

**Recommendation 7 –That a clear framework (including standards) for commissioning be developed to ensure a coordinated and consistent approach is adopted throughout the Council and, where appropriate, by partners.**

The option presented emerges out of the TSR Resource Subgroup’s work and group discussion. See also the findings reported in Chapter 3.3 in the main body of the Report that summarise the issues that this proposal is seeking to address.

The option outlined is a pragmatic approach to address the general issue of more consistency without having to review all strategic commissioning arrangements across the Council and tPCT. The ideal option would probably to be to have one central team with responsibility for all commissioning processes for all strategic delivery partnerships. However the option presented here does make a number of important steps towards a more streamlined commissioning arrangement for future years and ensures greater consistency across all strategic delivery partnerships.

## Option on Strategic Partnership Commissioning

A Partnership Commissioning Team is formed within the partnership structure with the following functions:

A. Promoting and Auditing Good practice in commissioning  
(8 Principles)

B. Complete Partnership Commissioning for some Strategic Commissioning areas

C. Direct funding support to partnerships requiring some direct support for their commissioning processes

## A. Promoting and auditing good practice in commissioning

### 1. Promoting 8 principles to partnerships:

including the added value of Third Sector, equalities, cohesion, outcomes focus, sustainability etc. Linking to procurement strategy

2. Custodian of the Accountable Body Guidance – updating and keeping up with policy developments - training

3. Audit commissioning processes – across the Partnerships and Council

4. Mapping Resource Allocation  
a) Thematic  
b) Geographic  
c) Equality and Diversity groups  
d) Third Sector

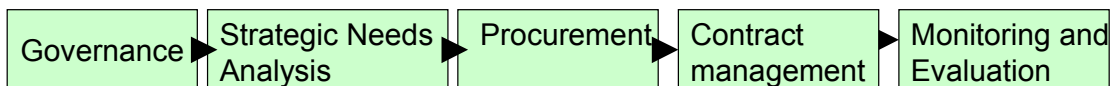
5. Core details of accredited providers

The five areas above would collectively deliver a very effective and efficient way of ensuring a consistent approach across all the strategic delivery partnerships. The processes developed would be embedded in The Eight Principles of Good Commissioning (Cabinet Office). These are as follows:

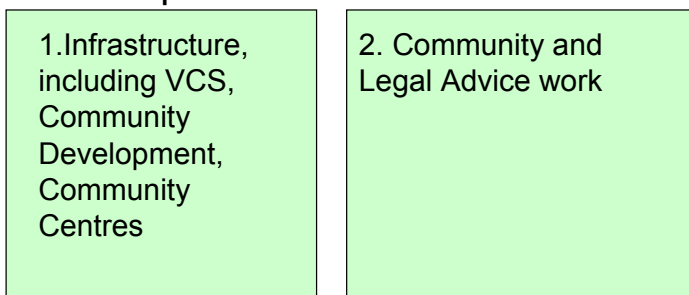
1. Develop an understanding of the needs of users and communities, by ensuring that, alongside other consultees, they engage with third sector organisations and advocates, to access their specialist knowledge
2. Consult potential provider organisations, including those from the third sector and local experts, well in advance of commissioning new services, working with them to set priority outcomes for that service.
3. Put outcomes for users at the heart of the strategic planning process
4. Map the fullest practicable range of providers with a view to understanding the contribution they could make to delivering those outcomes.
5. Consider investing in the capacity of the provider base, particularly those working with hard-to-reach groups.
6. Ensure contracting processes are transparent and fair; facilitating the involvement of the broadest range of suppliers, including considering subcontracting and consortia building where appropriate.
7. Seek to ensure long-term contracts and risk sharing wherever appropriate as ways of achieving efficiency and effectiveness.
8. Seek feedback from service users, communities and providers in order to review the effectiveness of the commissioning process in meeting local needs.

## B. Complete process for Strategic Commissioning areas that require it (likely to be cross cutting themes)

A joint finance approach Council, ABG, tPCT



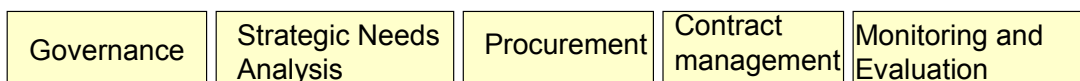
### Examples



In addition to the good practice role the partnership team would be responsible for overseeing complete processes for strategic commissioning where appropriate. These Commissioning Groups would seek to pool funding streams to maximise a strategic approach and reduce possible duplication and ineffective commissions. The actual direct carrying out of commissioning processes by the team would help ensure that team members had a practical as well as a theoretical approach to commissioning

## C. Part commissioning support to partnerships requiring some direct support for their processes

A fee based service open to all partnerships, working to their governance arrangement as and when related to any funding stream



All partnerships could access support – e.g. Safer Communities may only require 1. contract management and 2. Monitoring and Evaluation

Some partnerships may seek support on only parts of commissioning processes. It is proposed that the team could also undertake this work on a fees basis.

**Further work to explore this option and other options:**

***Explore more options including:***

- Options that do not involve a physical team taking on the responsibility to deliver coordination and consistency
- Option of having a team that only deals with Promoting and Auditing Good Practice in Commissioning
- *The option of one commissioning team*
- Possible option of merging currently separate teams without necessarily merging all

**Undertake an options appraisal based on the following criteria:**

- Specification of each of the options to be developed – including quantifying
- Costing up of the specifications
- Workability of different options – including timescales to implement
- Exploring a possible stepped approach towards a desired final outcome
- Assessing likely impact on improving consistency
- Assessing risks with particular options
- Equality considerations