



Blackpool Better Start Commissioning Plan

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Foreword

Our vision is:

To give every new baby in Blackpool a better start in life, helping them enjoy the early care and nurture they need for healthy development and to be ready for school

The commitment to all Blackpool's families from Better Start:

- We will transform the way local services are delivered, putting children and families first
- Every expectant mum and dad will have access to high quality antenatal education
- Every new parent will have opportunities to meet other parents in safe attractive community spaces
- Every new parent will have the information and advice they need to foster good health and readiness for school
- Every mum under twenty will be able to access the Family Nurse Partnership
- We will increase access to early help services for babies in families affected by drug and alcohol, mental illness and domestic abuse problems
- We will radically reduce the risks of abuse and neglect of babies
- We will become a national beacon for early child development

Blackpool's Better Start shares with all its partners a responsibility to constantly find more effective ways of making the Better Start and public money deliver better outcomes for our children.

Commissioning is the process for deciding how to use the total resources available in order to improve outcomes in the most efficient, effective, equitable and sustainable way. Commissioning is one of the most effective tools we can use to support us make robust and effective decisions on how we deliver the Better Start programme in Blackpool.

Excellence in procurement and contract management are integral to our Commissioning Strategy. They will provide Blackpool Better Start (BBS) with a foundation and a framework for pursuing a transformative agenda. It sets out how we are going to work together; what governance will apply; what information and processes do we need; how will we work with providers and service-users and what new skills and behaviours do we need to learn.

Setting out our commissioning approach is particularly important for joint working across the partnership. A commitment to excellent commissioning starts with our obsession with achieving great outcomes but it also includes developing relationships with providers to achieve our shared business requirements, identifying providers that will assist with transformation, securing contracts that are value for money.

Finally, innovation is as much about stopping doing something as it is starting or developing something else. This may mean changing or 'decommissioning' existing services to reinvest in a different, better approach and means confronting fundamental questions about the 'right' way to deliver what the communities need. This Commissioning Strategy will help us to be robust about both the evidence for decision-making and the processes needed to enable decommissioning.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Strategy sets out our principles and framework the Blackpool Centre for Early Child Development will use for commissioning. For partners and providers, it is intended to raise awareness of the business opportunities, to give the market time to prepare for tenders, and to guide sub-contracting opportunities. It also offers a basis on which to engage with stakeholders about needs, outcomes and possible solutions.
- 1.2 This Strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis. Consultation on the review will take place as part of our ongoing dialogue with stakeholders, and the reviewed document will be approved through the Blackpool Better Start governance mechanisms.

2 Blackpool Better Start – strategic priorities

- 2.1 Blackpool Better Start has three overarching outcomes:

- All babies in Blackpool are born healthy
- Blackpool's children are ready for school
- Families in Blackpool feel more included in their community

- 2.2 Whilst delivering a balanced budget, the **key strategic priorities** for Blackpool Better Start are:

- Tackling poor parental health and unhealthy gestation and birth
- Safeguarding and protecting the most vulnerable children and families
- Tackling poor mental health and well-being
- Enabling our youngest children to enter school ready and able to learn and reach their full potential
- Delivering quality services through a committed, professional and motivated workforce.

- 2.3 Blackpool Better Start Key Principles

- 2.4 Children, young people and their families will be **at the heart of everything we do**;

1. There will be “**no wrong door**” – equitable service will be accessed no matter which agency is first contacted
2. Service will be delivered in and through the **universal services** rather than through separate specialist services
3. We will “**hold the baton**” – the service will work with the family rather than just refer them on.
4. Relationships will be at the centre of our work – **relationships before tasks**
5. “**Services for people, not people for services**” – services will be flexible enough to meet need wherever and whenever children and families need them.
6. Services will be experienced as “**seamless**” by children and parents.
7. There will be a **single point of contact** - children and families will not be required to struggle through the maze of services, but will have a named individual contact.
8. There will be clear, **simple lines of accountability**.

