

VCS Engage North West

VCS Engagement Good Practice Papers

November 2008



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1.0 Introduction

The papers published within this publication were gathered by VCS Engage North West as part of the Self Evaluation Tool workshops held in October 2008.

The self-evaluation tool is an initiative within the VCS Engage Programme. The overall aim of the programme is to strengthen the engagement of the voluntary and community sector (VCS) in the Every Child Matters (ECM) agenda and the programme is carrying out a range of initiatives to meet this aim (more details at www.vcsengage.org.uk). The programme is funded by DCSF. The tool has been developed and piloted with invaluable assistance from Christine Davies, Julie Bowen, Susanne Baccini, Kevin Garrod, Sharon Long and Navinder Kaur.

The aim of the tool is to provide a means by which Local Authorities can gauge their level of engagement with their VCS and review current practice.

The workshops undertaken in October 2008 included Local Authority and VCS representatives from:

- Blackburn
- Bury
- Cheshire
- Knowsley
- Lancashire
- Oldham
- Tameside
- Trafford
- Warrington

2.0 Terms of Reference

Salford Children and Young People's Voluntary and Community Sector Forum

Terms of Reference

Aim

To provide broad ranging representation of the interests and views of voluntary and community organisations working with children and young people in Salford. To represent these views to Salford Children and Young People's Partnership and other strategic or commissioning bodies as agreed by the Forum.

Objectives

- To share relevant information with Forum members and their wider networks about key developments affecting those working with children and young people in Salford
- To provide a central Forum through which consultation with a range of voluntary and community organisations and their service users may be undertaken
- To encourage discussion of best practice in working with children, young people and their families, building the capacity of the voluntary and community sector to undertake such work
- To advocate for and lobby on behalf of the voluntary and community sector, providing a means to influence key decision makers
- To elect representatives to the Salford Children and Young People's Partnership Board ensuring that the expertise and interests of the voluntary sector are included in key developments
- To provide a means through which partnership working between statutory and voluntary organisations, and within the voluntary sector, might be developed, enabling a more strategic approach to developmental commissioning¹

Principles

The Forum will work to the shared principles of public and third sector agencies as identified in the Compact on relations between Salford City Council, Salford PCT and the 'Third Sector'². These include:

- Recognition of the different and complementary roles of public agencies and the third sector
- The importance of voluntary action and community involvement to an inclusive and democratic society
- The importance of an independent and diverse third sector
- Acknowledgement of the differing responsibilities and accountabilities of the public and third sectors
- The commitment to resolve any disagreements in a constructive way, in a spirit of mutual understanding and respect

In addition the Compact Codes of Practice, for example on funding and procurement, community involvement and representation, will provide more detailed and specific guidance. The Forum will advocate for and support the development of full-cost recovery.

The Forum seeks to work in an inclusive manner, paying due regard to issues of diversity and equality. The Forum reserves the right to request the withdrawal of the membership of any organisation that refuses to work within this ethos or brings the Forum into disrepute.

Membership

Membership of the Forum is open to:

- Voluntary, community and not for profit organisations that provide services to Salford's children, young people and their families
- Voluntary sector infrastructure organisations that provide information and services to organisations working with children, young people and their families

The provision of services includes commissioned, grant aided and non-funded work and activity with children/young people/families.

The Forum recognises the importance of including the viewpoints of those groups lacking the resources to fully engage with consultation or commissioning processes. The Forum seeks to include minority ethnic groups and volunteer lead community organisations working with children, young people and families.

Meetings

The Forum will meet at least 4 times a year. In the first year, to accommodate the pace of change, the Forum will meet 6 times. In addition representatives will attend and report back from other meetings with the Salford Children and Young People's Partnership or specific VCS interest groups, as agreed by the Forum.

Forum meetings will be open to observers/guests only with the explicit agreement of members.

Minutes will be distributed within 2 weeks of the meeting of the Forum.

Representation

As identified above the Forum membership will annually elect representatives from the membership to the Salford Children and Young People's Partnership Board. To support people in the role of representation and ensure accountability to and sustainability of the Forum, a representation protocol is agreed by the Forum. Elected representatives will be expected to abide by this protocol (attached). Any Forum member will be eligible to stand for election. Candidates will be asked to provide a brief outline of their relevant experience and reasons for standing. This will be circulated with ballot papers.

Voting

One vote per member organisation. In the case of voluntary sector infrastructure organisations³ no vote will be allowed as their member organisations will be entitled to exercise their own vote. Membership bodies such as the Guides or Scouts and National organisations such as Barnardo's will have to determine internal voting responsibility for one vote on behalf of their organisation within Salford.

Resourcing of the Forum

The Forum will appoint a secretariat to provide the following support:

- To keep and update an accurate list of membership organisations
- To circulate minutes, agendas and supporting papers for Forum meetings to members
- To arrange and book venues, and where agreed invite speakers, for Forum meetings
- To circulate information regarding Salford Children and Young People's Partnership initiatives to members
- To send out nomination and ballot papers to members for the election of representatives and if there are issues requiring the mandating of representatives
- To ensure links between relevant regional and national bodies (National Council of Voluntary and Child Care Organisations and National Council of Voluntary Youth Services) and Forum members by the communication of relevant information
- To support elected representatives in their communications with Forum members
- To achieve as much as possible of the above by electronic means

The Salford Children and Young People's Partnership will be asked to fund the costs of the secretariat in administering the Forum and volunteer expenses required by Forum members and elected representatives.

¹ Developmental commissioning is "the process of assessing need, identifying resources available, planning how to use the resources, arranging service delivery, and reviewing the service and reassessing need...Commissioning creates the levers for service change" From Vision to Reality: Transforming Outcomes for Children and Families, 2004 Inter Agency group

² The 'Third Sector' is a term used in the compact to include social enterprises, mutuals and co-operatives alongside voluntary and community organisations

³ Voluntary sector infrastructure organisations support and aid the development of voluntary and community sector organisations and enable communication and representation of the interests of the sector as a whole e.g. Salford CVS

Warrington Children and Young People's Voluntary and Community Sector Forum (VCS Forum)

Terms of Reference

Aim

To provide broad ranging representation of the interests and views of voluntary and community organisations working with children and young people in Warrington. To represent these views to the Children and Young People's Partnership (CYPSP) and other strategic or commissioning bodies as agreed by the Forum.

Objectives

- To share relevant information with Forum members and their wider networks about key developments affecting those working with children and young people in Warrington
- To provide a central Forum through which consultation with a range of voluntary and community organisations and their service users may be undertaken
- To encourage discussion of best practice in working with children, young people and their families, building the capacity of the voluntary and community sector to undertake such work
- To advocate for and lobby on behalf of the voluntary and community sector, providing a means to influence key decision makers
- To elect representatives to the Children and Young People's Partnership (CYPSP) ensuring that the expertise and interests of the voluntary sector are included in key developments
- To elect representatives to other strategic or commissioning bodies as agreed by the Forum.
- To provide a means through which partnership working between statutory and voluntary organisations, and within the voluntary sector, might be developed, enabling a more strategic and transparent approach to developmental commissioning.

Principles

The VCS Forum will work to the shared principles of public and third sector agencies as identified in the Local Compact for Warrington (1). These include:

- Recognition of the different and complementary roles of public agencies and the third sector
- The importance of voluntary action and community involvement in an independent and diverse third sector
- Acknowledgement of the differing responsibilities and accountabilities of the public and third sectors.
- The commitment to resolve any disagreements in a constructive way, in a spirit of mutual understanding and respect

In addition the Compact Codes of Practice, for example on funding and procurement, community involvement and representation, will provide more detailed and specific guidance. The Forum will advocate for and support the development of full-cost recovery.

The Forum seeks to work in an inclusive manner, paying due regard to issues of diversity and equality. The Forum reserves the right to request the withdrawal of the membership of any organisation that refuses to work within this ethos or brings the Forum into disrepute.

Membership

Membership of the Forum is open to:

- Voluntary, community and not for profit organisations that provide services to Warrington's children, young people and their families
- Voluntary sector infrastructure organisations that provide information and services to organisations working with children, young people and their families.

The provision of services includes commissioned, grant aided and non-funded work and activity with children, young people and their families.

The Forum recognises the importance of including the viewpoints of those groups lacking the resources to fully engage with consultation or commissioning processes. The Forum seeks to encourage the involvement of minority ethnic and diverse groups and volunteer lead community organisations working with children, young people and families.

Meetings

The Forum will meet at least 3 times a year or as necessary to accommodate the pace of change. Representatives will attend and report back from other meetings with the CYPSP or specific VCS interest groups as agreed by the Forum (See Representation Protocol)

Minutes will be distributed within two weeks of the meeting of the Forum.

Representation

The Forum membership will annually elect representatives from the membership to the Children and Young People's Partnership Board and other strategic and commissioning bodies as agreed by the Forum. To support people in the role of representation and ensure accountability to and sustainability of the Forum, a representation protocol is agreed by the Forum. Elected representatives will be expected to abide by this protocol. Any Forum member will be eligible to stand for election. Candidates will be asked to provide a brief outline of their relevant experience and reasons for standing. This will be circulated with ballot papers.

Voting

There is one vote per member organisation. In the case of voluntary sector infrastructure organisations no vote will be allowed as their member organisations will be entitled to exercise their own vote. Membership bodies such as the Guides or Scouts and National organisations such as Barnardo's will have to determine internal voting responsibility for one vote on behalf of their organisation within Warrington.

