

COMMISSIONING FRAMEWORK

1. The CDC Head of Paid Service is the lead commissioner for the Council. In this role, the Head of Paid Service will specify the types and levels of service provision required by the Council; and how service provision is to be monitored.
2. The Council purchases the majority of its services from Publica. This also includes commissioning work/activity, whereby Publica acts as agent for the Council. Given this arrangement, the Head of Paid Service has a direct relationship with Publica's Executive Director (Commissioning) and Managing Director.
3. Consequently the 'commissioning' element of the role the Executive Director (Commissioning) must be able to be undertaken in such a way that the Executive Director is directly accountable to the Council for the services commissioned from Publica, and also for the services commissioned by Publica from third parties on behalf of the Council. In essence, Publica as contracting agent for the Council must ensure that the Council has sufficient information to challenge the performance of services provided by Publica and others. This arrangement must be made known to any third party provider.
4. The provision of robust performance data in future - quantitative and qualitative, together with an analysis thereof - is vital to ensure that the Council has the information it requires to assess whether its commissioned services are being delivered in accordance with the quality and standard that it has determined. This data will be presented in the first instance to the Head of Paid Service who will review it (and challenge where necessary) and then approve it for inclusion in a formal report to the Council/Cabinet/relevant Committee as appropriate, which will also contain a statement of assurance (or otherwise) from the Head of Paid Service. It is proposed that a 'tiered' approach be developed and adopted, in discussion with Councillors and the Head of Paid Service, to ensure that the appropriate level of detail is provided to all relevant stakeholders in order to provide them with the information and assurance they require. (N.B. A similar approach will be taken in relation to financial performance data, which will be presented to the Head of Paid Service and the Chief Finance Officer; and where it will be for the Chief Finance Officer to advise in terms of assurance).
5. In circumstances where performance falls below what is expected/specified, the Executive Director (Commissioning) will report this to the Council's Head of Paid Service, either as part of the regular performance reporting or as an in quarter exception (dependent upon timing). An Executive Director of Publica

(or a senior manager from another contractor where it is their performance that is called into question) will separately, but at the same time, report on the reasons for the under-performance and what is being done to rectify the situation. The Head of Paid Service may require the attendance of a representative from the service provider at an internal meeting or at a meeting of the Council to report on any issue(s) of under-performance in person. This requirement must be made known to any third party provider; and written into any formal contract(s) when commissioning is undertaken.

6. In relation to any new commissioning activity, or a requested review of current service provision, Publica will undertake the necessary options appraisal and the Executive Director (Commissioning) will be responsible for presenting this in an objective manner to the Council's statutory officers in order that they can then make appropriately informed recommendations to the Council. However, the Council reserves the right to seek independent advice on any such matter.

7. Similarly, when any contract which the Council has entered into (whether with Publica or another third party) is due for review, the Executive Director (Commissioning) will report objectively to the Council's statutory officers on the options available, which may in some circumstances include contracting with a third party other than Publica for a service/function currently provided by Publica. As above, the final recommendations will be formulated by the Council's statutory officers; and the Council reserves the right to seek independent advice on any such matter.

January 2020 Update

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