



Bristol Ageing Better

Selection of Delivery Partners Policy & Procedure

Introduction

Bristol Ageing Better (BAB) is a partnership of local organisations working together to tackle loneliness and isolation in later life across Bristol. In July 2014 the partnership was awarded a grant £5.9million from the Big Lottery Fund (BIG) for projects lasting 5 years from April 2015.

Age UK Bristol (AUKB) is the lead organisation of the BAB partnership and has overall responsibility for awarding payments from the grant to organisations to run projects to achieve the 4 overall programme outcomes of BAB. The process of selecting delivery partners will be managed by Age UK Bristol (BAB lead partner) and must comply with Big Lottery Fund's (BLF) Terms and Conditions of Grant and additional procurement guidance.

Aim

Age UK Bristol will seek to implement a collaborative commissioning approach with partners balanced with a process that is open, fair, compliant with BLF requirements and focussed on securing sustainable, high quality and value for money services.

Core Principles of BAB Commissioning

The following principles will be followed when commissioning any BAB delivery partners to deliver services:

1. Older people, particularly those with experience of isolation and loneliness, will play a lead role throughout this process
2. BAB will procure the best services it can
3. Organisations will be expected to work together in and through the partnership to build services that can be sustained after the BLF grant has ended
4. Providers will be required to strengthen local communities and work closely with local organisations and older people
5. The process will be fair, transparent and high quality, adhering to core principles and principles in practice
6. BAB partners will be highly engaged throughout the process
7. Service proposals will need to demonstrate value for money

8. Local voluntary sector organisations will be encouraged to seek to provide as many BAB projects as possible, and will be supported to do so by BAB

By working to these principles, BAB services will be of the highest quality and ensure that the programme meets its outcomes and effects change for older people in Bristol. Examples of these principles in practice include:

- Proportionality – BAB will use different procurement methods according to the scale (total contract value) of the service being procured
- Fairness – all commissioning/procurement decisions will be evidence-based and adhere to published and consistent evaluation criteria
- Transparency – all BAB procurement (processes, approaches, results) will be published and open to all to understand. Age UK Bristol will share its governance and decision-making processes with the wider BAB partnership to ensure its responsibility as lead agency remains accountable to older people in Bristol
- Inclusion – BAB will proactively support the inclusion of small VCS organisations in developing partnerships and proposals, including the provision of a development support fund
- Value for money – BAB projects will be commissioned with an emphasis on quality, reach and impact. While cost is an important aspect, BAB believes that others, such as long-term social value and sustainability, are equally important. Delivery partners will work together to ensure the legacy of the BAB programme continues beyond the five years of Big Lottery funding
- BAB will take into account both outcomes and methodology when commissioning partners to deliver BAB projects

BAB's initiative framework is a combination of developing a range of new projects and bringing together initiatives that already exist – wherever and however they are currently happening – to tackle loneliness and isolation more effectively. This means potentially working and linking with a range of public and statutory services to build on and increase their impact.

BAB will seek to collaborate with and strengthen existing local initiatives rather than replace them.

Competitive Tender Process

Clause 8.2 of BLF's Terms and Conditions of Grant states if BAB purchases capital items or a series of services costing more than £10,000, the order will be put out to competitive tender. We are informed by BIG that public money procurement principles including OJEU limits are not applicable to the BAB programme.

Collaborative Commissioning

BAB's successful bid to BIG developed out of the combined efforts of a wide range of stakeholders, and it has always been an intention of the programme to prioritise collaborative service development (that leads to stronger and more sustainable impact against loneliness and isolation) rather than foster unnecessary competition between public and voluntary sector organisations.

BAB will actively encourage partnership and collaborative bids, and ensure that the timings involved in commissioning allow for collaboration and partnership building. BAB will also set aside some money from the contract (up to 0.5% of the total contract value) as a development support fund to which any potential bidder wishing to facilitate collaborative discussions can apply to. The spirit of this fund is to provide support where it is needed and where organisations (particularly smaller VCS organisations) could not

otherwise participate in a collaborative process. The level of financial support provided by BAB during the commissioning process will reduce the total contract value of the project.

Proportionality and Advertisement of Opportunities

All tender opportunities will be sent out to the BAB Partnership and made available on the BAB website. Further and more wide ranging advertisement of opportunities will be proportional to the value of the contract (see table below).

The table below sets out a framework of commissioning processes proportional to contract values:

Contract Value (total)	Procedure and Timing	Advertisement geographic scope	Decision making
< £10,000	Quotations sought directly from up to three providers Duration: 14-28 days	N/A – expressions of interest will be invited directly	BAB Programme Director and older people
£10, 000 - £100,000	Proposals sought through advertising of requirements Duration: 21-42 days	Local advertisement ¹	AUKB representative, BAB Programme Board member and older people
>£100,000	Formal tenders sought through open invitation Duration: 42-56 days	Local advertisement plus Avon region CVS networks	AUKB representative, BAB Programme Board member where appropriate, independent expertise ² and older people

Where there are different contract values available for the same BAB project in different areas (for example, Community Development), the same commissioning procedures (including length of advertisement and evaluation criteria) will be used regardless of contract value.

