

Buckinghamshire Children's Joint Commissioning Strategy 2011-2014

1] Introduction

This document sets out the joint commissioning strategy for Buckinghamshire. It compliments the "Commissioning Principles & Framework" document previously agreed by the Children & Young People's Trust. Its purpose is to set out the priorities for joint commissioning work and their rationale for the next three years¹, and to set out further aspects of the context for this work not already covered in the "Commissioning Principles & Framework". It gives high level principles to inform service specific commissioning strategies and plans.

1.1 The Vision Statement of the Children and Young People's Trust is:

"In Buckinghamshire we want all our children and young people to have the best start in life and to be able to lead safe, healthy and fulfilling lives, and to be able to make a positive contribution to their communities and to society. Our aim is to ensure access to a range of universal services as well as developing more targeted services to meet their specialist needs."

1.2 The definition of commissioning adopted in Buckinghamshire is:

"The process of assessing need, identifying resources available, planning how to use the resources, arranging service delivery (as opposed to operational management), and reviewing the service and reassessing need...Commissioning creates the levers for service change...Integrated commissioning will bring innovation, value for money and improved services that cut waste and duplication"

1.3 The core principles of commissioning are:²

- All decisions are based on a clear rationale for improving outcomes and are linked to organisational and partnership priorities
- Commissioning should make sure that we get the most out of every pound we spend in Buckinghamshire
- Commissioning should always focus on delivering efficiencies, outcomes and quality
- Commissioning should always focus on evidence based practice
- All services are systematically commissioned
- Commissioners should make sure that outcomes are sustainable in the long term.
- Adults, Children, young people, their families and communities must participate meaningfully.
- Commissioners have a strategy to move resources to preventative and early intervention services.
- Commissioning function exercises independence of decision making from internal and external providers.

¹ Set out in the Appendix

² Expanded version of that adopted in the "Commissioning Principles & Framework" already agreed by the Children and Young People's Trust

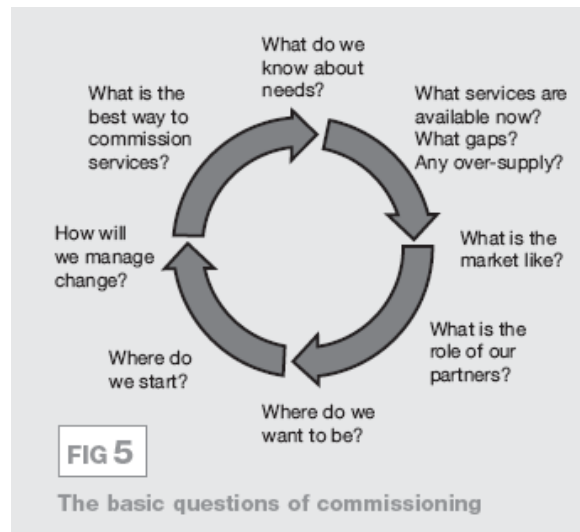
- Commission in partnership with other commissioning bodies locally or regionally, so as to maximise efficiency and category management opportunities
- Commissioners must ensure that approaches are compatible with EU and UK law, regulations and guidance.
- Decisions must be transparent and fair.
- Our commissioning approach should not disadvantage small or medium sized enterprises
- There should be only one strategic commissioning plan for all children's services for all children and young people in Bucks.
- Big Society: support and encourage community involvement in delivering local services

1.4 The aim should be "Right Outcome, Best Provider, Best Value"

- Commissioning should be based on sound and robust analysis of need
- Commissioning should be transformational – achieving broad and complex outcomes
- Commissioning could and should (where appropriate) achieve innovation in service delivery
- Commissioning should deliver return on investment, reduce future spend, achieve efficiency savings on current provision and knowledge transfer
- Commissioning should be user and community led, based on needs and evidence and match organisational priorities
- Commissioning should secure continuous improvement over the life of contracts/SLA³s
- Commissioning should deliver sustainable solutions to meet current and future needs
- Commissioning should seek to develop new markets and increase supplier choice
- Commissioning should be fair, transparent and accountable
- Commissioning should secure robust, but dynamic and responsive contracts or internal SLAs
- Commissioning should engage all stakeholder in the process
- Commissioning should be a cyclical process

³ Service Level Agreements [SLAs] are internal contracts

1.5 The key questions we need to ask when we are commissioning are:



In addition to these questions should we be asking:

- What do we know about evidence based practice to meet this need?
- Who should be our provider (i.e. is this a "make or buy decision and is it a tender)

There are large numbers of commissioning models which say similar things. The key elements of the cycle are Analyse, Plan, Do and Review.

