

Championing Social Value

Andy Hay

Job Title: Procurement Planning Manager
Organisation: NHS Lothian and NHS Tayside
Department:
Time in Post: Four Years



Background

Andy moved from a programme management position within the financial sector, initially on a six month contract, to carry out an assurance role in relation to procurement within NHS Lothian and NHS Tayside. In effect he acts as a quality check for buyers within the NHS in Lothian and Tayside, supporting them to ensure they follow legal requirements and best practice throughout the procurement process.

Responsibilities

In supporting the procurement process a key focus for Andy is the overall sustainability of how the NHS procures its services, not only in financial terms, but also in terms of environmental and social benefit. Although the inclusion of community benefit clauses is not automatically standard within the NHS, Andy is keen to encourage the inclusion of these clauses in the procurement process. An ongoing developing theme is the increasing recognition of the importance of preventative spend in maximising value for money for the NHS in the delivery of its services.

Andy also has an ongoing role in a range of NHS and partnership policy initiatives, such as contributing to the development of the Procurement Reform Bill, and to establishing the NHS Scotland Sustainable Procurement Network to develop a database of best practice procurement examples.

Within the broader Ready for Business framework, Andy has regularly attended partnership and social enterprise events, such as Third Sector *Meet the Buyer*.

Personal attributes

In relation to this area of work, perseverance and tenacity have been key attributes in persuading internal NHS procurers about the merits of considering wider social and community benefits as part of sustainability and value for money in the procurement process..

Challenges

While Andy feels that change is happening within the NHS there are a number of personal and organisational challenges to overcome such as:

- The ongoing cost pressures facing the NHS;
- The processes involved in supporting the development of sustainable procurement within the NHS, and the scoring of tenders to take into account outcomes such as social benefit;
- Informing social enterprises at partnership events about the importance of becoming procurement ready in order to realistically engage in the NHS procurement process.

More broadly, although Andy recognises the supportive Scottish Government agenda on the role of the Third Sector in the delivery of services, he feels that a

Scottish Government directive on the inclusion of community benefit clauses within contracts over £50k value, as standard good practice, would help to accelerate their use.

Achievements

In the four years in this post Andy has noticed a significant change in the mind-set of internal procurers within the NHS with regards to both the ability of the voluntary and third sector to deliver NHS services, and in relation to perceptions about the inclusion of community benefit clauses. He feels he is now winning the argument in relation to both the above and has noted a shift away from the general scepticism he initially encountered when first coming into post. In particular he has noted a shift in the thinking about how services are delivered, and in the role of innovation as being critical to achieve value for money within the significant cost pressures facing the NHS.

Advice

Based on his experiences over the past four years Andy would suggest that:

- Although he feels that the inclusion of Community Benefit clauses as standard would have helped him achieve a change of mind-set with internal NHS procurers quicker, winning the argument can be achieved by matching your approach to the respective culture of the organisation.
- In this regard the gradual development of best practice case studies and the imparting of this information across the organisation as a way of changing perceptions has been particularly effective.

For further information, contact:

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