

Guidelines for the use of Consultants

General

A consultant is any contractor, or sole trader, appointed to support to deliver bespoke improvement support work for the Care and Health Improvement Programme. They are engaged on this scheme through a specific procurement exercise and issued with a maximum of a one-year contract up to the value of £50,000, without the guarantee of any work.

In appointing and using consultants for our work we need to ensure:

- **Transparency** in identifying consultants, where ever possible, and use
- **Accountability** in the delivery of the improvement support and response to the client
- **Compliance** with prevailing legislation and LGA policies where applicable
- **Learning** is captured and shared widely
- **Value for money** for the work and the daily rate and time allocated

Our general principle is to use consultants to provide support, rather than make a direct grant award to address support needs.

We will always seek to engage a broad range of consultants to achieve a mix of skills, ability, experience and cost that meets the needs of the Programme. As such we regularly request that consultant's or suppliers who are adequately qualified and with relevant experience send in their CVs and a brief statement as to their expertise and relevance of their work so that they can be considered for future work.

The maximum value of work that can be awarded under this scheme to any single contractor in a single financial year is £50,000.

CHIP will closely monitor spend that runs through this scheme so that contractors do not go over the £50,000 threshold in a single year. Other contracts issued to the contractor under separate direct competitive tender processes do not count towards this £50,000 total. This includes any additional costs associated with any extensions or variations to the work. If/once £50,000 has been reached no further work can be commissioned against this contract under this scheme.

Issuing a contract for bespoke work

When a piece of work is commissioned the CHIP lead will determine the number of days and day rate (from the below table) to adequately complete the work. A minimum of two contractors for up to £20,000 value of work or three contractors if the value of work is £20,001 – £50,000 will be referred to the council, or local system, for evaluation. Referrals can only be made from those consultants on the list.

The basis of award will be on experience, expertise and capability to undertake the work. A contract must be issued to the awarded contractor for this work.

To ensure value for money we will scope and cost work based on its complexity and likely duration. As a guide we will use the following as a guide to complexity. Any deviation from the below in terms of rates must be agreed in advance by the Head of Care and Health Improvement.

Complexity	Bespoke support that is broadly characterised by the need:	Max Daily Rate
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For knowledge, skills or analysis to resolve largely service delivery or technical issues • To reach consensus within or across local organisations • For options appraisals and/or presentation of alternatives • To facilitate pre-defined or structured workshops 	£200 to £450
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For expert knowledge or skills to resolve multiple service delivery or technical issues • For options in-depth appraisals and/or presentation of alternatives • To reach consensus where there is a known disagreement • To develop and deliver workshops or engagements 	Up to £550
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to broker complex relationships between local and/or regional organisations • Complex issues of a political and/or service management • The need to broker change or solutions using an extensive body of knowledge or expertise 	Up to £650
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant reputational issues for the local authority or the sector or as a whole • Substantial and complex issues of a political and/or service management • The need for credibility to broker change or solutions from a nationally recognised expert 	Agreed in advance Head of CHIP

A specification for the works/ services must be included to each contract setting out the services that are required.

Direct awards/single consultant referrals are not permissible. In exceptional circumstances a procurement exemption form (authorised by Sarah Pickup) can be used but advice from the Business Management Team must be sought in advance.

In specifying the work full details of the service should be set out clearly stating the purpose and scope of the work and the expected deliverables **must** be recorded on the CRM and in purchase orders. Work must not commence until the contract has been issued.

Accountability

Consultants are accountable to the commissioning CHIP lead for the scope and quality of their work, however, this must be managed in the interests of the council or local system receiving the support who will provide feedback regarding the consultant's performance.

Consultants will generally be self-sufficient, i.e. not require administrative support from the LGA or council, where this is not the case it will be reflected in the contract and daily rate.

Compliance

We will ensure compliance with legal, General Data Protection Regulations, HMRC rules etc. in order to protect the council or local system and the LGA.

No consultant will be offered a single bespoke assignment of more than 20 days in any 12 month period. Where a single bespoke assignment is likely to be more than 20 days duration it will be subject to a separate tendered contract and only with the approval of the Head of Care and Health Improvement.

Learning

The commissioning CHIP lead will always conduct post bespoke support interviews with the council or local system to assess the quality of our work and that of the consultant.

The commissioning CHIP lead will always include in the specification a request that the consultant document and provide the learning gained through this assignments as part of their commission, in writing and in discussions with the commissioning lead.