economies of scale.
- There should be an openness to share what works as well as what does not work effectively, so that all can learn from developments.

Spend money wisely

- The principles of best value should inform all commissioning.
- Work with providers should seek to achieve efficiency savings.
- Incentives should be developed to encourage providers to achieve ever-improving outcomes in shorter timescales.
- Commissioners will encourage a collaborative culture so that providers can learn from one another as well as work together effectively to achieve sustainable improvement in outcomes.
- Services that are not delivering the required outcomes or quality should be decommissioned.
- Work should take place to continuously improve the quality and effectiveness and efficiency of services.

Quality standards for commissioned Services

This document establishes a set of 'must do' or essential standards for services delivered to children young people and their families, and complements the commissioning framework to ensure consistency and equity. In order to commission the best services we will ensure that those services we commission meet a defined set of quality standards including the following:

Keeping children and young people safe from harm - Ensuring that all those working with Children and Young People in Enfield are DBS checked and are aware of and are applying the relevant safeguarding guidance. All providers must have their own safeguarding policies and procedures in place. That information will be supplied to all providers about the ESCB and access to training.

Equality of opportunity - Equality of opportunity policies are in place and are working to narrow the gap between those that are doing well and those that are being left behind ensuring that all services meet the needs of diverse communities with different cultures and expectations.

Integrated processes - All those working with children and young people will need to use the integrated processes established in Enfield including the CAF process, contribution to the SPOE, lead professional and team around the family (TAF) approach. They will also need to be aware of and apply the information sharing protocols in place across the Borough. Access to training is available to all providers delivering services to CYP across the borough through the ESCB. Services should not be using additional systems to those agreed. We are committed to reducing bureaucracy to the minimum necessary and to sharing data effectively between agencies and partners are reminded of the information sharing protocols within the SPOE.

Governance standards - That services can demonstrate their fitness for purpose and produce an annual report. All providers will have clear service specifications and specified targets to ensure that their services make a positive impact on children's outcomes. Ensuring that the right things are done well and that stakeholders and service users are involved throughout.

Engagement and involvement - That commissioned services ensure they have systems in place to gather and take account of the views of stakeholders and service users. The involvement of children, young people and their families and opportunities for them to make informed choices will be minimum standard.

Performance management - Collect and produce information to measure performance and judge their contribution to improving outcomes for children and young people across the Borough

Quality of service and staff development - Appropriate standards for their workforce. Clarity about standards of individual and professional supervision to ensure support for those working with children and young people. A workforce development policy is in place that ensures practitioners have access to training and are helped to spot children at risk.

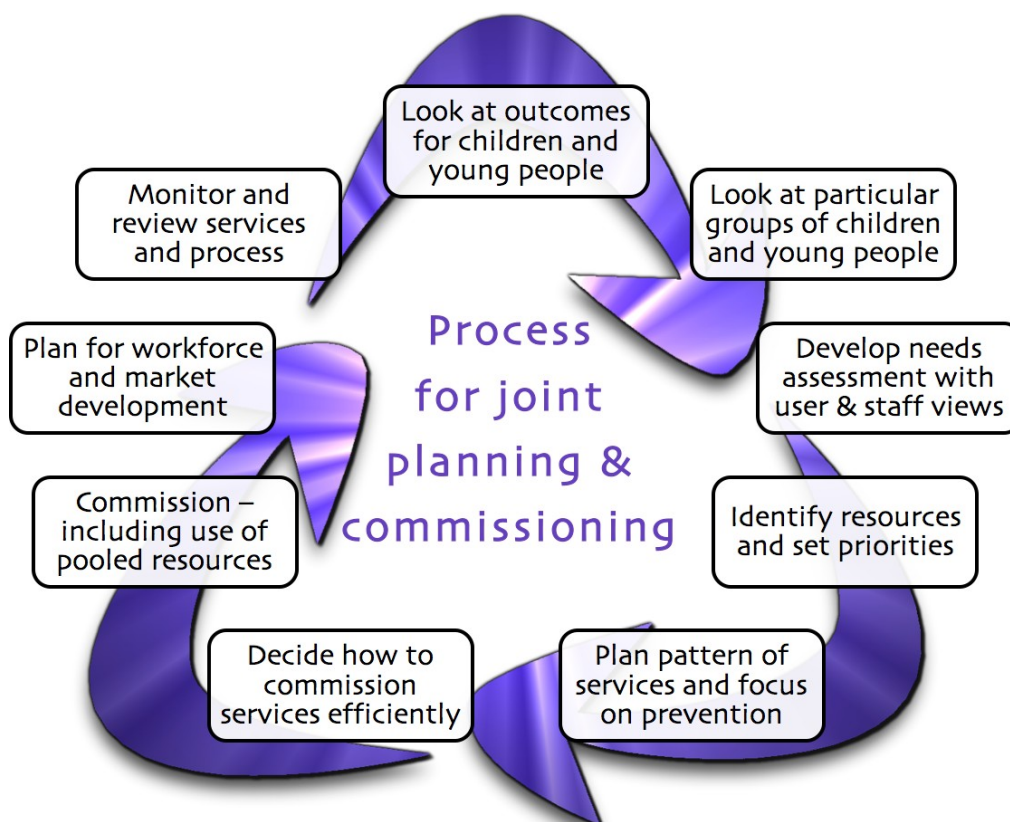
Compliance - Compliance with statute and regulation by keeping abreast of new policy and legislation.

