



Report of the Cabinet Member for Care Services

Child and Family Services Scrutiny Performance Panel – 24th October 2023

COMMISSIONING OVERVIEW

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide an overview of the commissioning approach taken by Child and Family Services, and Directorate Partnership and Commissioning Hub
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This report includes a summary of the context of how the team commission services, both internal and external, via / using a variety of methods. It will include the wider implications, the impact, challenges, solutions, and opportunities within this area of work. The report concludes with how the commissioning teams are developing systems to ensure there are proactive commissioned services that are needs led and data informed.
Councillors are being asked to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the report and its conclusions
Lead Councillor(s)	Cllr Louise Gibbard, Cabinet Member for Care Services, Cllr Hayley Gwilliam, Community support and Cllr Alyson Anthony, Cabinet Member for Wellbeing
Lead Officer(s)	David Howes, Director of Social Services Julie Davies, Head of Child and Family Services Jane Whitmore, Strategic Lead Commissioner Claire Edwards, Principal Officer - Commissioning and Care Services
Report Author (S)	Mark Gosney, Commissioning Team Leader Dave Rossiter, Commissioning Team Leader
Legal Officer	N/A
Finance Officer	N/A
Access to Services Officer	N/A

1. Background and context

The Social Services Directorate operates annually with a gross budget of circa £220 Million. This includes approximately £70 Million of external grants. Much of this funding is commissioned either externally via grants and contracts or internally via service level agreements.

Child & Family Services Revenue Budget is circa £57 million. 45% of budget is allocated to external commissioned care (c£26mil).

A clear consistent approach to commissioning services that means need is essential within the context of which we operate.

What is commissioning?

- **Commissioning** is the process by which services are planned, purchased and monitored.
- To enable this to be as effective as possible, this needs to be informed by good quality **engagement and participation**, which will allow us to understand what matters to people which will inform the commissioning decisions.
- Underpinned by a clear understanding of **data and information**.
- We also need to ensure **effective partnership arrangements** are in place to maximise opportunities for joint working.
- Simply put, the aim of our Commission team is: **“Commissioning and partnership working to enable people to live their best lives”**.

- 1.1 In Swansea we follow the Institute Public Care (IPC) commissioning cycle of Analyse, Plan Review and Do.



1.1.1 The **analyse** section enables us to understand the need that is required. This exercise utilises several methods of assessments including looking at various data sets and co-production activities with service users and stakeholders.

1.1.2 The **plan** section looks at understanding the market, developing a commissioning strategy which will lead to an options appraisal. The options available in an appraisal include stopping services, in-sourcing, out-sourcing, developing a hybrid model etc.

During the 'plan process', provider information days are also carried out which allows the development of a gap analysis.

1.1.3 The **Do** section is implementing the agreed recommendations and commencing with the new arrangements.

1.1.4 The **Review** section is the evaluating and monitoring of the current provision which in turn will feedback into the Analyse section and support with-future commissioning arrangements and decisions.

1.2 We commission services that make a real difference to people's lives across the entire continuum of need. These include family support provision (E.g. Early Help Hubs, Jigso, etc), Family Centres, day time and overnight respite, therapeutic interventions as part of care management plan, clinical assessments, residential homes, independent foster carers, open access play provision, holiday activities, mental health provision and homelessness prevention.

1.3 Commissioning is important for several reasons:

- Enables us to understand the needs of the community, which informs how much resource we need to meet them and assists us with identifying the most appropriate service to deliver these needs.
- Ensures both local and national guidance and statutory responsibilities are adhered to.
- Uses co-productive approaches in developing solutions which involves service users and other stakeholders.
- Identifies efficiencies.
- Identifies gaps.
- Ensures we are compliant with our Contract Procedural rules (CPRs).

2. **Current Commissioning priorities**

The range of services commissioned across Child and Family services is extremely diverse. All of which are at different stages on the commissioning cycle. Most of which are currently in operation and are being monitored whereas some require reviewing or recommissioning.

