

Recommendations from the CIU's March 2008 research report

'How Was Commissioning For You?'

1. That Newham council conducts a fuller survey of organisations' views of the NewCEYS and Culture & Community commissioning as part of its commitment to review the process.
2. To offer feedback to groups whose bids were unsuccessful, in order to contribute to voluntary, community and faith organisations' on-going learning.

Training and Learning

3. That the council works with Newham's second-tier organisations to develop an urgent programme of training and learning for voluntary and community groups on:
 - the concepts and culture of commissioning.
 - principles of partnership working and consortia development.
 - quality systems to provide a focus for groups' 'commissioning-readiness'.
 - monitoring requirements to enable organisations to make an informed judgement about whether to bid to deliver public services

Information

4. That fact sheets are developed to give general guidance to organisations on:
 - Eligibility criteria.
 - The appropriate format of tenders.
 - Newham council's position on full cost recovery, value-for-money and 'added value'.
 - Case studies highlighting examples of successful and unsuccessful tenders.

5. That the council's microsite at www.abetternewham.co.uk is developed to include a third sector 'portal' for this general information and for updates on future commissioning processes. This could include an online forum or discussion board for information-sharing and promotion of consortia opportunities

Planning future commissioning

6. That the council works in partnership with Newham's second-tier organisations in planning future commissioning processes, looking at:
 - Developing and testing quality, accessible information.
 - Methods of early publicity of the introduction of a new commissioning process.
 - Consultation on the improvement of service specifications.
7. That the 'bidding period' is extended in future commissioning processes to allow sufficient time for the development of genuine partnership bids.
8. That there is the inclusion of a 'clarification period' between the publishing of service specifications and the start of bidding.
9. That future commissioning learns from the experiences of the NewCEYS and Culture & Community process in pre-preparing answers to most frequently-asked questions.
10. That future commissioning should include greater access to council officers who drafted service specifications.

Consortia development

11. That funding is available for local infrastructure organisations to broker and facilitate partnerships during future commissioning processes.
12. That consideration is given to the provision of mentoring for small groups to enable them to deliver their part of a consortium commissioning contract (as Newham PCT has previously undertaken with its commissioning on Sexual Health)