Analyse	What do we need and why, what are the population or individual needs
Plan	How can the outcome best be delivered and achieved including reviews of research, evidence bases and the right model of delivery for Bucks also to consider whether a partnership approach is needed. Who can best deliver this service and how
Do	Undertake the work
Review	Have the planned outcomes been achieved for the investment



1.6 Commissioning Standards

- Commissioning authorities work together to assess local needs in order to inform decisions on priorities and to target resources
- Commissioning ensures the safeguarding of children and young people and vulnerable adults
- There is a strategic approach to the development of a comprehensive range of services to vulnerable people
- Agencies involved in commissioning will work together to optimise the impact of funding on outcomes for service users
- Service delivery is based on agreed commissioning plans and written service agreements and on service specifications that reflect the needs identified for population information.
- Clear and measurable targets should be agreed with a clear and shared understanding of success or good performance established
- Evaluation, monitoring and review are carried out as an essential tool for developing evidence based and innovative services
- Commissioning staff and agencies have clear objectives and access to up to date knowledge, experience and expertise in planning and the delivery of services

2] The Elements of the Strategy

2.1 Purpose & Rationale

The benefits sought through joint commissioning is that it will help agencies together to:

- Target services to give the greatest impact on outcomes
- Avoid duplication of services
- Ensure value for money & efficiency
- Develop co-ordinated services
- Share best practice
- Share expertise
- Share intelligence about needs
- Improve integrated working

2.2 Scope

The scope of joint commissioning encompasses all services where agencies have joint roles and responsibilities. This includes the majority of services. However, some commissioning is, by definition, single agency e.g. only the County Council has responsibility for home to school transport e.g. only the PCT has responsibility for commissioning acute paediatric services. In contrast safeguarding and responding to the needs of vulnerable groups must always be a multi-agency concern.

2.3 Commissioning priorities for the next three years

Priorities have been identified based upon the needs highlighted in the Children and Young People's Plan, The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, and Inspection reports.

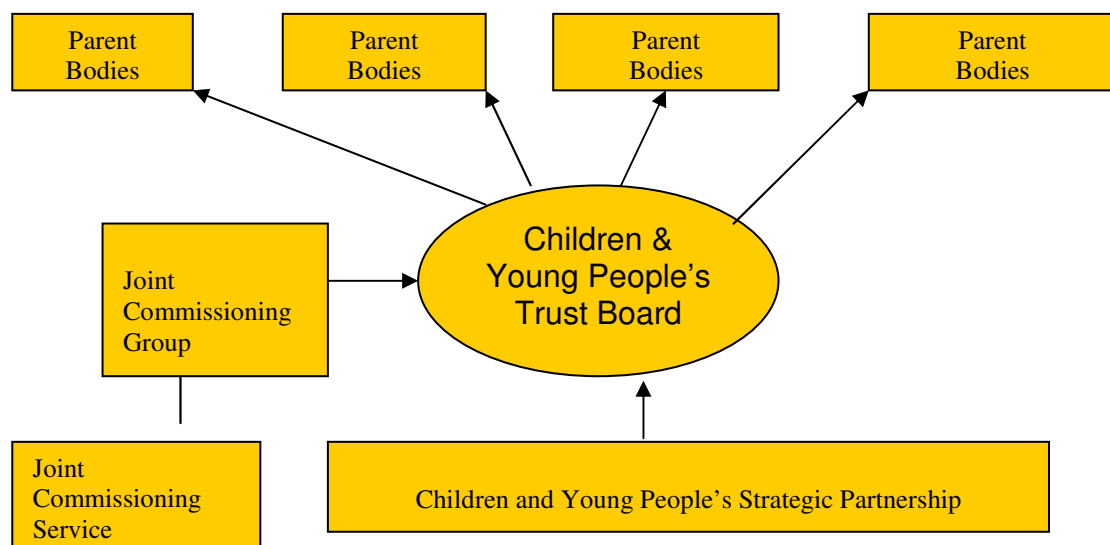
3] Commissioning Resources & Arrangements

The practical arrangements for this work to be carried out are:

3.1 The Joint Commissioning Group

A Joint Commissioning Group has been established reporting to the Children and Young People's Trust

Joint Commissioning Governance Arrangements in Buckinghamshire



3.2 Pooled and Aligned Budgets

Whether it is best to pool or align budgets will be judged using an algorithm already agreed by the Children and Young People's Trust.

