



## VOLUNTARY SECTOR COMMITTEE – 4TH DECEMBER 2013

**SUBJECT: VOLUNTARY SECTOR QUESTIONS ON:- FAMILIES FIRST, PROCUREMENT & TENDERING**

**REPORT BY: ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 VOLUME would like to know more detail around Families First specifications for new projects, and the tendering process.

### 2. THE REPORT

#### 2.1 Who sanctioned the new projects and their specifications?

The specifications have been developed and agreed through the independent Task and Finish Group, nominated by the CYPPB. Please see attached for the email that was sent out to CYPPB members to seek approval as well as the response from the Voluntary Sector representative, Mike Bridgman.

Original Message-----

From: Mike Bridgman [<mailto:mike.bridgman@gavowales.org.uk>]

Sent: 19 August 2013 08:48

To: Bosanko-Williams, Lynne

Subject: RE: CYPP Proposal of Task & Finish Group for Commissioning [Spam score: 12%]

I have no problem in the Task and finish group members chosen. Or process.

Mike.

**From:** Bosanko-Williams, Lynne

**Sent:** 16 August 2013 14:59

**To:** Aspinall, Sandra; Bosanko-Williams, Lynne; Brandon Williams; Ewings, Clare; Cllr. Passmore, Rhianon; Cole, Keri; Dave Brunton; Davies, Kerry; Rees, Howard; McMahan, Tina; Rogers, Michaela; Mike Bridgman; Parent Network; Peters, Kathryn; Phenis, David; Sam Crane; Sian Millar

**Subject:** CYPP Proposal of Task & Finish Group for Commissioning

**Importance:** High

Dear colleagues

As advised in the CYPP Board meetings. The contracts for the current Families First Projects end 31st March 2014, and we need to commence the commissioning process in a timely

manner in order to tender projects through the open market to ensure that they commence 1st April 2014. Also we want to let successful tenders know as early as possible.

As always, the commissioning process is to be undertaken and approved by a small core of representatives with commissioning experience from, and, or, approved by members of the Board. For transparency and impartially, all have to be totally independent, not have a vested interest in any of the current projects commissioned, and would not be involved in any future commissioned projects.

Therefore, in order to meet the deadlines and manage this process efficiently and effectively, a Task and Finish Group is required to be set up this month to oversee the process.

However, as there is no CYPP Board meeting until 18th September 2013, I am proposing the following members for this group so that the next phase of the work can commence immediately.

- Voluntary Sector Representative (to be confirmed)
- Dave Phenis, Sport and Leisure Services Manager (CYPP Board member)
- Tina McMahon, Community Regeneration Manager (CYPP Board member)
- Malcolm Topping, Support People Manager Health Representative (to be confirmed)
- David Thomas (Equalities and Welsh Language)

Due to the timing and urgency of commencement please indicate by return of email to me no later than 3.00pm on 21st August 2013 only if you have any objections to me progressing the process in this manner. I'm sure you will agree we need to expedite the process but at the same time ensuring full representation of board members.

Should you wish to discuss please contact me.

No response will be taken as your approval and commence of the next commissioning phase. However, should you wish to discuss first please contact me on my telephone number below.

Pending approval of the group, an update will then be provided at the next CYPP Board meeting.

Kind regards,  
Lynne.

### **Lynne Bosanko-Williams**

Children and Young People's Partnership Co-ordinator | Cydlynnydd Partneriaeth Plant a Phobl Ifanc  
Caerphilly County Borough Council | Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Caerffili

## **2.2 The time allowed for the tenders (to form partnerships) is unrealistic - why were the procurement guidelines waived on this but not on other things, why not bring it in line with the Compact Agreement?**

The current projects do not end until 31st March 2014, therefore from a commissioning perspective it would have been possible to award the tenders in the New Year. This would have then allowed a longer time period for organisations to develop their applications. However, after risk assessing the commissioning process, it has always been our goal to award before the Christmas holidays for a number of reasons. These reasons outweighed the one benefit of longer timescales spanning into the New Year. The reasons are as follows:-

To allow sufficient time for current providers to issue staff notices if applicable (for most this will be 3 months).

To allow a time period for any staff transfers to take place between organisations, again if applicable.

To allow a timely review of current providers 'exit strategies', not just for staff as mentioned above, but for the consideration of service users and project resources.

To give current staff peace of mind before the Christmas period around their employment situation.

We can confirm that in addition, procurement guidelines, namely the Caerphilly County Borough Council Standing Orders were followed to the letter throughout the process. It is our understanding that for tenders targeted at the private sector, timescales are shorter.

We are unclear as to why reference is made to the compact as we can see no reference to set timescales relating to applications. If we have misinterpreted, please clarify.

**2.3 Have the Voluntary sector been involved in determining the basic requirements of the specifications? (If not, it is CCBC owned not CYPPB)**

Yes the Voluntary Sector have been involved in determining the basic requirements. Firstly as members of the CYPPB and then progressed through the Independent Task and Finish Group.

Conflicts of interest of some CYPPB members do prevent information of projects to be procured being discussed at the CYPPB in any great depth. This was clarified and agreed at a number of CYPPB meetings including:-

- The 17th April 2013 meeting when the current financial year commissioning was being discussed.
- The 17th July 2013 meeting where the new Supporting Family Change project was being discussed.
- And the 18th September 2013 meeting when an update was received from the Phase IV Independent Task and Finish Group.