3 Commissioning Principles

- 3.1. Our strategic intentions are firstly, to ensure service specifications, contracts and contract monitoring arrangements reflect Better Start outcomes and are evidence based. Secondly, to work with providers to ensure services are designed to meet the needs of parents and residents.
- 3.2 The Better Start Partnership has agreed a set of principles that underpin our approach to commissioning. Commissioning will be based on:
- Ensuring all commissioned activity contributes to achieving the BS priority outcomes
 - Using evidence to understand what works – either through the use of evidence based interventions or those with a science base
 - Robust evaluation that both meets Better Start performance requirements and enables commissioners to assess impact, and where necessary, to decommission services which are inefficient, ineffective, inequitable or unsustainable
 - Sharing the learning widely on what works, including what works in implementation
 - Building sustaining stable relationships between key practitioners and vulnerable families
 - Ensuring the views of children, young people and families shape commissioning decisions.
 - We are committed to developing innovative ways of engaging service users, for example, through co-design and co-production.
 - using open and transparent processes that build confident partnerships
 - using commissioning not just to retain existing services or commission new ones but, taking account of value for money in all decisions and encouraging a more diverse provider market in order to stimulate quality and choice
 - use of shared processes such as lead professional arrangements and the Blackpool Getting it Right Framework and associated assessment paperwork
- 3.3 Together these principles contribute to the local commissioning framework. These will be shared with and understood by all who provide services for young children under the Better Start banner.

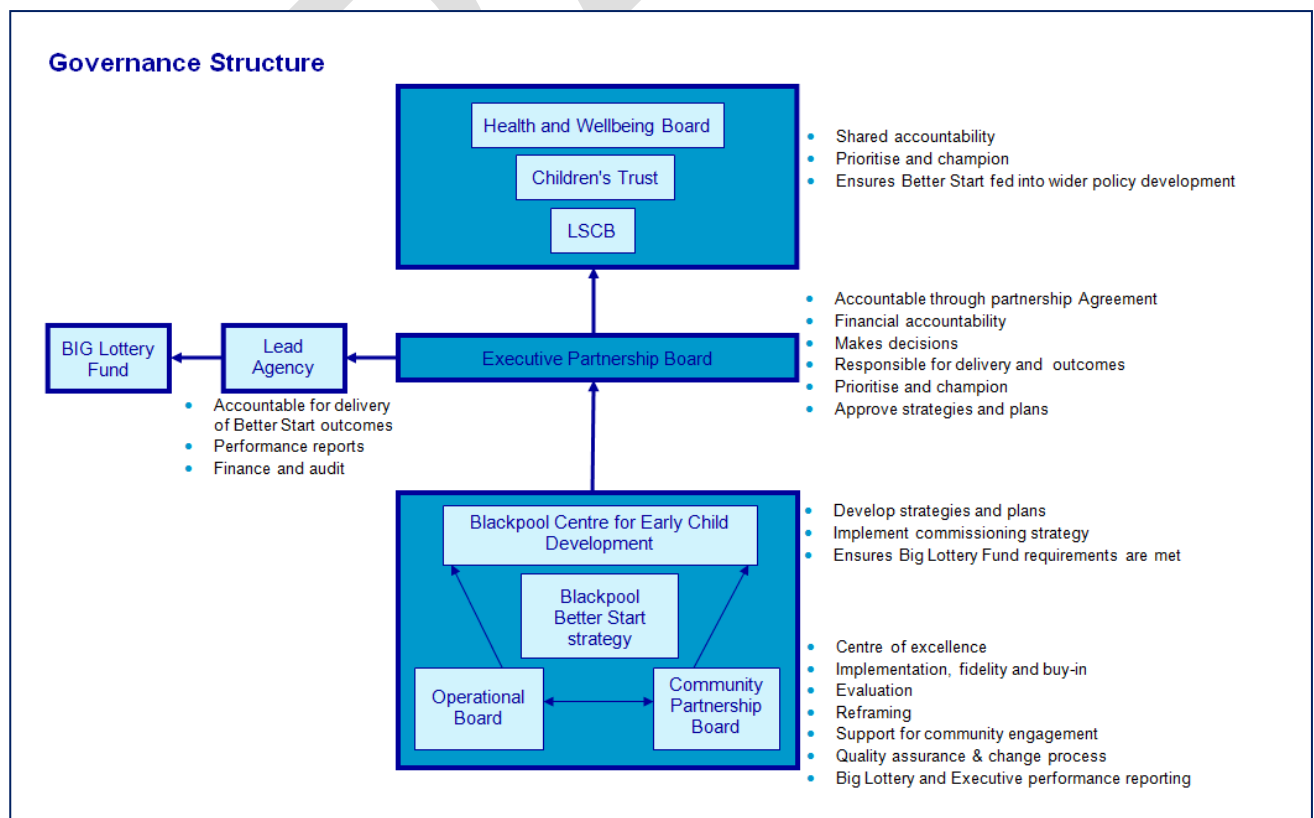
Governance and Decision Making

- 4.1 The tender process will be undertaken in line with Blackpool Council's Contract Procedure rules which are written in accordance with EU legislation. This will ensure an equitable process in the procurement of services.
- 4.2 All commissioning activity will reflect the Commissioning Cycle



