

Appendix 4 - Detailed feedback from the provider engagement event

We asked Providers 2 questions:

Do you think you could meet the balance between business and social outcomes, if so how?	What are the challenges?
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These were the responses:

<p>Effective marketing is required for many of the services to increase sales targets. Continue providing employment opportunities and meaningful occupations for people with a LD as well as ensuring the business is viable.</p>	<p>Having a skilled workforce as many of the services are specialist (Woodwork, Pottery). Marketing is required and knowledge of how to do this.</p>
<p>Not sure where revenue comes from. I think the question 'what are the challenges' will need to be answered clearly prior to consideration of putting this out to tender.</p>	<p>Transport/staffing to and from locations? Expertise in making the products - how is this retained. Are skills being taught transferable so that employment outcomes are realistic? Premises costs - moving e.g. end of lease unsuitable location, close of day centre. Need to know rents.</p>

<p>Within the Home Improvement Agencies there may be possibilities to work in partnership within the Ashford Wood N Ware enterprise.</p>	<p>TUPE implications Leases on current provisions - rent overheads etc.</p>
<p>It would be easier to balance these outcomes if these services were part of a bigger tender, either for the whole of day services, or as part of a wider supported employment service. We have run successful cafes but they tend to work because we can swap staff around various parts of a larger service + integrate them. Also a bigger service could offer more choice to people using the service - if they want to explore employment outside of catering or crafts.</p>	<p>There are a lot of unknowns that would need to be clarified before we would consider tendering - TUPE costs, lease costs, potential market to expand these services. On the surface, the services look very unviable as they stand, so the tender would need to incentivise bidders in some way. Perhaps by allowing them to offer a more flexible service (i.e. it is not being set in stone that those services continue). Business Plans would be useful.</p>
<p>Does not seem financially viable.</p>	<p>Increasing income Would there be a limit? In terms of charging DP. Who would be responsible for providing equipment and maintenance of equipment on a regular basis? Would recommendations to service users be made from KCC?</p>
<p>Very difficult to see the business potential with the figures and so little information. How can individual tendering for example only comply with the European Procurement cost £110.</p>	<p>To prove outcomes of merit? TUPE cost will be huge and expensive as will as difficult to take on existing staff with no real knowledge of our working practices.</p>

<p>Yes - by training a two-fold approach to service delivery + outcome measurement. By introducing a LU Framework based on the outcomes, staff measures, learning outcomes + SROi overlaid over business and service objectives. Key to the success will be throughput - i.e. accredited learning leading to sustainable engagement + learning outcomes leading to employment. Would need to ensure step off service to ensure people do not just remain in the system. Look at models elsewhere in Macintyre + wider learning and development opportunities for learners overall. Worked place learning leading to employment through experience Tree - SU's links with community.</p>	<p>TUPE - although levels of TUPE staff manageable particularly with wider business. Sustainability - i.e. pipeline of referrals to take up throughput when are DS are still in house + maybe proffered options. Introductions PB/DP for current client group - new concept may decide to purchase elsewhere. Building risks + capital required amend any maintenance specialist equipment.</p>
<p>As an organisation that specialises in Autism, our expertise is not within the marketing areas, I would also be concerned with income + revenue as currently costs are 'in-house' with KCC and not clear, also assuming that individuals being charged would be met by KCC is not a guarantee that it would happen.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Skilled workforce - Meeting outcomes highlighted - 'finding real jobs' - Saturation of the products - i.e. is this sustainable? - Location of current development e.g.: cafe in KCC building gives a target market - moving this on and relocating would lose this.