Below are the reviews that are currently underway across Child and Family:

- 2.1 **Additional Learning Needs (ALN) or those with a disability** - This review will assess preventative services for children and young people with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) or those a disability to identify whether the existing range of services meet current and projected future need and are evidencing contribution to key outcomes.
- 2.2 **Preventing Youth Homelessness** – This review includes the preventing Youth Homelessness funding from the Youth Support Grant and the Mediation Homelessness provision within the Housing Support Grant.
- 2.3 **Children’s and Communities Grant** – Review of the Children and Communities Grant (excluding Flying Start and Expansion) to ensure the programme is meeting identified and emerging needs and can be delivered against budget challenges. This review includes Childcare and Play, Families First, Out of Court Parenting Support, Promoting Positive Engagement for Young People at Risk of Offending, St David’s Day Fund
- 2.4 **Therapeutic and Assessment Services** framework – creation of a framework for therapies and assessments to ensure the services we commission are high quality, cost efficient and outcomes focussed.

3. **Innovative Commissioning**

- 3.1 Commissioning is often confused with procurement or assumed to be just contract or grant management. In Swansea we take an innovative approach which is far broader.
- 3.2 Commissioning teams within Child and Family services work in partnership with frontline delivery teams in a strength-based approach to ensure services for children, young people and families are needs led and outcome focussed. This support is offered via frequent communication, understanding needs affecting the sector and helping to problem solve.
- 3.3 We have utilised commissioning processes to increase funding into the council. Examples of this include providing support and data/information to the CMET (Contextual, Missing, Exploited and

Trafficked) team to be successful in a funding application for Youth Endowment Fund.

We have delivered the Welsh Government's 'Summer of Fun' programme. Initially this was a one-off funding provision for Swansea, but we developed it into the 'Winter of Wellbeing' programme. In addition, through the evidence of impact that was captured at both programmes, this enabled funding to be available for an additional summer of fun programme.

- 3.4 When the Welsh Government Summer of Fun funding finished, we also successfully applied for the Shared Prosperity Fund to deliver holiday provision for Children, Young People and families as well as the 50+ community in line with our Ageing Well and Human Rights City agenda, to expand and continue this provision. We utilised this funding to develop COAST (Creating Opportunities Across Swansea Together). COAST delivered a range of activities in all communities in Swansea throughout the summer. Commissioning also worked closely with the Tackling Poverty service to provide food to families who were struggling over the school holidays.
- 3.5 Developed a Market Stability report regarding placements for looked after children looking at regulated services such as in-house residential care, fostering and domiciliary care for children. In some areas costs are increasing by nearly 30%. This work has allowed us to cap any increases to 9.2%. This has allowed a more manageable and consistent sector aligned to the local authorities' approach to strategic planning and medium term financial planning.
- 3.6 Commissioning teams within Child and Family services are currently undertaking a review of commissioning processes to develop a Commissioning strategy. This will enable consistent and equitable processes to be embedded and medium to longer term strategic priorities identified that fit with the local placement commissioning strategy, the regional market stability report and the vision for Child and Family Services

4. Conclusions/Key Points Summary

- 4.1 There is a lot of positive work within commissioning across teams in the directorate and we continually work to develop fair, equitable, consistent and intuitive systems to ensure the best possible services for children, young people and families are being developed and implemented.
- 4.2 Commissioning will continue to improve spend efficiency and develop new income generation streams where possible to help manage growth/change in services when need is increasing against a background of a difficult economic climate.

4.3 Ensuring children and young people and families have opportunities to co-produce services and share their feedback and participate in service developments.

4.4 There is huge variety of frontline services (statutory and non-statutory) being supported via commissioning services from early prevention services such as play and support for care experienced young people.

5. Legal implications

5.1 None

6. Finance Implications

6.1 None

7. Integrated Assessment Implications

7.1 None

Glossary of terms: None

Background papers: None

Appendices: None