

Nottingham City Council Commissioning and Partnerships Provider Engagement Strategy

I Executive Summary

This strategy sets out the approach we will take to our communication and engagement activities with providers contributing to the health and wellbeing of citizens within Nottingham City to enable collaborative working to ensure the best possible outcomes for Nottingham Citizens.

Working with providers, we will deliver the best value through the most efficient and effective use of resources, whether through contracts, service level agreements or where citizens purchase directly from the provider, ensuring that the best possible social and financial value is achieved for our citizens. Supporting service providers and community groups to access alternative funding streams will also help to generate additional income for Nottingham City. This will have the benefit of shaping healthy and diverse social care markets and building capacity to meet the needs of our citizens.

2 Strategic Focus / Context

Commissioning and Partnerships consider the availability of support within Nottingham when designing, delivering and purchasing services which address gaps in addressing the needs of Nottingham's citizens. We aim to put people at the heart of everything we do when meeting the Council's statutory duty to ensure:

- sufficient good quality Adult Social Care and support services
- sufficient good quality placements for children in our care. (Children's Act 1989 and Care Act 2014)
- that our services and support enable the best start for our children.

When commissioning support from external providers and partners to meet the needs of our children and vulnerable adults, the strategic priority is to deliver safe, quality and innovative services that meet citizens' needs, securing social and community benefits. Key to this is working with providers to influence and stimulate the development of markets and offer opportunities for choice, quality and value for money.

2.1 Adults

The Better Lives Better Outcomes Strategy sets out how care and support are provided for adults in Nottingham and aims to ensure sustainability by:

- Changing how we work with citizens, communities, and partners to achieve good outcomes within available resources
- Promoting independence: we will work with citizens and communities, their needs, aspirations, skills, and resources to build their resilience and independence

The four key themes that underpin this strategy are prevention, community connections, independent lives, choice and control.

"...that all older and disabled citizens in Nottingham will be enabled to live as independently as they can, be connected into their communities and that where formal care and support is needed it helps to retain and restore independence..."

¹ [Better Lives Better Outcomes](#): a new strategy for sustainable adult social care in Nottingham

Providers of care are crucial in helping us to deliver Better Lives Better Outcomes and we will be working with all providers to ensure that services available for citizens are focussed on promoting independence and outcomes, and that they always offer best value for money.

2.2 Children

The Children in Care (CIC) Commissioning and Sufficiency Strategy 2021-2023 outlines that *“Nottingham City Council will drive a dynamic, outcomes focussed, child-centred placement market, which offers good value, quality and choice, to ensure that the right placement is found the first time, on time, every time.”* A key element of provider engagement is articulating expectations for excellent outcomes for each child and young person. The strategy plans to consult with the local market on different approaches to commissioning and contracting, to better meet the needs of our children and young people and improve quality, sufficiency, and value for money.

Collaboration with providers is key to promoting markets which are truly fit for purpose, have capacity, meet the needs of our citizens and ensure greater value for money.

²*“It is the responsibility of local authorities to ensure their local care market is healthy and diverse.”*

We also recognise the valuable role that providers can play in helping us connect with Nottingham's citizens. This includes those who use services to meet their social care needs, those who use preventative services which will reduce or delay the need for social care and those who may require such services in the future.

3 Objectives of this strategy:

This strategy provides the framework and mechanisms for undertaking engagement activities with current or potential providers of contracted services as well as those who deliver to the self-funded market to enable a market of provider services to meet the needs of the citizens of Nottingham by ensuring the following:

Sufficiency:

- Facilitating an affordable supply to meet people's care needs and allowing people to exercise choice over their care, whoever is the purchaser (the Local Authority, Integrated Care Board, self-funders).

Stability:

- sustainable rates of care, effective occupancy or 'user' levels, and a valued workforce. Providers should be able to evidence of how they value their workforce to deliver continuity of support to individuals and how they promote a workforce which reflects the diversity of our communities across Nottingham.

Collaboration:

- Providers are part of our partnership approach across the City and region, with the right balance of collaboration and competition to drive up quality and efficiency. The market will be community-connected, supporting people to access resources in, and contribute to their communities and building on existing networks of friends, family, and community that people have and working more closely with them in meeting people's needs

Informed

- The market is given clarity about the needs, outcomes and preferences of people purchasing care – now and in the future which allows the market to plan for and meet these needs.

Quality:

- The market will be rated good or outstanding by the Care Quality Commission.

Innovation:

² People at the Heart of Care: Adult Social Care Reform White Paper

- The market has opportunities and resources for innovation and new models of care. Including the use of tech-enabled care and digital solutions.

We will:

- Listen to what providers and citizens say to develop an understanding of individual needs, wants and desired outcomes. Enabling support to be provided in the way that they want and ensuring that people are at the centre of everything we do
- Work in partnership and collaboration to enrich market shaping and co-production
- Build relationships with providers to improve ongoing involvement
- Improve/build on/develop engagement and communication with providers ensuring that they can communicate and participate effectively
- Manage and co-ordinate engagement and communication activities to ensure accessibility, consistency and quality
- Empower providers to be innovative in service delivery
- Provide an arena in which to share sound principles and best practice
- Provide a space for providers to build relationships and networking opportunities
- Uphold the principles of the open market
- Meet statutory requirements such as the best value duties under the Local Government Act
- Communicate our transformation journey and direction of travel to foster understanding and engagement
- Provide a mechanism to facilitate early identification and a good understanding of issues and improve areas where there are known problems
- Work with providers to improve services, providing high-quality, integrated services designed around the needs of individuals. Delivering desired outcomes, ensuring choice and fairness of access
- Develop and implement ongoing reviews and improvements around how needs and outcomes are met
- Test new ideas

3.1 Providers

Any provider group that contributes to the health and well-being of citizens, including community groups, delivery of contracted services, grassroots and micro providers, faith groups, private sector organisations, social enterprises and voluntary groups. These can be contracted, self-funded, through direct payments, or universally delivered.

4 Mechanisms for communicating with providers - Model of Engagement and Co-Production

The model below provides a variety of methods that can be used to engage with individual markets depending on required objectives and outcomes. Discussions with providers as to which level of engagement is appropriate and what dialogue style can be used will inform individual market engagement plans.

Table 1: Think Local Act Personal: Ladder of Participation

Ladder of participation	What does this mean?	Type of commissioning
Co-production	Doing with people Working together in an equal, give and take partnership	This is co-producing commissioning
Co-design		
Engagement	Doing for people Engaging and involving people (asking for their views)	This is commissioning co-production
Consultation		
Informing	Doing to people Doing things to or for people without involving them or asking for their views	This is market management/control
Educating		

[Links to the Think Local Act Personal \(TLAP\) Co-Production Ladder and further information](#)

[Ladder of Co-production explained – 5-minute video](#)

5 Feedback and Evaluation

Feedback and evaluation will be embedded into each engagement plan through surveys and feedback questionnaires to ensure that communication remains appropriate and relevant.

6 Next Steps

Task	Timeline
Share Market Position Statement and undertake scoping exercise with providers to inform draft engagement plans	July/ Aug 2023
Hold market events to consolidate feedback	Sept 2023
Develop forward plan of engagement based on feedback.	Sept/Oct 2023
Deliver/facilitate engagement in line with agreed plans	Nov 2023
Review engagement plan with providers	May 2024

Appendix B – Engagement Plan Template

See Excel Document for Template and Stakeholder Analysis Toolkit