Resourcing the Forum

Currently a secretariat function provides the following support:

- To keep and update an accurate list of membership organisations
- To circulate minutes, agendas and supporting papers for Forum meetings to members
- To arrange and book venues, and where agreed invite speakers, for Forum meetings
- To circulate information regarding Warrington Children and Young People's Partnership initiatives to members
- To send out nomination and ballot papers to members for the election of representatives
- To ensure links between relevant regional and national bodies (National Council of Voluntary and Child Care Organisations and National Council of Voluntary youth Services) and Forum members by the communication of relevant information
- To support elected representatives in their communications with Forum members
- To achieve as much as possible of the above by electronic means.

The Children & Young People's Strategic Partnership currently supports the Forum by providing the secretariat function as part of the Voluntary Sector liaison role undertaken by the CYPSP co-ordinator. In the future, the Forum will consider its own funding arrangements.

2.1 Governance Frameworks

CHESHIRE CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILIES VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY
AND FAITH SECTOR HUB

GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

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1. INTRODUCTION

This framework provides the information necessary to assist in understanding how the Cheshire Children, Young People and Families VCFS (CYP VCFS) operates. It outlines the context within which the HUB has been developed and the desired outcomes for the HUB as described in the HUB Blueprint for its development.

To guide the relationship of the HUB with other partners a fundamental section of the framework are some partnership working principles along with the rights and responsibilities of HUB members. It is expected that the contents of these two sections will guide the work of the HUB and its members in all of the work undertaken in the name of the HUB.

The remainder of the document outlines the internal functioning of the HUB.

2. THE CONTEXT

Cheshire Children's Fund, the CYP VCFS and the Cheshire Children and Young Peoples Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) have agreed a blueprint for how the CYP VCFS could work within a partnership framework, with a particular focus on the CYPSP, to promote the 'Change for Children' and Every Child Matters agenda and to be able to respond to the governments expectation that:

“voluntary and community organisations should be involved at every level of children's trust arrangements.”

The CYPSP has recognised that integral to its ability to deliver effective Children's Services requires joint working with a range of partners and in recognition of this the CYPSP has recognised it needs to

- listen and learn from the voice of the VCFS
- build the capacity of staff to work with the VCFS
- take into account the impact of policies on the VCFS and the role that the VCFS can play in supporting better outcomes
- monitor and respond to Compact requirements

The VCFS should be included in the CYPSP because:

- it has a role as advocate and campaigner for individuals and groups that need a stronger voice in the community and can thereby hold the public services to account
- they do the things that the state finds less easy to do, focussing on the local, one-to-one help
- it acts as a catalyst for cohesion between communities and is a force for social justice and tackling inequalities.
- it is value-driven and principally re-invests surpluses and funds to further social, environmental or cultural objectives
- it incorporates a large number of organisations that provide high quality, value for money and innovative services

- it brings a user perspective, including those who are “hard-to-reach”, disadvantaged, excluded or vulnerable
- it has knowledge , experience and expertise to help improve the effectiveness of policies and programmes
- it has a role of supporting and facilitating volunteering

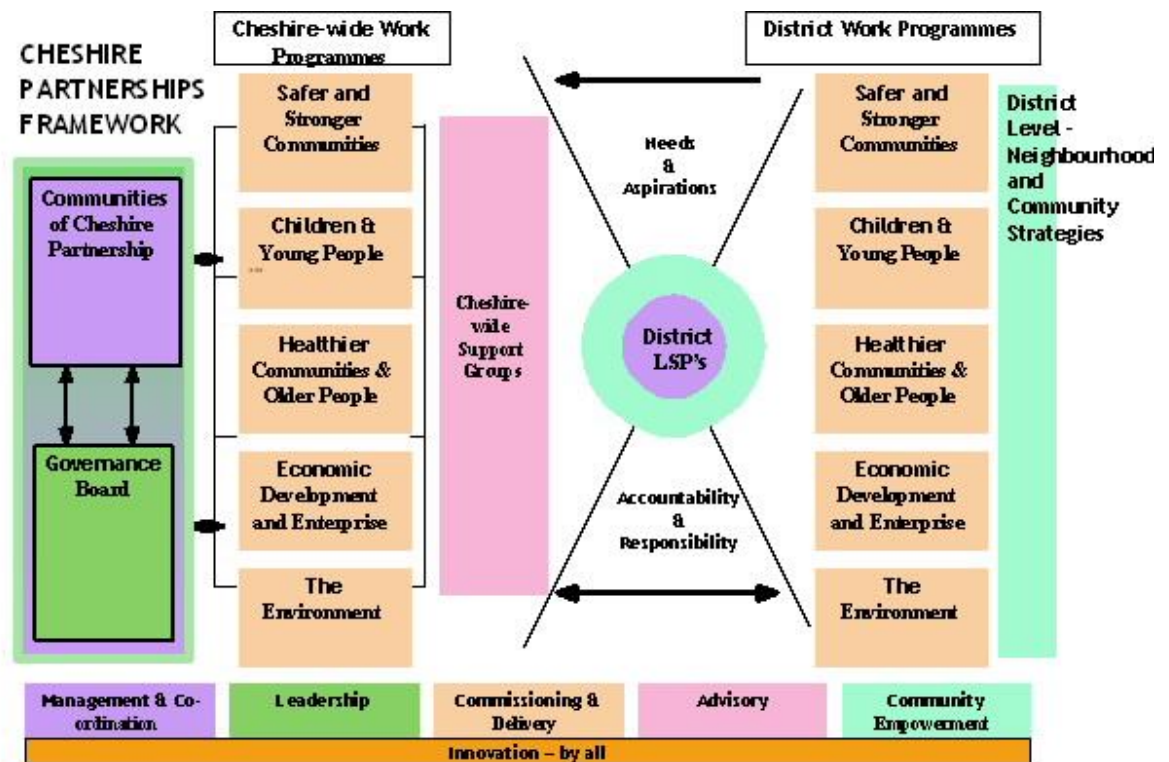
From the VCFS perspective there has also been recognition that their involvement with the HUB either as HUB members or as part of the spokes emanating from the HUB will bring a range of benefits including opportunities to:

- be involved in setting strategic objectives for the children and young people of Cheshire
- have the work recognised as important in the lives of many young people
- enable partnership working with the public sector to add value and help to achieve common objectives
- be funded more sustainably
- deliver a wider range of services, as identified by the CYPSP
- work in collaboration with others in the VCFS will enable a broader range of services to be delivered to a wider group of people

The information contained in this governance framework goes some way in exploring and explaining how the CYP VCFS can play a role in interagency governance and the development of an integrated strategy for meeting the needs of children and young people in Cheshire.

Finally from a contextual perspective it is important to recognise and to locate the HUB within the broader partnership framework in Cheshire.

In the diagram below, the HUB can be seen to be located in the CYP elements indicated by a * and is therefore central to decision making.



3. THE BLUEPRINT

To be able to respond to the government's expectation at a local level requires recognition of the diversity of the CYP VCFS in Cheshire both from a geographic and themed based perspective, along with an assurance that any blueprint or development aspirations are capable of reflecting that diversity.

The development of the final blueprint has taken cognizance of the need to be capable of delivering on a number of fronts and therefore the blueprint, and integral to that the governing framework has been developed to respond to the following criteria:

1. We need to be able to develop the engagement of the sector as well as its representation at a strategic level
2. The VCFS needs to be represented and engaged in a variety of partnership settings
3. The VCFS needs to be able to function in a strategic way, influencing policy and practice at both a county and district/borough level

4. Any individual or single organisation should not be overloaded and the role of VCFS representative should be shared
5. The diverse nature of the sector needs to be represented
6. Communications between the sectors and across the VCFS needs to be appropriate and timely
7. The existing infrastructure needs to be utilised and developed where appropriate
8. That representatives are clearly seen to be representing the sector and not their own organisation
9. VCFS organisations are able to define and select their own levels of involvement
10. The VCFS is provided with autonomy and the space to self organise.

4. PARTNERSHIP WORKING PRINCIPLES

The HUB seeks to work in partnership with the CYPSP and other partnership bodies and recognises that an agreed set of partnership working principles will enable clarity on the expectations of that joint working to be understood and therefore met.

The HUB therefore offers the following 10 key principles:

1. That the partnership promotes equal status for all of its partners (regardless of the amounts of funding each partner brings)
2. That the partnership acknowledges and values different approaches and ways of working
3. That the partnership respects and supports the different starting points of its partners
4. That the partnership implements a communications framework that enables all partners to operate in an informed and accountable manner
5. That the partnership develops information sharing arrangements that will enable strategic decision making and joint working arrangements to be maximised
6. That the partnership develops an environment where challenge of strategy and practice (of the partnership and of partners) is welcomed, where the outcome leads to better services for children, young people and families
7. That the partnership welcomes and supports creative and innovative approaches to problem solving

8. That all partners are integral to the development of strategies and plans to meet the needs of children, young people and their families
9. That all partners are integral to the development and implementation of shared mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation and reporting on performance

FINALLY

10. That the role of all partners in improving the opportunities for children, young people and their families be celebrated (as appropriate)

5. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF HUB MEMBERS

The following rights and responsibilities are seen as bring integral to the successful operation of the HUB and will require HUB members to sign a protocol that explains their role within the HUB and the constituents they support along with what they need to enable them to deliver their role effectively.