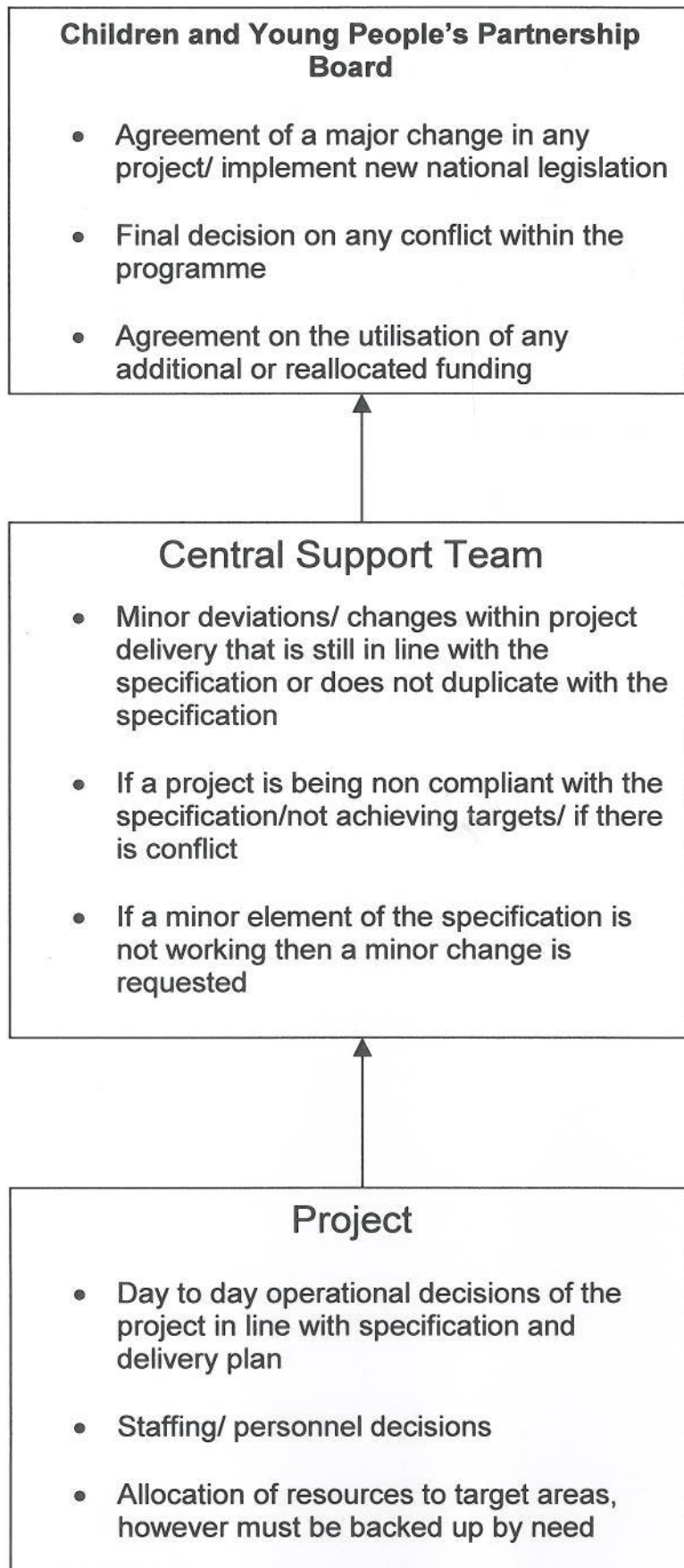
The Independent Task and Finish Group was sanctioned by the CYPPB to agree the projects for Phase IV (the re-commissioning), to ensure there was no conflict of interest and the process was impartial.

Indeed, as in all partnership groups there was Voluntary Sector representation involved. The agreed Voluntary Sector representative for this process was Simon Ellington of the Citizens Advice Bureau. This was agreed by Voluntary Sector CYPPB members as referred to in response to question 1.

**2.4 If the payments are made in respective (guideline interpretation questionable) is this not disengaging with small voluntary sector groups who may be the best ones to provide a quality service at cost effective rates?**

If you are referring to payments in arrears, then every project has had the opportunity to request payment up front. This can be done formally by the organisation presenting a copy of their latest audited accounts. If it is evident that there are cash flow difficulties within the organisation, then the Assistant Director for Planning and Strategy can grant payment in advance. Please see attached the process map which all projects have received to request payment in advance.

# Families First – Decision Making Flow Chart



**2.5 Can we also be informed of Where does the Voluntary Sector fit - on the top table, into the governance of the SIP and its Core Groups?**

The Chair of the CYPFB explained at the meeting on 17th July 2013 that:-

The Chairs of the partnerships were drafting a delivery and performance management framework.

The Local Service Board would need to approve the framework.

Following approval membership would be sought from partner organisations, including the Voluntary Sector.

To date a structure has not been approved and hence the reasons why partners have not been approached to sit on a group.

Author: Sandra Aspinall, Acting Deputy Chief Executive (CCBC)