

# Commissioning case study

## Best practice

### Specialist domestic abuse service working in partnership with commissioners in Essex

Effective service provision starts with thorough and robust assessment of need. The council adopted a collaborative approach to commissioning by working closely with local specialist services and service providers to map existing provision. Cabinet members made sure that every partner working on domestic abuse was in the room. Following the statutory duty, their first priority was to continue safe accommodation for survivors currently in refuge - to ensure any gaps in funding were covered. The council then looked at all the domestic abuse providers in the area, which areas weren't funded e.g. children and young people, and used the available funding to plug the gaps.

As a result, the specialist domestic abuse service and commissioners work in partnership to design services, that meet the diversity of survivors support needs.

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"We find **solutions together**, it's not them and us, it's **co-production collaboration** - whether service users or providers"

- Commissioner in local council

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The innovation embedded in the initiative led to high quality service provision for survivors. Examples of key learnings include:



#### Commissioning

Commissioning doesn't always need to mean procurement - commissioning is about getting the best outcomes.



#### Establishing strategic partnerships

The council worked with partners based on shared beliefs and values to ensure their core corporate objectives were aligned.



#### Cross-boundary collaboration

Collaborating with neighbouring authorities to bring contract timelines together helped to streamline local service provision.



#### Qualitative research methods

Through data collection practices like workshops with service providers, the council were able to find solutions to barriers in collaboration with the experts.



#### Meaningful engagement

The council listened to specialist support providers about local need and priorities, which placed a greater emphasis on survivor outcomes and helped to make partnership working more efficient.



#### Informative procurement practices

By ensuring all providers' questions were answered as quickly as possible up until the procurement went live, providers were equipped to make their bids.