

## The Commissioning and Procurement Cycle

**Commissioning** is the process which establishes what services are required, now and in the future, to meet the needs of local people, and to ensure that they are planned and delivered in a way which meets any statutory duties.

**Procurement** ensures those services are purchased, delivered and managed in a way which secures best value from public resources and ensures legal compliance.

In accordance with EU Law, the way in which these processes are carried out should be open, transparent and fair.

The following diagram illustrates the key steps in the commissioning and procurement cycle. The outer ring shows the stage in the commissioning process and the inner ring shows the resultant stage in the procurement process.



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It shows how public service commissioning and procurement is a continuous process based around four key activities: **analyse, plan, do** and **review**.

## Analyse

The process starts with an analysis of need. This will include looking at:

- Reviewing current service provision
- Reviewing need in the local area
- The direction of national strategy and policy
- What is happening in comparable situations across the country and new services available in the market place?

The commissioning officer will be responsible for analysing need and deciding what types of service are required. The procurement officer will be responsible for stimulating the local market place.

## Plan

Based on the outcomes of the analysis work, the commissioning officer will consider:

- Gaps in current service provision
- What services are needed within the local area
- What resources are required and what resources are available?
- Allocation of resources for a specific service out of total available resources dependent on need, priority and available budget

The procurement officer will then, within the parameters of EU Law and the internal rules of the commissioning body, decide what the best way will be for the commissioning body to secure the delivery of that service. This could include tendering processes or grants depending on the type, scale and value of the service under consideration.

## Do

This involves ensuring that services are delivered efficiently, effectively and as planned. The procurement officer will carry out the procurement process and secure a suitable provider(s). Once a provider has been secured, the procurement officer will be responsible for developing a strong working relationship and managing the delivery of the specific service by the provider in the terms of the contract. The commissioning officer will be responsible for change management, and managing the total budget the service is part of.

While carrying out the service the commissioner should continuously strive to ensure that there a good range of potential suppliers available in the local market place. This may require activities which stimulate the market place.

## Review

The monitoring of services and their impact and analysing the extent to which they have achieved their intended outcomes is essential. The process involves collating information from individual services, developing systems to bring together relevant data on finance, activity, and outcomes. Consulting with service users is also vital. The procurement officer will review the performance of the specific service provider while the commissioning officer will evaluate the overall impact of the service and consider this against changes to demographics within the area and also to changes in national strategy and policy.

## ACEVO Commissioning Support Helpline

Contact us for advice and support on procurement and commissioning issues:

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