

Devon Small Scale Provider Forum Meeting

Date...28.02.11

Venue....Step One Services Ltd, Newton Abbot

Those present:-

Wendy Mason...chair

Claire Lewis

Kay Nicholls

Ian Greenaway

Jan Navran

Richard Mills

Mark Coughlin

Apologies:-

Linda Williams

Lisa Dunn

Guests:-

Ian Hobbs

Graham Varley

The chairperson opened the meeting by welcoming the guests and thanking them for coming. She expressed her regret at the poor attendance but said how difficult it is for small providers to find time to attend the plethora of current meetings.

The concerns of small providers with regard to current changes in funding/consortia etc were outlined to the guests.

Ian Hobbs [IH] said that from today [28th Feb] the PQQ is live on the website and questions and answers regarding this will also appear.

This is really the first opportunity for providers to see with clarity what the definitions are.

He stated that the PQQ is a very simple exercise allowing DCC to understand the level of interest in lots and zones.

Before I sent out these minutes several members have emailed me to say that the PQQ is not so simple as IH and GV have led them to believe and that some questions were worrying. Please contact IH if you have problems with this.

When the results are in they will publish and share the information to allow providers to consider where they might fit in.

IH said that providers are obviously nervous although there is more confidence with Lot3 [personal care].

It has emerged very strongly in meetings and feedback that providers feel that Lots 1 and 2 should be delayed to allow time to iron out problems.

DCC are open to the possibility of phasing Lots 1 and 2 more slowly but, if there is a positive result from PQQs, they will proceed.

The proposed timetable, assuming that all goes to plan, is as follows:-
PQQs open until end of March.

Evaluation of response followed by list of providers expressing interest in certain zones and lots.

Launch of Invitation to Tender [ITT] around mid-May.[You have to be in this to be in the framework]

Roll out of framework around October time.

The meeting pointed out and IH agreed that there is a real danger that, as providers feel obliged to return PQQs, DCC will 'read' this as a positive response to proceed. IH said that there would be further opportunities, after PQQs, to express reservations about time scales.

Ian Hobbs was quite clear that if you didn't fill out the PQQ or enter the framework then you could still keep your existing business outside of the framework. Problems could potentially arise at reviews however.

If a small provider does not wish to engage in the framework, feels confident to continue in business with its current service users, is able to attract new business privately and feels that their business model would not fit in, then they need not fill in PQQs. Later on at any time a provider could then become a sub-contractor if the need arose.

However, DCC reserves the right, in certain circumstance, to tender your contracts into the framework. [ie if the interests of a service user were not being met].

There will be a standard hourly rate established for former SP hours but this will be phased in sensitively, respecting the needs of service users.

Graham Varley [GV] said that there are two issues to consider....

- 1] Ability to maintain current business.
- 2] Need for new business.

In answer to questions raised IH said that the new system will cut the current bureaucracy because service user funding will all come from a single stream. Block contracts are counter to personalisation.

On the matter of consortia he said that DCC would be delighted if small providers formed, as an alternative, organisations.

IH advised providers to watch the Provider Engagement Network website for ongoing information.

The issue of Direct Payments was raised because providers have encountered difficulties. There seem to be differences of opinion about who can qualify.

As promised GV has sent me the following in answer to the question of whether former SP hours can be transferred to Direct Payments for current Service Users.

' following the introduction of the Framework Agreement for PC and CBS, our intention is that anyone who is allocated resources following an assessment of need and establishment of eligibility will be able to choose to receive their personal budget through the process of a direct payment.'

It does not really answer the question so I'll approach him again.

The chairperson thanked IH and GV for their input and the meeting closed at 12.50.

Next meeting:-

Monday 11th April 10.30

Step One Services

Newton Abbot TQ12 2QZ

NB. This meeting is instead of the March meeting which is cancelled as we had put in the extra meeting on 28th Feb.