<p>These particular services would not fit within our current strategy or work. Though with wider consultation on provision of support, we could be keen to explore how our time limited care in crisis / support could fit into a wider framework. The event, though not so useful in the provisions discussed, actually provided a feel for where the commissioning of services is leading potentially and offered and insight in what to expect for future development within LD environment + wider KCC.</p>	<p>For most fairly long standing Services, TUPE and flexibility of provision to be transferred could be a key concern. Any change is difficult and particularly with this beneficial group care must be taken to address the 'hearts and minds' of users and family/carers in the process. Hopefully, the process will provide innovative and cost effective means of doing and potentially develop these services in the future. I look forward to seeing how these evolve over the coming years ahead.</p>
<p>Yes we think good social outcomes / business outcomes could work. Many of us already have significant local contacts + working relationships with public + mainstream services. We believe we can work in particular to diversity the choices for people + add value via external funding services. We work with individuals, families, and business - corporate social responsibility.</p>	<p>TUPE would make the contacts unworkable. Will this be helpful for the business planning? Will the Big Society Funding from KCC be open to pump Prime business planning + re-modelling?</p>
<p>Yes, however would require input from commercial sector. Would seek Directors from Business Sector. Consortia to run all would be best - marketing, branding could lead to new 'branches' in Kent.</p>	<p>TUPE Need for Viability study of each</p>

<p>We already run work based training which provide income streams to offset cost without losing/ compromising social outcomes.</p>	<p>Consistency of referral. Connection between supported employments to clearer vocational placements.</p>
<p>More details are required on service users and demographics of each area. This will likely determine a need for a more specialist provider to cater for a need and know whether there is sustainability in service user is coming through. More details will be required about whether one provider will manage ALL places as they are geographically so far apart.</p>	<p>LINKS AND COSTS FOR ACCREDITATIONS Set-up costs and sustainability. Current service users being moved across to direct payments - timescales matching with provider taking over. Level of direct payments that SU's are assessed matching costs calculated to min a sustainable business and provide enough support.</p>
<p>Yes. Using Personal Budgets (PB) to buy placement with specific outcomes. Marketing strategy. Would KCC accept SU placements from other borough? More information on SU needs.</p>	<p>KCC ready for using Personal budget. Budget meeting existing cost of services - like for like. Potential for 'more on' - developing local business to support SU to more on from service. SDS Services available to support users to make choices about using their PB or DP. TUPE.</p>
<p>The budget must allow for extra staff to expand.</p>	<p>The budget is not realistic in some of the services as they rely a lot on voluntary time given by staff. National providers will price out small quality bidders.</p>
<p>On the face of it challenge seems too great.</p>	<p>Making services viable.</p>
<p>Please be clearer about the facts.</p>	<p>KCC's Transparency!</p>

<p>Really depends on how the transfer is funded. Is the only income for the new organisation going to be from commercial sales or will some of KCC's current budget be used to fund the undertakings.</p>	<p>TUPE (and clear figures needed on whole time equivalents of staff - as opposed to 'number of staff employed'). Lease + License arrangements. Potential to increase 'sales' and earnings from direct payments.</p>
<p>You need to more clearly articulate the aims and outcomes! There would have to be relative funding for a range of outcomes - work placements, further training.</p>	<p>No one will like this challenge without some help on TUPE - either financial extended funding over 5 yrs or redundancy and re-employment - major cost items. The aim needs clearer focus in it.</p>
	<p>Developing contacts in a new community to enable service development. Clarity needed over nature of contact with KCC - weighing risk of loss - making against possible gains (how would actual incomes be split? Ownership of assets (equipment/leases). Too vague at the moment, precise specification required - number of potential service workers, requirements, demographics. Timescales for re-assessing..... - Time required to explain to the service users that they will now be paying for the service.</p>
<p>Yes - If the income generated is not solely based on sales and the income gained from supporting service users enables you to ensure the services are not driven by sales profits. This will allow for staff/ volunteers to ensure service users are supported to learn / develop.</p>	<p>Ensuring income. A large part of the income will come from people paying to be supported in the service. How can this income continue be sustained medium / long term? Can you determine the outcomes (social) if people accessing it are on personal budgets - is it not up to the individual service users? TUPE is a concern / challenge.</p>