Full Needs Assessments will be undertaken alongside a continuous cycle of reviewing performance and monitoring outcomes. The needs of the community, through consultation and feedback, will be reflected as part of the commissioning cycle.

- 4.3 Outcomes will be measured against Key Performance Indicators to ensure a positive impact for babies, young children and their families.
- 4.4 Community voice will be a 'golden thread' throughout the commissioning cycle.



4.6 The Better Start Blackpool Executive Board was created in September 2013. The role of the Executive is to:

- Provide a robust evidence base for decision-making.
- Offer a strategic and integrated view of need.
- Ensure the best and most cost effective providers are sourced
- Develop markets and alternative delivery models.
- Derive maximum value from procurement.
- Ensure the performance of service providers is managed well.
- Use performance information and business intelligence to improve and learn lessons.
- Challenge the status quo and to drive innovation and improvement.

4.7 The Blackpool Centre for Early Child Development will work with local authority and health commissioners to ensure:

- that expertise and experience is shared
- Procurement efficiency
- Good relationships with providers and suppliers

5 Informing the Market of Commissioning Opportunities

5.1 How we will communicate and engage with provider markets

We want to BBS to be a project that providers want to do business with, and whenever we tender contracts, we want to get them right for all parties involved.

5.2 Often we will place Prior Information Notices [PINs] in the Official Journal of the European Union [OJEU], on our websites, in the specialist media, and on capital E-sourcing [when available] that will alert providers to our intention to tender a contract in the near future. We may invite providers to an event to hear more about it, and for us to hear their views. Of course, we realise providers might not want to share their ideas openly with potential competitors, so we might also ask them to complete a confidential questionnaire on some of the key issues to get their feedback. Where the market is small and specialised, we may invite providers to have one to one meetings with us.

5.3 We are keen to improve the method and quality of our engagement with providers. We aim to foster a dialogue with providers in order to facilitate continuous service improvement and to achieve better outcomes for babies, young children and their families.

5.4 In order to develop collaborative and mutually beneficial relationships with providers, we will:

- Appoint designated commissioners to act as the key contacts with providers, facilitating a means of communicating their concerns, ideas and wishes.
- Ensure that our key priorities and projects are communicated to providers via the designated contacts and at provider forums.

- Keep abreast of significant policy and market developments and communicate these to providers.
- Organise events that will bring together key stakeholders across the sector in order to promote relations between organisations and to facilitate an open conversation on priorities, partnership working, and gaps in services.
- Offer opportunities for greater involvement with providers in the design of services, acknowledging their invaluable expertise and practical knowledge.

6 Contract Management

- 6.1 Over the course of the next year we aim to develop a contract monitoring and management system. The Framework will be based on the following principles:
- We will ensure that standards and methods for assessing performance and quality are detailed in the service specification/contract.
 - We recognise that contract monitoring can be resource intensive for both provider and commissioner. We will therefore ensure that the methods used are proportionate to outcomes, contract price, and the level of risk.
 - Contract monitoring will focus on the delivery of outcomes rather than just inputs or outputs. We will establish key performance indicators linked to outcomes, and work with providers to address performance variations and under-performance.
 - Evaluation will be a key part of the delivery of all contracts and providers will be required to work with BS evaluation teams.
 - Where we can, we will collate information from already existing sources.
 - We will consistently manage supplier relationships across the contracts we hold, and we will make use of provider's own quality assurance and self assessment systems.
 - There will be a named commissioning officer for each contract.
- 6.2 Finding out what works is a key part of the Better Start initiative. All projects will be evaluated and where they are shown to be effective, using criteria agreed in advance by the BBS Executive, a business case will be made to take them to scale drawing on leveraged funding.
- 6.3 Performance information indicating that services are inefficient, ineffective or unsustainable will help inform commissioners' decisions both to support and challenge the provider to improve, or to de-commission it and seek alternative provision to meet need. The first stage in addressing failing performance will usually be to work with providers to agree what action they will take to improve their performance. We will agree timescales for improvement and be clear about the consequences of failing to make the agreed improvements. We will agree a protocol for intervention with poorly performing or failing providers, and set up systems for remedial action where needed.

