Commissioning support for local authorities

Project learning

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Project Aims and Objectives

• Increase understanding of the commissioning agenda

• Improve the ability of the sector to engage as a strategic partner
  – Building relationships with commissioners
  – Helping identify how the service can hone its offer

• Share the learning
The commissioning cycle

- Priorities
- Needs
- Resources
- Users communities
- Delivery options
- Procurement
- Delivery
- Monitoring
- Review

Plan

- Analyse
  - Sector needs to be seen here

Do

- Sector mainly found here

- Review

Users communities

The commissioning cycle
A changing environment

• More organisational, political and financial turbulence

• Less capacity

• Different attitudes and behaviours

• Diverse organisational cultures, language and existing relationships
Project process – what worked

• The basic elements of the process still work

• Role of adviser is crucial

• Role of our Local Government Relationship Manager valued

• Mapping is crucial to understanding

• ‘Events’ enabled ownership and created impetus
What worked – the benefits

• National project status
• Aligns well to Sport England Strategy
• Gave focus and direction
  “impetus” “amplified” “fast tracked”
• Improved understanding of commissioners, commissioning and language
• Gained political leverage
• Secured senior level engagement
• Became strategic players
  – improved confidence
  – developed stronger leadership
  – enhanced knowledge and skills
What worked – the benefits

• Improved and strengthened relationships/communications
• Broke down silos
• Increased visibility of sport and physical activity with Health and Wellbeing Boards and some CCGs
• Use of specialist advisors and medical advocates open minds, changed attitudes and opened new doors
• Created new advocates
• Started different conversations re: Better Care Fund
• Action plans owned more widely
Examples of Impact

- Less tangible – more about relationships and time
- Opened door to CCG – Physical Activity now in the Sustainability and Transformation Plan
- Raised district councils credibility – seen as forward thinking
- Testing concepts in mental health
- Better positioned sport and physical activity strategy as it was being developed
- Reinvigorated the Sport and Physical Activity Group to meet commissioners needs
- Influenced thinking around organisational structure
Key Learning

- It’s more about relationships, changing ways of working and service integration than funding
- Relationships are less transactional more collaborative
- Concepts of commissioning and wellbeing are diverse and changing – more discussion around ‘cashless commissioning’
- Impact takes time, needs continued support, external challenge and tenacity for momentum
- Two tier can still be difficult but not impossible
- Day job v way of working?
- Commissioners faced with funding problems looking for quick wins rather than long term benefits
CLOA – Nottingham’s Experience

John Wileman
Head of Sport, Community and Leisure
Nottingham City Council
CLOA – Nottingham’s Experience

- Overall aim – To improve strategic positioning and relationships across health and social care and to be more integrated into the transformation processes.
- 7 key interviews with Chief Officers / Members from across the Council and CCG.
- Interviews highlighted wide range of areas for potential development between S&L and other services, in particular Adult Social Care.
- Advisor was key in drawing out these opportunities.
- Summit organisation difficult with diaries.
- Wider dissemination of mid project report to wider team managers with Sport and Leisure – very well received within the service.
Figure 1: Life expectancy and disability-free life expectancy (DFLE) at birth, persons by neighbourhood income level, England, 1999–2003.

Life expectancy
DFLE
Pension age increase 2026–2046

Source: Office for National Statistics

Nottingham City Council
The key question – what do we want to do?

× ‘What do we need for a long life?’

‘What do we need for a good life?’

× ‘What’s the matter with me?’