The RIGHTS of the HUB & its members	The RESPONSIBILITIES of the HUB & its members
To receive appropriate levels of coordination, facilitation & administration support to enable the HUB to deliver its work effectively	To promote the work of the HUB, its members and the broader VCFS to other partners to enable them to understand the contribution of the VCFS
For a clearly defined role description similar to that of other partners	To ensure as broad a base as possible within the VCFS is linked into the work of the HUB
For it to be acknowledged that they are speaking on behalf of the HUB (a wider constituency than just their own organisation)	To enable VCFS organisations to be involved with the HUB in ways that suits them
To speak out and challenge without fear of the funding position for their own organisation	To contribute as an active partner to the CYPP and other strategic planning vehicles
To be made aware of the agenda of the CYPSP as far in advance as possible	To actively participate at meetings in all agenda items
To be given a period of time – consistent with Compact guidelines – to undertake consultation	To utilise a variety of methods and mechanisms for engagement and to record engagement activity undertaken
To be involved at the start of the process for agreeing shared priorities	To deliver on time against agreed consultation process with the CYPSP

6. THE HUB MEMBERSHIP

a. The make up of the HUB?

The membership of the HUB will reflect the diverse nature of children, young people and families as well as their needs and the VCFS services that support them. It is important that the membership of the HUB remains fluid and flexible so as to enable the ongoing and changing needs of children and young people to be identified and responded to and being capable of growing and developing as organisations, forums and interests develop.

NAME ¹	ORGANISATION	REPRESENTING...

b. The criteria for becoming a HUB member

To become a member of the HUB the following criteria will need to be met:

ORGANISATIONAL	PERSONAL
Ability to operate at a strategic level	Ability to operate at a strategic level
Has a profile in their own field of work	Ability to read and synthesise information
Ability to free up a resource for at least one day a month on HUB business	Ability to network
Have some level of authority to be able to talk about the needs and challenges for children and young people in their sphere	Ability and the enthusiasm to work with others to bring about change
Have linkages to other groups working in the same field with children and young people	Ability to develop two way communication channels
Has the ability to operate at a county wide level	A good grasp of the needs and challenges for children and young people you work with
Is capable of communicating information about the HUB, the CYPSP and associated activity to and from those parts of the sector you come from	Respect for issues of confidentiality in conducting HUB business

c. The selection process for becoming a member of the HUB

To enable the diversity of the HUB to be achieved the process for selection to the HUB will be as follows

1. By invitation from the HUB using OR by approaching the HUB using
2. The agreed organisational and personal criteria to show capability
3. To deliver the roles assigned to HUB member by
4. Attending a HUB meeting and observing proceeding and then
5. Undertaking discussions with the chair of the HUB and possible roles then
6. Undertaking consultation with your own organisation and part of the sector leading to
7. An agreement to become a member of the HUB followed by
8. An induction process followed by finally
9. Signing up as a HUB member and outlining how you will contribute to the HUB and to developing your constituency and organisation

7. HUB OPERATION

The business of the HUB will take place in the following ways:

1. Meetings will be held in the same cycle as the CYPSP with HUB meetings taking place just before and part of the agenda reflects that of the CYPSP
2. Decision making will always aim to be consensus based
3. Meetings will last a maximum of two hours
4. The secretariat function of the HUB will be provided by **to be agreed**
5. Correspondence to the HUB will be addressed to **be agreed**
6. The venues of HUB activity will reflect the geographic diversity of the HUB
7. HUB members are able to send their views on agenda items via other members or in a written format if they are unable to attend meetings
8. HUB members are able to send substitutes to meetings when absolutely necessary but it is essential that the subs meet the person specification

9. The HUB to invite CYPSP members to their meetings as necessary
10. Individual and personal disputes should not be allowed to affect conduct within the meeting, but should be resolved elsewhere

AND

²Declarations of Interest - Members of the HUB shall declare any financial, personal, business or organisational interest in writing and verbally to the Chair of the HUB and any such declarations shall be noted in the minutes of relevant meetings.

Confidentiality – HUB and Partnership meetings may occasionally receive information which is not in the public domain, often relating to individuals or commercially sensitive matters. It is the responsibility of each individual to ensure that this information remains confidential to the meeting, unless prior authorisation has been given by the Chair for this to be discussed elsewhere. Individuals must never use confidential information for their personal advantage or the advantage or disadvantage of anyone known to them, or to disadvantage or discredit the HUB.

8. HUB REPRESENTATION

a. Overview

The HUB will select one person (and an agreed deputy) to sit on the CYPSP on behalf of the HUB. This will be done through individual HUB members indicating they are happy to stand and then the HUB deciding (through a vote if more than one person stands). The candidates should prepare statements outlining how they meet the requirements of a representative (as documented and agreed by the HUB) and a secret ballot at a HUB meeting will take place.

Once the representative is selected the CYPSP is then informed of the choice. However, a key principle of HUB effectiveness is that whilst it has been agreed that there will be one representative the HUB reserves the right to send additional HUB members to the CYPSP and associated partnerships and forums where an area of specialism is required. For example if the CYPSP is considering issues around CYP and DV then as well as the agreed representative the HUB can send the HUB member with knowledge and experience of DV issues.

b. Person specification & role definition

Children and Young People VCFS Representative to the CYPSP

Person Specification

Any person acting as the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) representative will ideally be:

1. From an organisation operating within the Children, Young People and Families VCF sector
2. Able to demonstrate that they have a mandate from the Children, Young People and Families VCFS (through the HUB) for taking up this role. This may be through direct election, open forum selection or membership nomination
3. Committed to acting as the representative of the VCFS collectively rather than their own particular group
4. Able to demonstrate that they have sufficient linkages within their own field of interest/geography and are able to talk about the needs and experiences of children, young people and families.
5. Interested and involved in working with children, young people and families
6. Aware of, have an understanding and the ability to further own knowledge and learning around the key processes currently being developed within Children and Young Peoples Strategic Partnerships, including:
 - Common Assessment Framework
 - Workforce Development
 - ICT and Information Sharing
 - Commissioning
 - Quality Standards
7. Able to operate strategically within the Every Child Matters and Youth Matters agenda.

Role Definition

The role of the VCFS Representative will include:

Note: it is expected that administrative and coordination support will be available to assist in the delivery of the following roles:

1. Collecting together issues of importance from other VCFS groups and raising these at the CYPSP
2. Disseminating the decisions made by the CYPSP through the HUB
3. Acting as an advocate for the VCFS as a whole rather than their own organisation
4. Acting as a critical friend for the statutory services through the CYPSP

5. Working with the HUB to identify the needs of Children, Young People and their families and assessing priorities
6. Promoting joint working with statutory organisations to the VCFS leading to greater partnership working
7. Liaising with other agencies and organisations to ensure that resources are best utilised, reducing duplication and competition.

d. Length of office

It is expected that a fixed term of office for the representative is agreed which is likely to be in line with the CYPSP which is the lifetime of the CYPP plan (currently 3 years)

9. HUB ACCOUNTABILITY

a. Defining and mapping HUB constituencies

One of the key tasks for HUB members is to define who they are speaking on behalf of and where they will get their knowledge and evidence base from. It is important therefore that each element of the HUB develops a map of who they need to relate to

b. Levels of involvement of HUB constituencies

The VCFS groups operating will not want to all be involved with the HUB and the broader agenda around children and young people in the same way if indeed at all. Therefore once the definition of HUB members constituencies has taken place it will be important that VCFS groups are informed of the HUB, told the details and ways of contacting the HUB member with the 'expertise' in the field and invited to decide how they want to be involved in contributing to the evidence base that the member will need to be able to speak with a level of certainty on issues relating to their sphere or field.

c. Consultation principles

The consultation that the HUB undertakes need to be based on the following principles

- That the HUB is capable of providing a voice for the voluntary and volunteer sectors
- That the individuals on the HUB use their constituents to gather views and opinions so as to be able to feed into the HUB and thereby ensure a certain level of accountability
- The HUB members will meet with their constituents (with appropriate support) on an annual basis to agree priorities for the coming year
- All HUB members will require a clear mandate from a broad constituency of VCFS organisations

¹ This is essentially the matrix that will be capable of insertion after the next meeting

² Taken from the Cheshire Partnerships governing documentation



VCFS Children and Young People's Services Reference Group

Governance Framework

October 2008

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1. WHAT IS THE VCFS CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES REFERENCE GROUP

As we move towards Children's Trusts Arrangements there is recognition that the sector must continue to be fully engaged. A reference group for the sector has now been established. In order for the VCFS to move forward, more structured methods of engagement and representation at a local and strategic level will be required to ensure the sector remains influential in the continuing dialogue.

The Children and Young People's Services reference group* is a county-wide body with a wide-ranging remit including:

- To involve the children's voluntary, community and faith sector in the development of a Children's Trust approach at a strategic level;
- To facilitate information sharing;
- To link five outcomes and not lose sight of children and families;
- To support the participation of children, young people and families in the process;
- Equipping the voluntary, community and faith sector to deliver services that children, young people and families want;
- To demonstrate and articulate the diversity of the sector;
- Ensure prevention is embedded in all planning, commissioning and delivery;
- Review on an annual basis.

Members are made up of VCFS organisations providing services to Children and Young People in Lancashire. Any organisation wanting more information should contact jeff.marsh@ed.lancscc.gov.uk.