<p>Yes - we would be interested in Hadlow Pottery with our current business environment / model. Currently has good links with Hadlow. Could have a dual benefit in supporting our current service sustainability plus the longer term viability of Hadlow Pottery.</p>	<p>Very difficult to comment until further information is available.</p>
<p>We have a track record of doing this across our existing social enterprises across the South East. Each of the businesses should run with trading account alongside its social budget to ascertain the business viability. Equally to the social outcomes should encompass employment outcomes.</p>	<p>Change is not easy - it needs to be conducted through consultation but also with showcasing TUPE is an issue - getting staff to change their practices is a bigger challenge. Having the right business model is imperative to the successes. Personalisation has enabled this success within our existing social enterprise models.</p>
<p>Possibly but we need more detailed information for us to bid grants especially revenue grants to run the business. We have another company who successfully resuming a CSC contract and KASS and SIS plus contracts during recent tendering. We have the understanding + drive to promote better services including employment for people with learning disabilities. We are in the process of opening a community hub in Aylesford with a built in cafe. We are working in partnership with the faith community.</p>	<p>TUPE - service users' direct payment may not cover or expenses but high expectation from KCC legislation change. Honest + open discussion with KCC. We need realistic help. Big National providers to take on all services + small quality providers will be priced out of the market.</p>

<p>Information on demographics per locality would be useful to identify need / throughput. Information on how long the SU group has been using the services and on outcomes of consultation with SU/Carers will inform feasibility also. Would KCC restrict placements in these businesses to solely KCC service users?? (What about self funders, or neighbouring L.A. areas.</p>	<p>There is a challenge in gaining throughput to mainstream employment, in preparing local businesses and employers to take people who move through the 'supported employment businesses'. This cost will need to be facilitated in to D.P. / Personal budget so people can pay for their service.</p>
<p>Not clear on advantages of this our starting from scratch as independent providers. Much of cost depends on service users levels of need. Will be contracting employment law if not time limited training outcomes.</p>	<p>Throughputs: Need for Kent CC to work with providers on referral and on move on - joint work with supported employment. Need ball park figures for relevant element of Direct Payment. Need TUPE information.</p>
<p>Social outcomes: develop move thorough plans to keep these schemes dynamic. Working in partnership e.g. Kent supported employment to create real employment opportunities. Social outcome performance indicators - critical. Linking in with job centre + linking with local colleagues for training qualifications for service users. Business outcomes: Explore grant funding / loans initially to underpin + support business development. Could consider linking the opportunities - e.g. the 2 catering opportunities in Maidstone.</p>	<p>TUPE would present a challenge given the current income figures. Business challenges - none of the schemes (using the current figures) are anywhere new being viable. The challenge would be building these into financially viable business whilst meeting the social outcomes. With this in mind KCC may want to consider a process over 5 or 3yrs where some grant funding is put in initially to assist in the transition - this would be a redundancy grant year as the business developed</p>

<p>Proper use of personal budgets: sell is all not just the people that use already.</p>	<p>TUPE - staff cost / pensions. Equipment - gifted to us or not. What is the percentage of customers waiting for this service? What is the next step if customer waiting. Rent - how much? What does a day actually cost? Are all the services going to be tendered or all separate?</p>
	<p>Start up costs. TUPE. Equipment costs. To change the methods of the move therapeutic based schemes i.e. Potters to produce items that will sell. Charging SU directly or block contract or outcome based. Need more information. At which point do we need to pay SU a wage.</p>
<p>Not necessarily with the projects on offer - to be viable business. Direct Payments? High/low payment bracket? Staffing at levels for 'low need client' groups only. What about sensory + high level need or dual purpose diagnosis need? What happens to them? ('Red figure and minuses' was misleading to be understood)</p>	<p>Equality for all. Diversity of client groups? Mix of staff/client need too low. How referral process to work. Supported employment to pick up. Throughput + outcomes onto employment?</p>