3.3 The Role of Schools and Colleges in Commissioning

Work through Strategic Area Networks and the 14-19 Partnership, alongside work to sustain the extended services in schools programme will be the route to enhance, develop and co-ordinate schools' role in commissioning services to meet the needs in their own locality.

In addition School Commissioning Partners will work to develop school place planning and the development of the school capital programme.

3.4 Health Commissioning

With major structural and legislative changes ahead it will be our strategy to continue to work closely with PCT [now Oxfordshire & Buckinghamshire NHS Cluster] colleagues and the new GP Consortia. This includes the prospect that the County Council would be the lead commissioner for children and young people where there is a common interest, building on the good practice already in place. This would mean the Council taking a leadership role in commissioning and not just joint work.

3.5 Market Management and Third Sector Development

Our market management will have the following objectives:

- to ensure that all the services required in Buckinghamshire are available in or near Buckinghamshire, delivered consistently to the standard required.
- To develop regional markets working in partnership with other local authority areas
- to grow and develop the number of available providers In order to ensure choice and value for money.
- to ensure a "fair playing field" upon which in-house, private and third sector providers can compete.
- to develop the third sector market in the context of the "Compact"
- to develop new funding models⁴

Market management and development will take various forms including the use of regular provider forums, and "soft market testing" i.e. discussion with providers about the potential for developing service provision in the light of our needs.

3.6 Workforce Development

There will be close links with the workforce development programme, so as to ensure that the supply of suitably trained and qualified practitioners matches the profile required.

3.7 Links with Procurement

There will be close links with procurement and contracting colleagues in both the County Council, PCT and other bodies so as to ensure that all services are contracted in accordance with local standing orders and procurement regulations.

⁴ See Allen Report

3.8 An Outcomes Framework

a] Monitoring and review

All contracts will include a cycle of monitoring and review so as to ensure the delivery of outcome-based performance targets.

	QUANTITATIVE	QUALITATIVE
OUTPUT or EFFORT	e.g. units of service delivered	e.g. process measures such as waiting times, or assessment time-scales
OUTCOME or EFFECT	e.g. ECM outcomes framework measures	e.g. consumer feedback

This will dovetail with work to develop **Outcomes Based Accountability** (or RBA)⁵

The approach uses performance measures to improve performance using 7

Questions⁶

1. Who are our customers?
2. How can we measure if our customers are better off?
3. How can we measure if we are delivering services well?
4. How are we doing on the most important of these measures?
5. Who are the partners that have a role to play in doing better?
6. What works to do better, including no-cost and low cost ideas?
7. What do we propose to do?

The way that this approach distinguishes between effort and effect is illustrated in the following diagram:

	QUANTITATIVE	QUALITATIVE
OUTPUT or EFFORT	How much did we do?	How well did we do it?
OUTCOME or EFFECT	Is anyone better off?	Is anyone better off?

b] Quality Assurance

All contracts/SLAs will include quality standards that can be monitored so as to ensure the overall quality of provision. Monitoring will be proportionate to the size of the contracts and the level of risk. This will include consumer feedback. Similarly audit checks will be proportionate.

c] Safeguarding

All organisations working with children and young people in Buckinghamshire come under the auspices of the Buckinghamshire Children's Safeguarding Board and contracts/SLAs make this clear.

3.9 Participation

- a] Participation will be an element of all needs analysis work
- b] Participation will be an element of all consumer feedback gathering
- c] The benchmark used for participation work will be the "Hear by Right" standard

⁵ Friedman, 2005, 'Trying Hard is Not Good Enough..' How to produce measurable improvements for customers and communities. A methodology to evaluate impact on outcomes, using Results Based Accountability (RBA) is set out in the 'Turning the Curve Toolkit'⁵ published under the auspices of the Every Child matters programme. The toolkit takes the reader through the essential aspects of data collection on local needs to carrying out a 'Turning the Curve' to improve outcomes exercise with different populations, communities, parents, young people, practitioners and strategic managers.

⁶ Friedman 2005, 'Trying Hard is Not Good Enough'

4] Review of the Strategy

The Joint Commissioning Group, a sub-group of the children and young People's trust will oversee the delivery of the Joint Commissioning Strategy. There will be regular "tracker" reports to the trust on commissioning activity. The strategy will be reviewed annually by the Joint Commissioning Group with an Annual Report back to the Trust each Spring.