*0.19 years (up to 25 for people with a registered disability)

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

- To involve the children's voluntary and community faith sector in the development of a Children's Trust approach at a strategic level;
- To facilitate information sharing knowledge and best practice;
- To link the five outcomes and not lose sight of children, young people*, families and communities;
- To support the participation of children, young people, families and communities in the process;
- Supporting the voluntary and community faith sector to deliver high quality needs led services to children, young people and families;
- To demonstrate and articulate the diversity of the sector;
- To support the trust to ensure safeguarding is embedded in all planning, commissioning and delivery of services;
- To develop a partnership with Blackburn with Darwin and Blackpool Unitary Authorities;
- The reference group will meet six times a year;
- To be reviewed on an annual basis.

*0-19 years (up to 25 for people with a registered disability)

Agreed – 23 April 2008

Review – Spring 2009

3. REFERENCE GROUP WORKING PRINCIPLES

1. To will promote the equal status of all members regardless of the size of the organisation or the amount of funding each member brings.
2. To respect and support the different starting points of its members.
3. To develop a communications plan to ensure organisations in the sector are informed of developments in an appropriate and timely manner.
4. To ensure that opportunities for inclusive strategic decision making and joint working arrangements are maximised.
5. To encourage an environment where challenge is welcomed to enable better outcomes for children and young people.
6. To acknowledge that all members are integral to the development of strategies and plans to meet the needs of children and young people.
7. To recognise that all members are integral to the development and implementation of mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating working with children and young people.
8. To encourage members to seek the involvement of children and young people in their services and develop a framework for their participation in the group.
9. To maintain open membership so as to enable the widest possible involvement.
10. To develop governance arrangements that ensure its representatives on strategic bodies represent the wider sector and not sectional interests.
11. To develop a model of working which engages with the widest possibly constituency of VCFS organisations. The group recognises that not all organisations have the capacity to take part in all the activities of the group. The reference group therefore recognises four levels of engagement:
 - Information sharing
 - Consultation
 - Participation
 - Representation

4. REFERENCE GROUP OPERATION

The business of the reference group will be conducted in the following ways:

- Regular meetings of the group will be held and properly minuted, all members will be notified in advance of the meeting and relevant papers circulated;
- The meetings will be held in a cycle to enable proper consultation before LCYPSP meetings;
- The secretariat for the group will be provided by LCC until another suitable arrangement is agreed;
- The venues of meetings will be chosen to enable participation from all parts of the county;
- The group will invite guests as appropriate;
- A steering group will be established to enable work to progress between meetings. Major decisions will be referred to the whole group for ratification;
- Representatives to outside bodies will be elected by a simple majority of members at a meeting of the group on an annual basis;
- Representatives will be expected to abide by the code for representatives. If not they can be de-selected by a simple majority at a members' meeting.
- The principles of representation are:
 - Act as an advocate for the VCFS rather than their own organisation;
 - Act as a critical friend for statutory services;
 - Promote joint working between statutory organisations and the VCFS;
 - Liaise with other agencies and organisations to ensure that resources are best utilised to reduce duplication and competition;
 - To attend meetings regularly and to inform deputies if unable to attend;
 - To provide timely reports on meetings
- The chair of the group will be elected annually by a simple majority at a group meeting.
- The chair of the group will be expected to uphold the principles of the group. If not they can be de-selected by a simple majority of the members attending a meeting.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the group will declare any financial, personal, business or organisational interest in any discussions of the group or whilst representing the group externally.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

Group members and representatives will occasionally receive information which is not in the public domain. It is the responsibility of the individuals concerned to ensure this information remains confidential.

7. REPRESENTATIVES

7.1 Role Definition

- Collecting issues of importance from the sector;
- Disseminating decisions made;
- To attend all meetings you are nominated to attend or notify your deputy;
- Reporting back to the group on meetings attended;
- Acting as an advocate for the sector rather than your own organisation;
- Acting as a critical friend for statutory services;
- Promoting joint working across the sector as well as with statutory bodies;
- To actively participate in all meetings.

7.2 Person Specification

Any person acting as a representative for the group will ideally be:

- From an organisation working with children, young people and families in the sector;
- Committed to act as a representative of the sector collectively rather than their own particular group;
- Is able to show sufficient understanding of their field of interest and is able to talk about the needs of children and young people;
- Is aware of the Change for Children and Every Child Matters Agenda including:
 - CAF
 - Contact Point
 - Workforce Development
 - Commissioning
 - Quality Standards
- Is able to promote joint working across the sector and with statutory partners;
- Has the capacity to undertake the role.

8. CHAIRPERSON

8.1 Role Definition

The reference group acknowledges the need for a chairperson and in order for the role to be filled effectively it is important to set out the commitment required.

- Chairing the reference group meetings;
- Chairing the steering group meetings held to progress work between meetings, review matters arising of meeting and to set agendas;
- To act as an advocate for the whole sector not just their organisation;
- To act as a critical friend for the statutory sector;
- To promote joint working across the sector as well as with statutory partners;
- To liaise with partners to ensure that resources are best utilised to reduce duplication and competition;
- To attend all meetings or nominate a deputy.

8.2 Person Specification

Any person acting as Chairperson will be:

- From an organisation working with children and young people in the sector;
- Committed to acting as a representative of the sector collectively rather than your own group or area of expertise;
- To be able to talk about the needs of children and young people;
- To be aware of and understand the Change for Children and Every Child Matters Agenda including:

CAF
Contact Point
Workforce Development
Commissioning
Quality Standards

- To have a strategic overview of the Every Child Matters and Youth Matters agendas.

9. VCFS CYP Services Reference Group Communication Strategy

The VCFS CYP Services Reference Group aims to:

- Involve the children's voluntary, community and faith sector in the development of a Children's Trust approach at a strategic level;
- Facilitate information sharing;
- Link five outcomes and not lose sight of children and families;
- Support the participation of children, young people and families in the process;
- Equip the voluntary, community and faith sector to deliver services that children, young people and families want;
- Demonstrate and articulate the diversity of the sector;
- Ensure prevention is embedded in all planning, commissioning and delivery;
- Review on an annual basis.

The reference group will achieve this by organising conferences, seminars and workshops; promoting and supporting collaboration between members; publishing papers and articles; maintaining a website of useful information; conducting surveys and liaising with appropriate governmental bodies and other organisations.

Good communication is important for achieving these aims and objectives.

9.1. Guiding principles

- Communication processes must be clear and known to all members;
- Communication must be purposeful and timely;
- Communication must be open, honest and frank;
- In general, relevant information will be available on an open basis, and only in exceptional cases (e.g. to preserve confidentiality), is it not made available;
- Effective communication increasingly depends on information systems which must be easy to use, accessible, robust and reliable;
- Decision making and organisational structures will support effective communication.

9.2. Key strategic aims

The Communications Strategy will support the aims and objectives of the group and promote the activities that it organises. The key strategic aims will be to:

- Promote VCFS CYP Services Reference Group;
- Improve communication between group and those with whom it has contact;
- Make it easy for people to find out about the group;
- Establish appropriate methods to regularly consult with members as there is a recognition that not all organisations have the resources to attend regular meetings;

- Establish links with governmental bodies, agencies and other organisations.

9.3. Levels of Engagement

The reference group is seeking to engage with the widest possible constituency of VCFS organisations. The group recognises that not all organisations have the capacity to take part in all the activities of the group. Therefore the group places a value on any level of engagement from the sector. Some organisations may only wish to receive information about strategic developments whilst others may wish to take on a role representing the wider sector.

The reference group recognises four levels of engagement:

- Information sharing
- Consultation
- Participation
- Representation

The group will seek to establish methods to facilitate these levels of engagement.

9.4. Channels of communication

There are many channels of communication available, including:

1. Printed information
2. The LVCFS / ECM website
3. Mailing lists
4. Events - conferences, workshops, meetings

9.5. Implementing the Communications Strategy

1. Printed information

Printed information is most useful as promotional material at workshops and conferences and for sending out in the post. Increasingly information is published online, so all printed information will also be made available on the LVCFS website.

2. LVCFS website

The LVCFS website is the main place where people will be able to find current information about the reference group and its activities. It will play an important part in advertising the group its events and group activities, storing minutes of meetings, presentations from workshops, links to other related material and member web sites, and holding the results of commissioned and ad hoc reports and surveys. It must be easy to find information, so the website will need good navigational tools - index, contents, and search facility.

To promote the group other organisations such as GONW, LCC, District Authorities and members will be asked to put links to the LVCFS website.

3. LVCFS mailing lists

The mailing list will comprise of the members of the group and wider contacts as agreed.

4. Events - conferences, workshops, meetings

Planned dates of conferences, workshops and meetings will be advertised on the LVCFS website well in advance to help avoid clashes with other organisations and members activities.

Confirmed dates, together with a description of the event, the programme and an online booking form, will be available on the LVCFS website.

After the event, relevant reports or presentations will be published on the LVCFS website. Links to other relevant resources will also be added.

5. Questionnaires and feedback

Occasional questionnaires will be emailed to member organisations, advertised and made available online on the LVCFS website. The results will be published on the LVCFS website.

6. Consultations

The reference group is often asked to respond to consultations. Members will be asked to contribute and the final responses will be published on the LVCFS website.

7. Governmental bodies and other organisations

Links with other bodies, such as CWDC, GONW, NWDA, LCC, and Unitary Authorities will be maintained and reported.

Membership Agreement

This document sets out the priorities, aspirations, commitments and standards of the VCFS CYP Services Reference Group.

It is a working document and will be reviewed annually by the group in line with other policy developments relating to children and young people.