Joint Commissioning and Planning

For joint commissioning to become a success, strategic commissioners must be able to build upon the current system to develop alternative models of service delivery, while also ensuring that services to children, young people and their families, especially hard to reach groups, do not become disadvantaged in the process.

Market management by strategic commissioners will be essential. The Nine Step Commissioning Framework¹ set out below is the structure and process that ensures the utilisation of resources is consistent with the commissioning strategy. This framework provides a focused and well considered efficient process for securing provision. This framework should govern all commissioning activity.

¹ Joint Planning and Commissioning Framework: Every Child Matters



This framework is a cyclical process. However the starting point for all commissioning activity, whether this is assessing the way overall resources should be used or developing a small aspect of a particular service, should always be to understand as fully as possible **local needs and outcomes**.

Needs Assessment

Using the JSNA and other relevant needs assessments, for example 14-19 annual assessment, as our starting point we need to establish data management and information management systems that collate accurate information that it is possible to share with our partners. By doing this all partners can share information and build up an holistic picture of need across Enfield.

As we move toward aligned children’s services and health budgets to support children and young people, particularly those with challenging and complex needs, it is expected that commissioning will improve value for money and better outcomes for children, young people and their families.

The Commissioning Model

Commissioning is a cyclical process that happens strategically across a population as well as individually for a particular young person or family. The model considers commissioning has

three main levels, Universal, Targeted and Specialist; from the macro approach of commissioning services for populations at the universal level to the micro level of individual packages of support more usually at the specialist end of the spectrum of need.

Specialist services commissioned at individual level are more usually complex packages of care determined through any one of the following; Family Intervention Projects, Child Protection Plans, or for children and young people who require mental health support at tier 3-4 or for those children with disabilities who require personalised support. Commissioning services that target specific groups or cohorts may also have a locality dimension.

The following table illustrates the various approaches that can be taken towards the components of commissioning within single agency arrangements or with partners with varying degrees of integration.

	Separate Approaches Objectives, plans, decisions and actions arrived at independently	Parallel Approaches Objectives, plans, decisions and actions arrived at with reference to other agencies	Joint Approaches Objectives, plans, decisions and actions arrived at in partnership by separate agencies	Integrated Approaches Objectives, plans, decisions and actions arrived at through single organisation or network
Purpose and Strategy	Agencies develop services to meet their own priorities. Single agency planning.	Systematic analysis of partner agency perspectives. Liaison in production of separate strategies.	Shared commitment to improve outcomes across client group. Joint strategy development.	Inclusive planning and decision process as an integral partner. Single agency with one commissioning function.
Needs and market intelligence	Needs analysis undertaken independently Provider intelligence for the purpose of identifying own commissioning priorities.	Separate needs analysis shared by agencies. Separate cost, benchmarking and general market intelligence shared by agencies.	Jointly designed population needs analysis. Joint working groups to review market mix.	Single projects undertaking needs and market analysis and using these to inform commissioning and contracting priorities.
Stakeholder Engagement	Public meetings, conferences designed and delivered independently.	Information from service users or providers is shared when relevant.	Agencies jointly design and manage consultation and feedback activities.	Single team responsible for systematic planning and delivery of provider consultation.
Resource allocation and management	Budgets used solely to meet self-determined objectives.	Agencies allocate some resources to address issues of common concern.	Agencies identify pooled budgets for particular areas. Joint approach to decision making on budget allocation to meet common objectives.	Pooled budgets within a single agency or network, to meet combined needs identified for the population.

Taken from the DfES Joint Commissioning Matrix 2006