<p>With appropriate and transparent partnership working it could be achievable, however greater detail is required.</p>	<p>Understanding and securing a clear referral process that enables the vision for throughput and outcomes. Looking at viability without transparent figures e.g. current direct payment threshold, (upper and lower), break down of current costs e.g. overhead. Further forum activity following this initial one to establish more detail. TUPE expectations. How are the needs of complex needs going to be met? E.g. wheelchair users, dual diagnosis - will they still be able to have access?</p>
<p>1. SU would need adequate/sufficient funding towards attending activities - visualising.....would money be paid directly to SU or organisation. Maintenance - improve facilities - who would be responsible for confirmed maintenance of property would give continuous support towards this.</p>	<p>Guarantee - KCC will increase DP to attend? Will KCC fund towards building maintenance and accessibility? Would mostly benefit how to moderate needs.</p>
<p>We could offer a wider range of work experience as well as the café including office work, reception etc also accreditation to vol orgs. We would like to extend the café to welcome members of the public and open longer hours.</p>	<p>Funding service users paid employment. The trainees in the café are still mostly the same as those who started the service. For us - financial viability - little expertise in supporting people with LD.</p>

<p>Clear aims and objectives/planning and evaluation. Use of outcome and person centred support principles. By applying the concept of social enterprise both the local community and those involved can benefit this win win scenario. Key to the latter is creatively indentifying a local need / gap in the market place and matching that to the skin set available within those seeking paid work and meaningful occupation. (It would be a transition/ process towards people being either employed or users of a service).</p>	<p>Joint working and celebrating who is good at what! Sustainability and positive mind set need innovation right people! Convincing the market place that individual with LD can be excellent contributors and employees. Working with families effectively. Ensuring we match individual to tasks in a person centred way. Competency of support and overcoming old fashioned attitudes. Accessing funding streams. Getting round TUPE? N.B. Interested in the cafe in Maidstone and wood n ware in Ashford if the figures stack up.</p>
<p>The current projects identified are not valid as they are. They would benefit from being absorbed into existing projects whose business plan appreciates and minimum level financial balanced budget. Any catering establishment needs excellent growth opportunities: location, outcomes (training) diversity of business opportunity and identified role responsible partners.</p>	<p>Identify viability (income - expenditure) - location, business opportunities. Opportunities (links to local businesses, training provision, partnership roles / responsibilities) Multi-functional objectives/ outcomes. Use each others strengths / influence. Very happy for you to look at our projects and visit us at the trust to look at our model of project development.</p>
<p>Yes - A well planned business model, balanced between dependence on fees + generalised income. Identifying markets for savings etc. Creative ways to address paid employment.</p>	<p>How dependent are these services or key personnel in their delivery? TUPE. Fees vs. paid employment. Upkeep of equipment/cost. Proving/evidencing outcomes? What is the long term vision?</p>

<p>Personally I know this proposal will not currently fit with our business model, however I am sure someone will have an ideal 'business fit'. Without a full proposal to offer, I am of the opinion that this morning was a two way useful 'Think Tank'.</p>	<p>TUPE. Funding unknowns. If funding is to continue at what level? Other than social outcomes is this a high bidder race. Organisational + assets commitments. Geographic restrictions + building adoptions for change of locations. Business longevity.</p>
<p>The balance can be met. Positive outcomes: sustainable employment that is skills based opportunity to progress and grow within an organisation greater access to the community by expanding service provided. Develop individual responsibility through reward schemes. The model only works with a business that is scalable into other services.</p>	<p>The fixed inherited cost base would need to be fully understood, e.g. staff costs, premises costs etc. Regulatory requirements need to be fully understood. E.g. adherence to care plans, daily reports etc. The ability of the service users is a major issue to be understood.</p>
<p>Yes - Provide sustainable employment which is skills based. Provide opportunities to learn and acquire life skills. Integrating Su's into the community. Giving people with LD real life responsibilities.</p>	<p>Meeting costs such as rent and wages (TUPE). Increasing the scale of the project would there be a framework that allows this. Regulatory requirements need to be fully understood.</p>