7 De-Commissioning

- 7.1 De-commissioning, the process of discontinuing a service procured from an external or internal provider, may be necessary when:
- A provider is failing to deliver the required outcomes, and has been unable to improve in a reasonable timeframe.
 - Evaluation shows the service is ineffective.

- A thorough needs assessment shows a particular service is no longer needed.
- Funding is no longer available or the provision is no longer a priority.

7.2 Decommissioning is part of the commissioning cycle and should be undertaken in a planned way to ensure that the most effective services are delivered, making best use of the resources available. In some instances service reviews will lead to a process of ending a service or part of a service and a smooth transition to a new or alternative service delivery model in order to achieve the right outcomes for people. This will enable investment in new services in accordance with our strategic commissioning plans.

7.3 The principles we have set out for commissioning apply equally to de-commissioning. However, in addition we will endeavour to apply the following principles:

- Strong internal and external engagement and communications.
- Minimised political, individual and social impacts.
- Sensitivity to the impact on organisations and markets.
- A strong narrative underpinning the changes.
- Effective validation of solutions prior to implementation.
- Strong and auditable governance.
- Strong follow-through to ensure outcomes are met.

Appendix A Priority Commissioning projects 2014/15/16

2014/2015

[Include list of deliverables, from the bid, for the first 12-18 months with the budget, key agency responsible where relevant and/or whether there will be a procurement. This should include all budget workstreams.]

Project	Key agency responsible [BBS Centre, LA, CCG, NHS England]	Procurement [y/n]	Budget
FNP	NHS England		



Blackpool Better Start Commissioning and Contracting Governance

1. Introduction

Decision making on spend for Better Start needs to satisfy the requirements of Big Lottery and partner organisations in line with their Standing Orders. The following is proposed for making decisions on spend for Better Start in Blackpool and is based on the need to identify an efficient, streamlined and rigorous approval process. The proposal applies to both Big Lottery and leveraged funding. Governance arrangements will evolve as Better Start is established and alongside other partnership arrangements.

The Blackpool Centre for Early Child Development would oversee all commissioning and contract activity.

2. Proposal for contract approval structure in Blackpool Better Start

- 2.1 The Blackpool Centre for Early Child Development will be the single agency with authority to oversee and approve the delivery and implementation of all Better Start strategies and their consequent procurements and contract management, prior to submission to the Blackpool Better Start (BBS) Executive for approval as required under the BBS Partnership Agreement.
- 2.2 The Centre draws on commissioning expertise from the Local authority and Clinical Commissioning Group Commissioning Team. Finance and legal advisers will be invited where particular items require it.
- 2.3 Reports should be submitted to the Executive within agreed formats which ensure that appropriate inputs have been obtained prior to submission, including consideration of the workforce, property and equalities implications, Community Voice, user involvement and stakeholder consultation, and legal and financial sign off. A sample template is attached in Annex C.
- 2.4 Decisions will be tracked through the Blackpool Centre for Early Child Development to ensure the timely conclusion of procurements. A sample template for keeping track of all commissioning and contracting activity to ensure priority outcomes and budget considerations are being met is attached in Annex D.
- 2.5 The Centre will raise any issues of concern with the Operational Board and, if necessary, through the relevant Partnership Executive Board member.

Blackpool Better Start Commissioning

Terms of Reference for the Blackpool Centre for Early Child Development in relation to commissioning

Aim

To provide oversight of, and approval for, the delivery and implementation of Better Start commissioning plans, their procurement stages and their ongoing contract management. To meet the governance requirements of the BBS Partnership.

Objectives

To manage and review a Forward Plan of procurement and agree the scheduling to achieve a clear link to shared strategic priorities and savings plans with partner organisations. There is also to be a link to the Strategic Commissioning Group which is part of the HWB

To ensure that statutory requirements, Better Start values, safeguarding considerations and Big Lottery standards are adhered to.

To involve the Operational Board and Community Voice in all decisions.

To ensure appropriate resource is committed to each commissioning project and procurement process to deliver in a timely fashion.