‘What matters to me?’
Meet Bob
Physical Activity is now hidden behind a much greater experience for Bob

It is invisible to him

It is a ‘means to an end’ not the end itself

‘The end’ is now getting to Anfield

And finding this greater value for each person will help create the industrial scale required
Helen Jones – Champion Case study

• Shared the highlights of Dr Bird's slides at our two AGM sessions with 250 colleagues.
• Clarified to staff that it's one of two priorities for the Directorate this year.
• The remainder of our 900 workforce will link to the AGM via DVD in the summer and discuss how to achieve the priorities in the teams.
• All teams / units will be expected to have an action around how they will deliver on the two priorities in their cultural behaviour change plan.
• Session held with all senior leaders/ managers across Children and Adults by Director of Public Health who used the national stats provided by the report and the local stats.
• Initiative sent out by Corporate Director of Children and Adults, that we will sponsor the best team initiative to raise activity across children and adults received by end of summer into the corporate "Being great fund"
Current developments and successes

• S&L colleagues now key part of Healthy Lifestyles Review
• Healthy Lifestyle clients now being signposted to S&L opportunities which previously did not occur
• Meeting with Director of Adult Social Care to take forward opportunities of joint working on a local level
• Overall improvement in relationship with Public Health colleagues which is resulting in a joint action plan being written and to be owned by Public Health
• Physical activity is now a strong theme within the new Health and Well Being Strategy

• Led to POD .................................................................
POD – Physical Activity, Diet and Obesity Strategy

Positive attitude and normalisation
- Normalisation in our population in line with guidelines for physical activity (Department of Health, 2011) and eating well (Public Health England, 2016)
- Consistent and persistent messages through media and HWB organisations
- “Looking after yourself” message
- Ensure messages and activities are culturally appropriate
- Identify and support community champions and leaders to facilitate social movement

Leadership and responsibility
- For HWB organisations to increase their commitment to physical activity and diet through a commitment and actions similar to the Tobacco Declaration and act as leaders across the city by setting an example of best practice
- For the population and organisations and their staff to have clear and shared responsibilities to being active, eating well and being a healthy weight. For example, parents and children’s responsibilities to healthy eating during school day and teachers’ and school’s role in facilitating this.
- Identify and support community champions and leaders to facilitate social movement
**Living environment**
- Control the density of unhealthy food outlets including fast food takeaways
- Support development of green and / or recreational spaces in formal and informal parks and open spaces
- Prioritise physical activity and good diet within built environment development. For example, street lighting to encourage walking for transport
- Manage traffic and parking to promote physical activity, e.g. traffic free areas, increase no parking zone around schools
- Support people to be physically active and eat well within own homes and gardens

**Working and schooling environment**
- Recognise work and school environments as vital in making positive or negative impact on staff and employees / students activity levels and diet
- Systematic application of best practice from Healthy Schools and other initiatives across all city schools
- Development of a workplace charter, based on the HWB Declaration, where private employers in the city can work towards working practices and environment which positively influence activity and diet
What have we learnt from the pilot?

- Having an independent advisor to hold discussions with Directors allowed open and honest conversations and challenge colleagues where necessary.
- Scope setting, it was vital to have the right people present and be realistic in what could be achieved.
- High level summit was instrumental in bringing together Senior Officer within NCC – first time Leader, Deputy Leader in same meeting without having it being a cabinet meeting. The afternoon session was also key.
- Do staff speak the language – we used some time to host a session for staff which really did help understanding.
- By widening the understanding and engaging with new partners and forums, the potential for sport and physical activity has been significantly enhanced. By using a name (William Bird) we got people to come to the summit and had dialogue since.
- Happy coincidences – ‘beat the streets’ – ‘Sheriffs Challenge’
- The initial report has been useful and has been referenced as fact so many times since.
- Very limited understanding of personalization budget.
- Don't start the discussion with money.
- The funding support has put us in a lot stronger position but is not essential.
Applying the learning

- Only half of people that commit actually turn up.
- Perceived value is more important than free
- Sport is a turn off word as are many others so language is key.
- Images are not reflective of our population
- Active person – helper – activator takes at least a year.
- There are less champions out there than you think and getting them takes time.
- People have busy lives no matter what.
- We have untapped comms routes we don’t yet work through who are better at this than we are. Housing associations, faith groups and charities.
- Think about social media and use of technology - channel shift should be replaced by channel choice.
- Taking exercise into safe environments - its ok to do it at home.
- Allow permissions – this is powerful – wear what you like
- Give people what they want, when they want it, where they want it.
Suffolk’s Most Active County Programme
What is Suffolk’s Most Active County Programme?