Governance arrangements and decision making

Many organisations and individuals have contributed to BAB’s development and their continued support will ensure its success. As BAB begins to commission projects levels of participation, especially regarding governance and decision making in all of the commissioning/procurement processes will need clarification.

The following arrangements will ensure that the BAB commissioning principles are fully implemented in the selection of delivery partners processes:

Each commissioning process will be undertaken by the BAB programme team (Age UK Bristol staff) and overseen by the BAB Programme Board. Decisions will be made by panels that comprise trained members of the BAB Older People’s Steering Group, Age UK Bristol staff and professionals with relevant expertise –

¹ Local websites and email bulletins/networks i.e. Voscur, Age UK Bristol, Bristol City Council, Bristol CCG, BAB Partnership

² For example Community Development or capacity building expertise from an expert external to the BAB partnership (dependent on project being commissioned)

some of these may be from the BAB Programme Board but are more likely to be others with expertise and experience.

In all cases, individuals or organisations with interests other than those about the BAB programme will not be involved in decision-making. For example, a BAB Programme Board member (a representative of a partner organisation) will not be on a specific commissioning panel if that person's organisation is submitting or considering submitting an application. Age UK Bristol staff members (either the Chief Executive or senior member of the BAB Programme Team) will be present on all commissioning panels as Age UK Bristol holds ultimate legal and financial responsibility for the BAB programme. Age UK Bristol will not submit a tender to deliver any commissioned BAB projects.

Managing Conflicts of Interest

BAB has a responsibility to manage the commissioning process in the best interests of the programme and its beneficiaries. This includes monitoring any potential conflicts of interest and being open and transparent about different interests within the partnership.

Declarations of Interest will be gathered as follows:

Spring 2015: Declarations will be sought from all members of the BAB Programme Board, Age UK Bristol Board of Trustees and senior staff.

Ongoing: In each commissioning process, consideration will be given to different interests. Any agency that applies to be a service delivery provider, and each member of the commissioning panel, will be required to complete and return a Declaration/Conflict of Interest form. This will also be a standing agenda item for every commissioning panel meeting, to capture changes and ensure probity.

Selection of Multiple Delivery Partners

BAB will seek to minimise risk across the portfolio of projects by managing (limiting) the number of projects delivered by single providers, and this intention will be described in all commissioning processes from the outset. Such practice will minimise risk of service failure and maximise diverse service provision and reach into communities.

Contract Management

All BAB contracts with delivery partners will be fair and proportionate and BAB will ensure respectful, productive relationships with its delivery partners. Quality of service will be monitored through a proportionate and coherent contract management framework. This will ensure that the programme objectives are delivered and that the 'test and learn' aspect of the programme is considered, captured and used to inform programme developments,

A BAB Decommissioning Policy will be developed which will include the approach that BAB will take in the event of the delivery being different to contract commitments. This process will be fair and based on dialogue, with the intention to solve any problems that may arise. It will also define the process of reducing/ending a contract, should performance not improve over time. In this way, BAB will be able to respond to unforeseen changes and, where necessary, redeploy resources to meet programme objectives.

Managing Disputes, Complaints and Appeals

BAB will adopt at all times an open, fair and transparent approach to the selection of delivery partners. In the event of an individual or organisation expressing dissatisfaction with the commissioning processes of BAB the following procedure will be followed.

During the commissioning process complaints can be made to the Chair of the commissioning panel or by emailing bab@ageukbristol.org.uk

Once a successful delivery partner has been notified following a commissioning process complaints can be made to the Chair of the commissioning panel or by emailing bab@ageukbristol.org.uk no later than five working days after all applicants have been notified of the outcome of the commissioning process.

Stage 1: Any complaint or dispute during the commissioning process or once the commissioning panel has reached a decision and notified all applicants, should be addressed to the Chair of the commissioning panel. Contact details for the Chair of the panel will be available on the public tender documentation.

Once a complaint is received, the Chair of the panel will convene the commissioning panel within 10 working days of the complaint being received to review the complaint and/or decision of the commissioning panel. A response to the complaint will be made by the Chair of the panel.

Stage 2: If an organisation or individual is still dissatisfied and wishes to appeal the decision of the commissioning panel, s/he can speak to or write to the Chair (or in his/her absence, the Deputy Chair) of the BAB Programme Board. The Chair or Deputy Chair will convene a panel of Programme Board members (Chair/Deputy Chair plus 2 other members with a least one member being an Age UK Bristol senior representative) who will meet to consider the appeal within 10 working days. The decision of the panel will be final.

Review

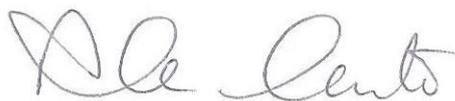
This policy will be reviewed after each commissioning process by the BAB Programme Team and annually by the BAB Partnership Board.

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation date: 1st April 2015

Review date: 1st April 2016

Signed:



REVIEW OR AMENDMENTS TO POLICY

Policy change (detail whether the policy has been reviewed or amended)	Policy lead (name and sign)	Date