All members of the group are expected to abide by the governance arrangements outlined in the document.

Name.....

Position.....

Organisation.....

Organisation Type (please tick as appropriate)

Unincorporated Association

Registered Charity (Reg No).....

Company Limited by Guarantee (Reg No).....

Mutual benefit society/co-operative (Reg No).....

Other (provide details).....

Address.....

.....

.....

Telephone.....

Fax No.....

Email.....

Signature.....Date.....

Every Child Matters Report Form

MEETING DETAILS		REPRESENTATIVE DETAILS	
NAME		NAME	
DATE		ORGANISATION	
VENUE		EMAIL	
TIME		CONTACT TEL	

Issues to be addressed:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Implications for VCFS:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Follow Up Actions required:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Date of Next Meeting:

2.2 Manifesto and Priorities

CHESHIRE CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES HUB MANIFESTO

The HUB AIM: The aim of the HUB is to provide a strategic platform for the voluntary, community and faith sector and its organisations who are working with Children, Young People and Families.

The strategic platform will articulate the needs and priorities of the children, young people and families with which the VCFS is working in a variety of settings, as well as promoting the role and identifying the needs of the VCFS in helping to deliver against those priorities. The initial focus for the HUB is to ensure the VCFS has a voice at the Cheshire Children and Young Peoples Partnership (the emerging Children's Trust for Cheshire) and the 5 Every Child Matters Outcome Sub groups.

This aim is consistent with the Every Child Matters agenda which the government sees as achieving:

“an environment where voluntary and community organisations central government, Government Offices for the Regions, local authorities and other public and private sector partners are enabled to work together from their different perspectives, to make the lives of children and young people better” ECM Guidance p3

It is expected over time that the HUB will:

1. Support the representatives role in a way that promotes the engagement of the sector as well as its representation
2. Enable the VCFS to be represented and engaged in a variety of partnership settings
3. Ensure that representation from the VCFS is shared and supported within a collective context
4. **Ensure** the diverse nature of the sector is represented
5. Promote communications between the sectors and across the VCFS
6. **Build on** the existing infrastructure where appropriate
7. Ensure the representatives role is understood and representatives are clearly seen to be representing the sector and not their own organisation
8. Ensure that VCFS organisations are involved in areas and at a level which suits their needs, understandings and makes most effective use of their contributions
9. **Provide the VCFS with** space to self organise, ensure the relationship with other sectors is maximised. This will include coordination and facilitation of VCFS
10. **Ensure the VCFS** is capable of functioning at a strategic level, and of influencing policy and practice at both a county and district/borough level

PROGRESS TO DATE

The HUB was established as a Shadow HUB in November 2006 following a period of research to identify the most appropriate structure for ensuring VCFS representation at a variety of decision making settings.

In April 2007 the HUB was officially established and it has 17 members all working with a range of VCFS organisations.

To date the HUB has:

- Developed and adopted a Governance Framework
- Undertaken some early consultation with VCFS groups connected to HUB members
- Responded to the JAR action plan
- Selected two representatives from the HUB to the CYPSP
- Selected representatives from the HUB to the 5 Every Child Matters Outcome Sup Group
- Selected two representatives from the HUB to the Prevention & Early Intervention Board
- Established and maintained links to the Safeguarding Board
- Produced a mapping report to identify who the HUB is linked to and where the gaps area
- Produced a HUB newsletter
- Held the HUB's first annual event
- Contributed to discussion on the IYSS

The HUB OBJECTIVES for 2008/09:

The HUB will contribute to its aim and objectives in 2008/08 by:

- A. Servicing the HUB Structure
- B. Developing the HUB further to ensure inclusivity, transparency and accountability
- C. Understanding and articulating what the VCFS is and how it can deliver outcomes for children, young people and families
- D. Providing a VCFS perspective at a variety of events and partnership settings
- E. Maintaining and enhancing relationships with the CYPSP and Outcome Groups
- F. Promoting the VCFS as a learning sector
- G. Reviewing and evaluating the HUB's operation and achievement

PLAN OF ACTION: April 08 – April 09

CODE	OBJECTIVE	ACTION NO	ACTION POINT	DELVIERY MECHANISM / RESOURCES
A.	Servicing the HUB structure	1.	Facilitate x 10 HUB meetings	Development Worker Admin support Meetings costs & expenses (£1,500.00)
		2.	Provide briefings for the HUB representatives to the Children's Trust x 10	Development Worker Admin support
		3.	Establish and deliver a Succession plan for HUB reps	Development Worker
B.	Developing the HUB further to ensure inclusivity, transparency and accountability	4.	Review linkages of HUB members to the voluntary, community and faith sector	Development Worker
		5.	Support HUB members to establish and maintain networks x 6	Development Worker Meetings costs & expenses (£300.00) Small budget for events (£2,000.00)

CODE	OBJECTIVE	ACTION NO	ACTION POINT	DELVIERY MECHANISM / RESOURCES
B.	Developing the HUB further...	6.	Build HUB membership x 3 new members	Development Worker
		7.	Review and help to develop the district Children and Young Peoples partnerships as well as other ' advisory forums'	Work with CVS 7 VA's & other I orgs
		8.	Establish and maintain a weekly HUB email briefing	Development Worker Admin support
		9.	Update the website	Development Worker
		10.	Produce and disseminate annual report leaflet	Development Worker

				Admin support
		11.	Promote the HUB through x6 articles in VCFS newsletters	Development worker Admin support
		12.	Translate and disseminate x 6 policy/consultation documents for VCFS comment	Development Worker
		13.	Produce an Induction pack for new HUB members	Development worker

CODE	OBJECTIVE	ACTION NO	ACTION POINT	DELVIERY MECHANISM
C.	Understanding and articulating what the VCFS is and how it can deliver outcomes for C,YP & F	14.	Host meetings with other partners to promote the HUB x 4	Development Worker
		15.	Produce a directory of the sector	Development Worker Admin support Production costs Collection of information costs (£5,000.00)

	16. Undertake 'State of the Sector' research	Development Worker Research costs (£5,000.00)
	17. Review the VCFS HUB Development Plan indicative actions (28.11.07)	Development worker
Providing a VCFS perspective at...	18. Attendance at x6 Cheshire wide events to promote the HUB	Development Worker
	19. Production of exhibition boards	Development Worker Production costs (£1,000.00)

CODE	OBJECTIVE	ACTION NO	ACTION POINT	DELVIERY MECHANISM
D.	Providing a VCFS perspective	20.	Training programme for HUB members to enable maximum participation	Development Worker Admin support Trainers and venues (£2,500.00)
		21.	Production of VCFS Position papers x 4	Development worker
		22.	HUB annual event	Development Worker Admin support Event costs (£3,000.00)
		23.	HUB annual report	Development worker Design and printing costs (£2,000.00)
E.	Maintaining and enhancing relationships with the CYPSP and Outcome Sub Groups	24.	Support HUB members informational requirements at CYPSP and Sub Groups	Development worker
F.	Promoting the VCFS as a learning sector	25.	Learning workshops/training x 4	Development Worker Venues and catering Facilitators / speakers (£1,000.00)

CODE	OBJECTIVE	ACTION NO	ACTION POINT	DELVIERY MECHANISM
G.	Reviewing and evaluating	26.	Undertake an assessment of the journey travelled and impact	Development worker & HUB members with external partners

Development Worker – estimated @ £25k (salary) + on costs, hosting the worker, travel expenses, etc

Admin support – part time ??? £10K

Development budget – estimated at £25K (this is at the high end and can be reduced)

(Note: this to be benchmarked against Bolton) Total £60K

CHESHIRE CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILIES HUB

PRIORITIES FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILIES

Paper produced by Alison Navarro, 29.11.07

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The following paper outlines the priorities identified by members of the Cheshire VCFS working with Children, Young People and Families.
- 1.2 The priorities were identified at the Children, Young People and Families HUB Annual Event held on the 21st November 2007.
- 1.3 The paper also provides a brief analysis of the priorities identified here with those contained in the CYPSP Strategic Priorities paper (Nov 07)

2. THE PROCESS FOR IDENTIFYING PRIORITIES

- 2.1 At the HUB annual event held on the 21st November 2007 participants outlined the priorities for children, young people and families they are working with and then these were discussed and pooled so as to be able to identify a sense of what is important across the VCFS people and organisations that attended the event.
- 2.2 This information was then collated and analysed to provide a list of priority areas

3. THE PRIORITIES

- 3.1 The following table present the range of challenges and issues identified under the priority areas along with examples under the priorities so as to be able to show the favour (the full breakdown is available on request).
- 3.2 The table also contains two numbers. The first – tally – displays the number of times the theme was identified. The second – importance – is a score (with 1 being the most important) based on the popularity of the response.