- A partnership of local authorities, public sector bodies, the voluntary sector and private companies in Suffolk;
- Focused on bringing added value to the good work that many organisations across the county do to engage people in physical activity;
- Established in February 2012 as Suffolk’s key legacy from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games;
- Guided by the Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board;
- 3-pronged approach - addressing inequalities, providing a universal offer and maximising economic impact.
Why focus on mental health?

1. Whilst Suffolk has a growing track record for helping inactive people to become more active through the Most Active County programme, the commissioning of physical activity to promote better mental health and wellbeing is still relatively under-developed and fragmented.

2. Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) review of mental health has considered levels of mental illness in Suffolk and projected future needs.

3. Suffolk Integrated Mental Health Strategy - clearly recognises the importance of self-care and prevention, the value of social interaction and the close relationship between physical and mental health.
What has happened to date?

- Mapping exercise undertaken looking at the local commissioning landscape, including a desktop analysis of key documents and a schedule of interviews with key stakeholders;
- Identification of local priority outcomes and potential opportunities for the sport and leisure and mental health sectors;
- Meetings with representatives of the sport and leisure and mental health sectors to test thinking and contribute to the production of the mapping document.
- Development and production of an action plan to help shape work going forward;
- GP Advocacy briefing with Dr William Bird.
Research Findings

- Greatest potential lies with focusing on people who experience general mental health issues rather than serious and enduring mental health illnesses;
- There are significant strengths in Suffolk. There are strong partnerships, a drive to transform services, and staff who understand that physical activity and mental health are interdependent.
- People in Suffolk are aware that the development of systematic commissioning of physical activity for better mental health is less well developed.
Research Recommendations

- To focus on two transitional phases in the life-course when the risks of poor mental health and wellbeing are heightened – from 15-25, and from the mid to late 50’s into retirement.

- The process should strengthen the connections at local level between professionals and volunteers/community groups involved in mental health (in the widest sense) and those involved in physical activity, so that more vulnerable, inactive people with mental health issues can be helped to find their way into more active lifestyles and less formal sources of support.

- Identify locations to test activity that could, potentially, be developed to scale.
Progress

- Working groups established in two areas (Ipswich & Stowmarket) with representatives from a wide range of organisations;
- A suite of small scale interventions developed/in development with local partners (inc. local GP surgery, libraries, charities, academy trust, etc.)
- Funding secured from Public Health to pump prime activity in each area;
- Discussions undertaken with the University of Suffolk in relation to capturing the impact and evidence of projects in improving the mental wellbeing of participants.
What have we learnt?

- The whole process takes time;
- At its heart it’s a relationship building exercise;
- Organisations initially tend to focus on the wrong part of the commissioning cycle;
- A respected independent adviser is helpful in opening doors to key individuals and organisations;
- Having a supportive political lead is helpful;
- There seems to be a genuine willingness to build closer relationships between both the mental health and physical activity sectors;
- People tend to automatically focus on long-term and enduring mental health issues as opposed to preventative action;
Take-away messages

- Find the people internally/within potential partner organisations with a passion for, and interest in, your subject area;
- It doesn’t need to be expensive. Low cost/’cashless commissioning’ is a genuine part of the mix;
- Evaluate and measure what you’re doing to prove impact;
- Engage non-traditional partners;
- Be informed by what people tell you they want.
Helping make Suffolk ENGLAND’S MOST ACTIVE COUNTY
For discussion

• How does what you have heard reflect what is happening in your area around commissioning?

• Do you have any examples of where the challenges highlighted here are being tackled and opportunities being developed?