

Learning from our commissioning pilots

LCIG

4th July 2011

Background

- **“We have a problem Houston”**
 - **Creating Better Outcomes for Children and Young People by improving the Commissioning of Cultural Services**
 - **Strategic Commissioning Guidance**
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The pilots

- East Riding & NW Renaissance
 - Leicester
 - North Tyneside
 - Trafford
 - Telford & Wrekin
 - Luton
 - Barking & Dagenham
 - Torbay
 - Hull, N Lincs & NE Lincs
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The offer

10 days consultancy support to help:-

- *Map the commissioning landscape locally.*
 - *Facilitate better understanding of the commissioning process.*
 - *Support the development of better relationships with commissioners to help make an impact on a specific local outcome such as health, adult social care or children and young people.*
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What we found.....



By raising of awareness and understanding it.....

- Helped staff teams learn about the process and language.
 - Brought people up to the same level of understanding.
 - Facilitated joint working across different services within organisations and identifying where in the organisation more support was required.
 - Achieved high level “buy in” within the council.
 - Improved visibility, recognition and credibility of culture and sport services with commissioners.
 - Achieved clearer focus for service providers.
 - Set the foundations for building new relationships with commissioners.
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The programme resulted in better positioning against corporate priorities:-

- In the East Riding relationships with health and social care are now developing rapidly and the work has been integrated into the wider corporate service transformation programme.
 - In Barking and Dagenham the programme has enabled positioning to be improved with health and in particular create the focus for a major initiative with local GP services and the development of a citizens' card for older people.
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All the projects believed there was now significant potential for new income to be generated.

- In Barking and Dagenham an additional £0.5m over two years was secured through a health related programme and opportunities are under discussion with adult social care to support the personalisation agenda.
 - North Tyneside has negotiated free access for looked after children that they hope will result in a payment in the future. They have also piloted a new 'charged for' after-school activity programme which they hope to roll out after evaluation and are developing a new health initiative around bowls and older people.
 - East Riding has negotiated two Living Well weight management programmes funded through the PCT.
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Learning from the programme

You will get better organisational buy in and build better relationships if:-

- awareness raising is done across all the culture and sport services including engaging senior managers and elected members.
 - culture and sport civil society providers are involved from the outset.
 - commissioners are involved from the outset.
 - externalised providers including trusts and private contractors are involved from the outset.
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Learning from the programme

- It is important to understand commissioner needs by listening to them but equally important to have a menu of offers that will meet these needs when dialogue takes place.
 - Although evidence of benefit and impact is important, it is equally important to have access to some practical local examples that have worked on the ground.
 - It is important to get the right people at the table at the right time. This requires senior buy in from the service management and the corporate management of the council as well as commissioners.
 - Turning better relationships into funding opportunities will depend totally on matching commissioner priorities with evidence of benefit and impact.
 - There are real dangers in over simplifying the relationship building process as a “dash for cash” rather than building long term business relationships.
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Emerging issues & challenges

- In many cases progress has been built on good personal relationships. The challenge is to turn personal relationships into sustainable business relationships.
 - The brokerage role of the council as a strategic commissioner may need to change as fragmentation is created by the localism agenda. Relationships therefore need to be both strategic and local.
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Emerging issues & challenges

- In the commissioning process roles will change over time and individuals may find themselves playing different roles in different relationships at the same time. The four main roles are that of strategic planner, a partner, a commissioner and a provider and knowing what role you are playing at any moment in time is important.
 - Once providers move into more business orientated relationships the levels of risk will rise significantly
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Emerging issues & challenges

- Understanding the language and the governance arrangements relating to each service commissioning processes is the first step to building better relationships.
 - Elected members have an equally important role to play in building these relationships with commissioners.
 - There are personal skills requirements involved in being able to access and influence relationships which may not yet be prevalent at the required levels across the sector and point towards a training and development need in the sector
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