PRIORITIES FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILIES		
	Tally	Importance
Well Being (emotional support & self esteem)	36	1
<input type="checkbox"/> To promote the well being of children including self esteem (9)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide support to enable under 5's to have their childhood (10)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Counselling to help with mental health and relationship issues (6)		
Family Support	32	2
<input type="checkbox"/> Family support (17)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Provision to improve parenting skills (4)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Continual support (4)		

Sustainability	30	3
<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable funding (20)		
Offending	28	4
<input type="checkbox"/> Reducing offending behaviour (9)		
<input type="checkbox"/> enable young people to understand the effects of crime (4)		
<input type="checkbox"/> prevention of crime and anti social behaviour (7)		
Safety	27	5
<input type="checkbox"/> children feeling safe in their home (9)		
<input type="checkbox"/> helping children to feel safe (6)		
Facilities / activities	21	6
<input type="checkbox"/> better information for children and young people (8)		
<input type="checkbox"/> leisure activities for 5 – 25 years (4)		
Disability	21	7
<input type="checkbox"/> Support for disabled children (7)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Prejudices surrounding disability – change it! (3)		
Reaching Potential	18	8
<input type="checkbox"/> supporting children and young people to reach their potential (9)		
<input type="checkbox"/> identify barriers and support young people into education & training (5)		
Happiness	17	9
<input type="checkbox"/> Happiness for children and young people (11)		

PRIORITIES FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILIES		
	Tally	Importance
Domestic Abuse	16	10
<input type="checkbox"/> Support for victims of domestic abuse (8)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Right to a violent free life (3)		
Young carers	15	11
<input type="checkbox"/> More involvement and support (15)		
Staffing and volunteers	13	12
<input type="checkbox"/> Attracting, recruiting & training committed volunteers (4)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Support for volunteers and staff (5)		
Appropriate to need	12	13

<input type="checkbox"/> To support parents and children to get appropriate support (6)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Make sure the needs of young people are met (4)		
Infrastructure & Partnership working	11	14
<input type="checkbox"/> Work in partnership with organisations		
<input type="checkbox"/> More joined up working		
<input type="checkbox"/> Smooth running of HUB		
Accessibility	8	15
<input type="checkbox"/> Inclusion not exclusion (3)		
Decision Making	6	16
<input type="checkbox"/> Giving children and young people a meaningful voice (2)		
Schooling	6	17
<input type="checkbox"/> Support with schooling of young children (3)		
<input type="checkbox"/> School attendance (1)		
Homelessness	5	18
<input type="checkbox"/> More support & joined up services for young people in temporary accommodation (4)		
Alcohol	5	19
<input type="checkbox"/> Triple alcohol prices (2)		
<input type="checkbox"/>		
Training	4	20
for those working with Children, young people & families		
Intervention and Prevention	3	21
<input type="checkbox"/> early intervention (1)		
Flexibility	2	22
<input type="checkbox"/> extend services to a wider community (1)		

3.3 A review of the above table suggests that the top 5 areas for concern are:

- o The well being of children and young people
- o Family support
- o Sustainability of service provision
- o Youth offending
- o The safety of children and young people

4. THE CYPSP PRIORITIES

4.1 The CYPSP has recently published the priorities for children, young people and families that it will be focusing on from 2008 to 2011.

4.2 The cross cutting priorities contained in their paper are:

- o Tackling the adverse impact o alcohol on children and their families
- o Improving attainment in children and families from low income backgrounds

4.3 As well as the above the CYPSP has identified a range of priorities under each of the 5 Every Child Matters outcome areas:

5. RELATIONSHIP TO CYPSP STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

5.1 An analysis of the CYPSP priorities with those identified at the HUB annual event reveals the following fit. The number in the column 'HUB event' refers to the importance attached to the theme (in terms of popularity) at the annual event

THEMES – CYPSP	THEMES – HUB	HUB event
Alcohol / smoking/ substance misuse	Alcohol	19
Improving attainment and achievement	Reaching potential	8
	Schooling	17
Teenage pregnancy		
Childhood obesity		
Mental health and wellbeing	Well bring (emotional & self esteem)	1
	Family support	2
	Safety	5
Children's health and maternity services redesign		
Neglect	Safety	5
Bullying	Safety	5
Risk taking behaviour and management	Offending	4
Placement stability for Looked After Children		
Children exposed to domestic abuse	Safety	5
	Domestic Abuse	10
Improve opportunities and outcomes for Children with Disabilities	Disability	7
Improve opportunities for activities outside school	Facilities / activities	6
Young peoples participation as influencers and decision makers	Decision making	16
Positive activities and opportunities for vulnerable children	Facilities / activities	6
Increasing pro social behaviour	Offending	4
	Accessibility	15
Active citizenship and community involvement	Decision making	16
Full entitlement to education and curriculum		

Tackling work less ness in families with children		
Employers engagement and support for 14 – 19		
Support homeless and vulnerable young people and families with dependent children	Family support	2
	Homelessness	18
	Intervention and prevention	21
Information, advice and guidance	Facilities / activities	6
Workforce development and reform	Staffing and volunteers	12
	Training	20
Multi agency responses	Infrastructure and partnership working	14
VCFS development	Sustainability of funds and services	3
	Infrastructure and partnership working	14
Children's Centre Extended Service		

5.2 The table shows that overall there is a good fit between the priorities identified in the CYPSP priorities paper and those identified at the HUB Annual event.

5.3 However, the following observations have been made:

- That family support as a theme is not explicit in the CYPSP priorities but has been identified as high importance by the HUB (2nd out of 23)
- That Young Carers does not seem to be included in the CYPSP priorities but was recognised at the HUB as being important (11th out of 23)
- That enabling children and young people to be 'happy' was identified by the HUB as a key priority (9th out of 23). Although this is not explicit in the CYPSP Priorities it is acknowledged that if the outcomes that are contained are delivered then the overall outcomes should be 'happy' children, young people and families

The HUB has not identified as priorities the following service based areas that are contained in the CYPSP plan:

- Health and maternity
- Looked After Children
- Worklessness and families
- Education and employment & engaging employers
- Children's Centre Extended Services

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN CHESHIRE CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILIES HUB

- 1.1 The following paper outlines the principles and methods of communication between the HUB and the broader VCFS as identified at the HUB 's 1st Annual Event on 21st November 2007
- 1.2 The paper outlines the principles that should underpin all communication (section 2), the preferred methods for communication (section 3) and the process to be adopted by the HUB for ensuring the principles and mechanisms are acknowledged and promoted

2. PRINCIPLES FOR COMMUNICATION

- 2.1 The following principles will underpin the HUB's communication with the wider VCFS and indeed with all partners and stakeholders it works with:

- Simple language
- Structured communications
- In an appropriate form
- Honest communications
- Timely & realistic
- Based on what people need to know
- Focused on the recipient audience
- Jargon and acronym free
- Will allow information to feed into and out of the HUB
- Regular communications

3. WHAT MECHANISMS OF COMMUNICATION ARE APPROPRIATE?

- 3.1 A range of communication mechanisms were identified for potential use in informing the broader VCFS about the work of the HUB and enabling the VCFS to feed into the HUB.
- 3.2 An over arching consideration was the need for a central point of contact.
- 3.3 The key mechanisms are:

1. DIRECT COMMUNICATIONS

- Email – however not everyone can access email
- Networking events
- HUB Newsletter
- Pigeon's!
- Articles in VCF groups newsletters
- Flyers
- HUB annual event
- HUB learning workshops

2. USING EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE & GROUPS

- Working through Borough Council
- Working with District based young peoples partnerships
- Using CVS mailing lists
- Linking to the voluntary youth sector
- Linking to advisory forums e.g. Young Carers
- Linking to existing partnerships e.g. Children's Disability Partnership

3. INDIRECT COMMUNICATIONS

- HUB website

Third Sector Forum Reporting Template

Report from:

Meeting attended:

Date:

Key Issues Discussed:

Actions for Third Sector Forum:

Feedback from Third Sector Forum:

2.4 Strategic Updates and Reports

Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector - Strategic Update (Children, Young People and Families) June 2008

1. Strategic Engagement

As you are probably aware, Kathy Brown ended her secondment from Barnardo's as VCS Strategic Lead at the end of May. A big thank you goes to Kathy for all her hard work which has enabled us to make significant progress. I have now taken on this role and at June's Children's Board meeting Mike (Director of MACC) and myself presented a paper outlining the focus for this year's work. We have identified six key areas of work:

- Communication
- Engagement in the development of children's trust arrangements
- Market Development
- Commissioning
- Capacity Building
- Engagement in the development of integrated youth services (VYM)
- Workforce Development (VYM)

These are linked to the outcomes from the Growing Success conference and we will be monitoring our impact on all these areas. You can download a full copy of the report on our website at http://www.macc.org.uk/macc/child_families_notes.php

At Children's Board the limitations of year on year funding were accepted and we are taking a further paper to the Children's Board in September outlining the need to mainstream VCS infrastructure funding.

2. "Growing Success" Conference

A copy of the conference report is attached to this email. Thanks to all of those who attended to make it such a successful event. As you will see from the report the conference was a really dynamic and productive day.

3. Re-contracting Process

The re-contracting process is on target to issue contracts by the end of June. Organisations have now attended a training day on monitoring and evaluation. This is based on outcomes based accountability (OBA) which is being rolled out throughout all of children's services and is recognised as a model of good practice.

A central support team has been set up to collect the monitoring and evaluation information submitted by organisations and this will be sent to commissioning leads for parenting and family support, youth and play and emotional health and well-being. The district panels will also have a performance management role.

Ross Grant (VYM) and myself attend the funding subgroup which oversees this process and which has now started planning for next year. We have a meeting in July with Pauline Newman to agree what the process for next year will look like. We are aware that decisions regarding next year's funding need to be made by December and are pushing for minimum 2 year contracts. Underpinning the process we are recommending that an incremental approach to commissioning is adopted over longer timescales to enable capacity to be developed in both VCS providers and commissioners.

