



Children's Services Newsletter

Collaborative Commissioning Support Unit – October Briefing Note

The Children's Services Programme is owned by the County, Unitary and Health Authorities in the South West and supported by the South West Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (SW RIEP).

Summary

Briefing notes are issued monthly to those involved in Children's Services in the South West and describe the activities of the Collaborative Commissioning Support Unit (CCSU) and the SW RIEP Children's Services Programme. Please feel free to forward it to interested parties.

The Governance Board met and approved the first projects using money released for 2008/9. The Commissioning Forum engaged with the new DCSF Commissioning Support Project.

Key People

The updated Commissioning Forum membership address list is on the SW RIEP website. Vic Sandel the IDeA National Advisor for Children and Young People is a member of the Governance Board and leading projects to improve performance against key indicators.

Commissioning Forum:

The last meeting of the year was held on 18 September and Brendan Clark of DCSF described their plans for a major commissioning support project. This has £20m funding and involves a consortium of consultants who will drive forward commissioning with authorities who wish to engage.

They will develop resources and allocate funds for work at local level. The formal announcement will be in October with the project fully active by January 2009. An initial step will be piloting a self-assessment tool.



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Forum meeting dates for 2009 will be set soon, please put them in diaries and keep them free once available. The Forum is an important strategic meeting for commissioning in the region.

SW Region Provider Forum

The second meeting in 2008 will be held on 23 October at the Cleve Hotel, Wellington. This Forum is open to Providers and Commissioners. Places can be booked via the Events section of the website. We will be looking at the revamped Cross Regional Placement Database, the National fostering Contract, progress on implementing Outcomes Frameworks and presentations from the National Commissioning conference.

LIFT SW RIEP Delivery Plan

The Governance Board met on 16 September 2008. Phase 3 of the Peninsula project (£90k) was agreed, together with phase 1 of a Complex Needs project to be led by Gloucestershire (£50k). Funding was also allocated to a Childhood Obesity project to be run by IDEA.

Support for Local Authority Capacity Building

GOSW, IDEA, and Steve Huggett (National Strategies), with Somerset (SEN Regional Hub), are supporting key Local Area Agreement priorities and the legacy of the Regional Partnership. A project on Obesity has been agreed, and teenage pregnancy and brokerage projects are being scoped.

Support for Commissioning Process and Practice

This will be integrated with the DCSF programme beginning after the October announcement.

Data and Information Management

The updated CRPD has successfully completed testing. The new database will be easier to use and will support improved monitoring processes. Providers are now inputting their information and Local Authorities are being given passwords.

The Annual SW Placement Survey of SEN (Schools), Social Care and Independent Fostering placements, has been collated and placed on the website. Trend data will be added soon. There is also a SW Provider Directory, a Data book to permit authorities to identify benchmarks, focusing on data that is important to commissioners, and an Information Toolkit. All these documents are in the members section, available for the use of commissioners.

Improvement and Efficiency Projects

The Northern Group list of pre-qualified suppliers of Residential Care is in use. **The Peninsular Placement Tendering Group** covers all Social Care and some Education placements in Devon, Torbay, Somerset, Plymouth & Cornwall with individual placements made by tender against a Needs and Outcomes statement. Evaluation of tenders from additional providers who wish to be added to the pre-qualified list is almost complete. The process to extend further into SEN placements will be fully implemented by the end of October. A comprehensive project review has been used to define a phase three project which has been agreed and will develop commissioning around the whole cycle.

The Eastern Group SEN Residential Schools Placement Project (nine authorities) is led by Gloucestershire to develop new relationships with Independent and Non-maintained

Special Schools. The tender is closed and evaluation is almost complete with the panel being impressed by the quality of most submissions. Successful providers will join a pre-qualified list to be the first port of call for all residential SEN placements.

A project to tender Independent Fostering Placements involving six authorities is being lead by Gloucestershire and will use the new National Fostering Contract. The Tender will be advertised by the start of October.

Future Projects will include Parent and Baby assessments and placements which is being scoped by Laura Tufton and Linda Barnett in Somerset.

Joint Project with Health looking at Provision for Young People with Severe Behavioural and Mental Health Problems

This is currently being scoped by CSIP.

And Also:

The National Fostering Contract steering group final meeting took place on 4 September and the final contract goes to DCSF for publishing this week. Drafts are on the ECM website.

The Deloitte and Touche investigation into the **future of Secure Accommodation** is now expected to report imminently.

The National Commissioning and Contracting Conference took place on 1 and 2 October with a number of workshops being run by people from the South West.

Information on the Website: Note Change of Address to

www.southwestiep.gov.uk.

This is due to the move of SW RIEP being supported by Dorset County Councils to South West Councils (based in Taunton). *Take care – there is an ‘r’ missing!*

There is a significant update which includes the new programme with additional information in the Members Area.

Follow the Programmes tab and then Children and Young People. The Member's Area is accessed from the bottom of the C&YP page or from the Home page. The contact is below if you need the password. Currently the member's area is restricted to Local Authority Commissioners.

If you would like to submit an article to this newsletter contact:
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