Procedures

Reports will be presented to the BBS Executive Board for consideration and approval based on a standard template (see Annex C) which can be amended by report authors to meet specific subject matter requirements.

Papers, with appropriate legal, financial, and corporate property, IT, and HR implications signed off, will be circulated five days in advance of BBS Executive meetings to ensure that Board members have time to study them. Tabled papers will not be accepted. In exceptional circumstances papers can be approved by email between meetings.

Decision Making & Accountability

The BBS Executive Board will approve, inter alia:

- commissioning/contracting strategies which require procurement and contract management,
- procurement initiation, specifications, service levels, service user involvement and procurement timetables,
- approval of preferred and reserve bidders and post tender clarification/negotiations,
- award of contract and contract start up,
- contract variations,
- contract extensions,
- reporting of any issue of concern and/or safeguarding matter that may arise in any contracted service,
- and any other relevant commissioning and contracting matter that may arise.

For large projects the Centre will carry out a gateway function for all stages of procurement and ongoing contract management matters.

Above agreed thresholds, reports will be submitted to the BBS Executive for approval.

Criteria for papers to come to the BS Executive Board

- a. Initiatives which result in Better Start incurring significant spend – with a financial thresholds of £10,000

- b. Initiatives which result in spend drawn from partners leveraged funds
- c. Significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in Blackpool.
- d. Significant in terms of its effects on the Better Start Partnership

Process

Projects will be presented to the board at three key stages:

- 1) to agree the strategy decision. This will require a paper setting out the approach and to agree key principles
- 2) Agreement to service levels, spend and spec
- 3) Contract award decision

Before presenting papers to the board the following should be included:

- Confirmation from finance on the budget for the project, including where the money is coming from (BS, leverage, other) and any other financial or resource implications.
- Clearance from legal
- Views of the community
- Timeline
- Political governance process



Blackpool Better Start Executive Decision Report

Decision maker(s) and date of Executive meeting	<i>Insert meeting details as appropriate</i> Date of decision: <i>[insert]</i>
Report title (decision subject)	<i>Insert, IN CAPITALS</i>
Project lead	<i>Insert name here</i>
Decision	Yes or No
Access to information classification	<i>Insert 'Confidential/exempt' or 'public'</i>
Executive sign-off details	<i>Report authorised: [insert]</i> <i>Date: [insert]</i>

[Please note that, in normal circumstances:

- (i) Reports should normally be no longer than four sides with ancillary information in appendices*
- (ii) Paragraph numbering should normally be limited to two levels, i.e. 1 and 1.1 but not 1.1.1 etc.*
- (iii) Sub-headings should normally be lower-case bold and that underlining should be avoided throughout the report.]*

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Include here a brief summary of the purpose of the report.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

You should include here precisely, but briefly, what you want agreed.

3. REASONS FOR DECISION

The reason for the recommendation must be included here.

4. BACKGROUND, INCLUDING POLICY CONTEXT, AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

This part of the report should set out the main consideration(s) for the decision maker. This is where you demonstrate that all relevant options have been weighed-up and how the recommendation has been arrived at. All relevant factors (see Appendix A for list of standard considerations) should be taken into account here.

Use relevant sub-headings (lower case bold please) to assist with clarity.

Other Implications

[The report author should consider, and include paragraphs on the following as appropriate within this separate appendix, unless these considerations are sufficiently important and relevant as to justify being included within the body of the report itself.]

- 1. Business Plan
- 2. Risk Management
- 3. Evaluation
- 4. Outcomes
- 5. Health and Wellbeing, including Health and Safety Implications
- 6. Staffing
- 7. Sustainability
- 8. Communications

6. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

Any key/relevant equalities issues must be included here, in the body of the report.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

This section should include the legal power relevant to the proposal must be set out together with any future possible legal implications. Unless circumstances dictate that a legal input from each authority is required, it will normally be sufficient for the Legal Officer at the authority originating the report to comment.

7. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

Details of the current and future financial implications must be set out here. It is the responsibility of the report author to ensure this happens.

8. CONSULTATION

*The report author will be expected to ensure all necessary consultation (including external consultation where appropriate) has taken place **before** this report is submitted to the BBS Executive.*

Background papers used in the preparation of this report

Contact person(s): *[Insert name, post title, organisation and both email/telephone contact details. The contact person should be the report author or someone who is able to answer questions about the report.]*

DRAFT