3. Children's Board – June meeting

In addition to reporting on VCS infrastructure and the VCS re-contracting process, a quarterly update from the Manchester Safeguarding Children's Board identified the need to deal with poor practice regarding the implementation of safeguarding processes and procedures across all agencies. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment has been completed and is in its final stages of consultation and a final version will be available by end July. In terms of the Children's Trust Leadership Team it was agreed to delay the review of this group until September. We raised the issue of VCFS participation on this group which was acknowledged as a gap and will be included in discussions in September.

4. VCS Strategic Representation

We now have additional VCFS participation on the following groups:

Family Support Steering Group	Shelley Byrne (Homestart North Manchester) Barrington Reeves (Sowing Seeds)
Domestic Violence Subgroup	Kate Jones (South Manchester Women's Aid) Emma Webb (Wythenshawe Women's Aid)
Wythenshawe CAF Steering Group	Caroline Mackechnie-Jarvis (Wythenshawe Women's Aid) Clare North (Wythenshawe Community Initiative) Carolyn Davies (Homestart)
South CAF Steering Group	Sharon Bell (Old Moat Youth Outreach Project); Martin Moran (Eclipse)
Central East/Central West CAF Steering Group	Jill Greenfield (Children's Society) Jennifer Richardson (Routes)
North East CAF Steering Group	Maria Gardener (Manchester Settlement)
North West CAF Steering Group	Melanie McGuinness (FWA)

If you would like to find out more about what is happening at these meetings or are interested in sitting on any of these groups please get in touch.

4. Youth Service & Connexions

The City Council's Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to consider services for young people at its next meeting on Tuesday 15th July. Ross Grant and myself are attending this meeting to feed in views on the youth offer in the city and proposals for universal and targeted youth strategies. Between now and then Ross is also meeting with Laureen Donnan (Asst Director Children's Services) who is leading on this work.

5. District Panels

VCS district panel reps will be holding a meeting a district meeting for VCS stakeholders over the summer to provide an update on the work of the panels and networking opportunity. If you don't know who your district reps are, please get in touch.

There are vacancies for a VCS rep on the North West and South district panel. If you are interested please get in touch.

6. VCS Strategic Lead Reference Group

We are please to welcome Deanne Blake (Children's Services) and Kate Wareham (District Manager) to the Reference Group. Both Deanne and Kate have a lead on voluntary and community sector issues – Deanne at a central level and linked to interagency governance arrangements and Kate at a district level. This should help us to enable a greater understanding of VCFS issues and strengthen existing partnerships.

Ruth Craven
VCS Strategic Lead

CONFERENCE REPORT

Growing Success:

Strengthening the Voluntary and Community Sector for Children Young People and Families in Manchester

21 April 2008



Purpose of the Day

On Monday 21st April 2008 we held our annual children, young people and families conference at Manchester Town Hall. This was organised in partnership with the Child & Family Support Forum (MACC), Voluntary Youth Manchester and Children's Services and provided an opportunity to come together to look at the strategic agenda from a voluntary, community and faith sector perspective. The event was well attended with nearly 100 delegates from both the voluntary, community and faith sector and the statutory sector.

The event highlighted the opportunities and challenges being faced by the sector as we are required to respond to the Every Child Matters agenda and operate in the changing context of the Children's Trust and district level working. We looked at what we need to do to improve the sector's ability to meet the needs of children and families, as well as how we can influence the strategic agenda.

In the morning we had presentation's from Mike Livingstone (Asst Director Children's Services); Kathy Brown (VCS Strategic Lead) and Dave Packwood (VCS Engage), followed by discussion groups, the content of which is documented in the following report.

Afternoon workshops focused on how we can stimulate collaborative working between VCFS and statutory partners on key elements of Children's Trust Arrangement such as safeguarding, prevention, the common assessment framework and lead professional, family support, partnerships and collaboration and integrated youth support services.

If you were not able to attend the conference but would like more information about the content of the day please contact:

Ruth Craven
Child & Family Support Forum
MACC
0161 834 9823
ruth@macc.org.uk

Ross Grant
Voluntary Youth Manchester
0161 832 0169
voluntaryyouthmanchester@gmail.com

Graham Mellors
Head of Strategy and Performance
Children's Services
Manchester City Council
Overseas House
Quay Street
Manchester M3 3BB
0161 234 7166
g.mellors@manchester.gov.uk

Many thanks to everyone who attended the conference and made it such a valuable experience. Organisations were represented on the day from:

42 nd Street	Manchester PCT Community Health
4CT Limited	Manchester Play Team
Assistant Director, Children's Services	Manchester Young Lives
Barnardo's	MCC - Homelessness
Benchill Ecumenical Services Scheme	MCCR
Big Life Services	Moss Side Adventure Playground
Black Health Agency	New East Manchester
CAN	New Heath Youth & Community Centre
Care for the Family	One Parent Families/Ginger Bread
Carisma	Pops
Catholic Children's Rescue Society	Rathbone
Children & Young People's Partnership - MCC	Reachout
Children's Services, MCC	Resolutions First
Children's Society	Save the Children
Chorlton Youth Project	South Manchester Regeneration Team
CN4M	Sowing Seeds
Community Foundation for Gtr Manchester	Starting Out
Contact A Family	Sure Start Family Support Team
Cool Services/Professional Bureau	The Mustard Tree
Community Safety Network	Ujima
Delivering Inclusion Network	Unity Arts Organising Group
Depaul Trust	VCS Engage
District Project Worker	Voluntary Youth Manchester
Domestic Violence Outreach Team	Wai Yin Chinese Women Society
Early Year's Service, Children's Services	Women's Action Forum
Fairbridge in Greater Manchester	Wythenshawe Community Initiative
Family Welfare Association	YASP
Gaddum Centre	YMCA Training
GMCB of People Living with HIV	Young People's Support Foundation
Home Start Manchester South	Youth Service
IMPACT	
Indian Association Manchester	
Kurd Saylee Society	
LSEN	
MACC	
MANCAT	
Manchester Care & Repair Ltd	
Manchester Carers Forum	
Manchester Community Health	
Manchester Deaf Centre	
Manchester Libraries	

VCFS Strategic Engagement Update

(Kathy Brown, VCS Strategic Lead)

Since September 2007, I have been in the VCS Strategic lead role, and this is the first time that this role has been carried out in Manchester, on behalf of the Voluntary and Community Sector. Manchester Alliance for Community Care (MACC) have managed this process, and I have been seconded from Barnardo's North West into this post for two days a week. A Reference Group has been formed to oversee and support the work of this role, and members include Graham Mellors, Manchester City Council, Martin Duffy from VYM, Mike Wild, Ruth Craven, MACC and Shirley Adams from the Gaddum Centre. In September 2007 we made a realistic plan for the funding which was initially to March 2008. We decided to concentrate on four areas of work:-

- Communication issues both within the sector and between Voluntary Sector and Manchester City Council
- Funding issues in a year of transitional funding
- The district structures
- Support for the VCS infrastructure

Communication Issues

The VCS has been represented on the Manchester Children's Board over the past year, and we decided to take a proactive stance to this work, by preparing a paper in September to put to the Board about the work of the Voluntary Sector over the year. This included proposals about funding, given that services were facing a transitional year of funding prior to commissioning being set up within the City Council. This placed the issues on the agenda, for discussion within the Children's Board, and a funding sub-group was set up to take this work forward. In addition to the Children's Board, I met individually with members of the Board, and with Assistant Directors in the City Council. Within the Voluntary & Community Sector, I have attended meetings e.g. Children & Family Forum Meeting, VYM Meetings, Safeguarding Sub-Group and District Representatives Meetings. There has also been a North West Network Meeting where people in strategic roles and other representatives can meet to exchange information between local authorities. Along with Ross Grant, I have attended meetings with the Youth Service and Connexions, and we have now established positive communication with these two organisations. Over the past few months, we have identified that several key groups are now no longer meeting e.g. the Youth Matters Group and the Children & Young People's Strategic Partnership. This raises further issues about the representation of the Voluntary & Community Sector at strategic levels.

Funding Issues

We recognised that the funding issues were pressing for most services within Manchester, and this has taken up a great deal of time during the past year. As stated above, a funding sub-group has been meeting during the year, and this has involved representatives from the Local Authority and the Voluntary & Community Sector. In the first instance, an audit has been carried out about organisations that are funded from the City Council and for the first time this information has been collated. The group has further addressed urgent issues about clear process for contracting with organisations, and for the first time, we are working towards contracts being in place for services by the end of June 2008.

Discussions have also taken place about how contracts will be monitored, and the process for the next financial year has already been started. We have discussed the need for services to be able to move to long term contracts, now that more funding streams are known. The involvement of the Voluntary & Community Sector in decision making has been stressed, and the funding group and reference group have also identified the need for services to be developed so that they are ready when commissioning is in place. This will mean some capacity building for services in order to have business planning processes in place.

District Panels

In Manchester six district panels have been operating over the past year, and there are two Voluntary & Community Sector representatives on each panel. During this process, representatives from a voluntary sector have met on a regular basis to discuss common issues, and to share practice across the districts. Panels are currently engaged in developing a needs analysis and a district plan, which will reflect the needs in the local area. A future issue will be to develop district networks of VCS providers, and some discussion has now taken place about taking this forwards. Several issues have been discussed by district representatives including clarification about their role on the panels, and whether they would be involved in financial decision making regarding commissioning. There is also the outstanding issue of how city-wide organisations will be commissioned, in addition to the district structures.

VCS Infrastructure

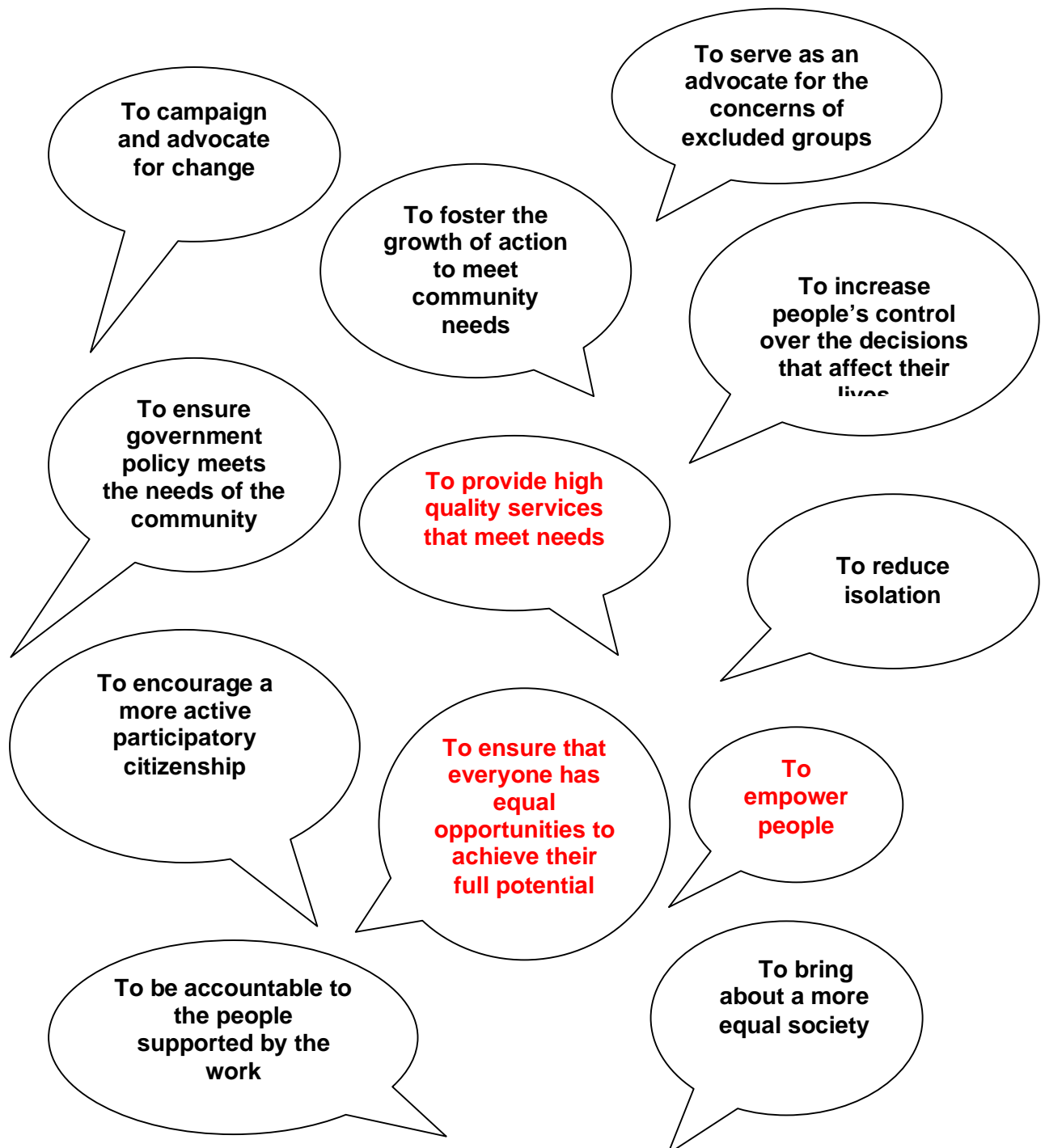
During this year funding has been available to support the strategic work. We have reported back to the Children's Board about how this funding has been used, and proposals for funding for 2008/09. We have identified several areas where increased resource is necessary e.g. helping to develop organisations to be ready for commissioning. We are pleased that the amount of funding for the infrastructure has now been increased for 2009, and plans are in place to take this work forwards within MACC.

Conclusion

Over the past seven months, we have developed the process to ensure that the VCS in Manchester is represented at strategic level. We have now laid the foundations for this process, by establishing clear communication channels with Manchester City Council and within the VCS sector. We have also started an important process about the funding of services during a transitional year before commissioning procedures are in place. This is only the start, and there is a long way to go to ensure that services are prepared for commissioning, and that the needs of smaller services are also addressed. These are vital processes, to ensure that the VCS can continue to make a valuable contribution to outcomes for children, young people and their families in Manchester.

Reminding ourselves of the values of the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector in Manchester

It is often claimed that one of the distinguishing features of the voluntary, community and faith sector is that it is value driven. We started discussion groups by exploring which values are most meaningful to members of voluntary and community sector in their work. Statutory participants were asked to reflect on which values they felt best reflected VCFS partners they work with. The following values were identified to be the most meaningful (with the top three highlighted in red):



What are the Greatest Threats to Our Values?

Now more than ever there are pressures on the sector which have the potential to cause a change in what the sector does and how it does it. These pressures will be experienced very differently by organisations that are small and large, local and national, those that campaign and those that deliver services.

This following reflects what participants felt were the greatest blocks/challenges to living the values in our work (as discussed in the morning discussion groups).

1. Pace of Change

A big issue for the VCFS is the pace at which the environment in which we are working is changing. There appears to be a policy and legislation overload that makes it difficult for projects, especially smaller ones, to keep up to date. The result of not understanding and keeping up with the changing agenda could be drastic, with some organisations could disappearing altogether. It is increasingly evident that policy changes are not simply for managers, but also frontline workers and governing bodies need to be knowledgeable about the strategic agenda. The Common Assessment Framework was identified as a key development in this regard.

2. Developing a Partnership Approach

Participants felt that opportunities to develop a joined-up approach to service development are being missed, and that inter-agency governance structures reflect a lack of continuity or leadership. It is crucial that partnerships are developed between and within different sectors; partnerships built on the principles of respect and equality. It was felt that current partnerships reflect an inequitable balance of power between different sectors, exemplified by the 'paymaster' role of the City Council. There is recognition that partnership development is a challenging process that requires mutual understanding and an inclusive approach. Experience demonstrates that the local authority does not appreciate the complexity of the VCFS. To improve relationships across sectors it would be helpful if partnerships sought to identify shared values. It is important however that outcomes don't get lost in the process of relationship building.

3. Improving communication

A key factor that undermines the capacity of the VCFS is poor communication. The need to improve communication across and within sectors was identified is therefore essential. Equality of information and the distribution thereof by the City Council was considered vital to developing services and partnerships. In particular, a greater emphasis should be placed on actually talking to each other.

4. Developing good commissioning practices

Given that commissioning is the thread that passes through policy development in the City, there were a few concerns about how best to develop good commissioning practices. Most recent developments in the sector have been about being able to 'step outside of the box' and to think beyond boundaries, including geographical ones. There are fears that Commissioning will not recognise that many VCFS organisations don't fit neatly into district 'boxes', and that timescales will not be flexible enough to enable VCFS to tender, nor is

there sufficient understanding of tendering within the sector. Commissioning processes need to maintain a balance between quality and price in commissioning decisions, while funders and deliverers have to treat each other with equal values of fairness, transparency and honesty. Also, performance management needs to take on board existing frameworks, such as Supporting People and PMS, and ensure that soft outcomes are valued and incorporated into commissioning as legitimate evidence. Systems also need to capture diversity. Some concern was expressed as to where the VCFS fits with larger contracts.

5. Citywide vs local priorities

Many organisations perceive a real tension between city-wide and local priorities and have concerns that services meeting localised needs which sit outside of citywide priorities will not be protected. Accepting that there are competing local priorities by the local authority is important, and needs to be supported by making funding available for local issues.

City-wide target setting must not take away from groups being successful in responding to local need, and need to be given the opportunity to feed this into district needs analysis and the Children and Young People's Plan through a supported process.

6. Funding

Perhaps unsurprisingly key messages regarding funding were voiced by many participants throughout the day. In order to protect VCFS provision there is an urgent need to move to longer term sustainable funding streams. Organisations are no longer able to depend on public funding and it was felt that it is easier to access external funding which fits with organisational values than access statutory funding which can result in mission drift. Changes in eligibility of funding and priority issues affects the continuity of projects and has an impact particularly on smaller groups. Voluntary groups with no funding still have to pay the cost of conferences/networks and

7. Capacity Building

The ability of organisations to demonstrate outcomes/impact (what difference did it make?) as opposed to outputs was raised as an issue particularly for short term pieces of funding. Support around performance management is needed, however it is important to recognise that capacity building takes time – we need to go at organisation's pace. Leadership and management skills and full cost recovery were also specifically identified as a skills gap. It was recognised that the supporting infrastructure is not in place within organisations and we need to get better at sharing our skills and knowledge with other providers within a local community. It was suggested that common purpose training could be carried out to see where each organisation sits in relation to ethos and service delivery.

8. Loss of independence

Participants felt that it is becoming increasingly difficult for VCFS organisations to maintain their independence. The lobbying/campaigning role of providers is increasingly being recognised as difficult to get funded and needs to be promoted in a positive light. At the same time it was recognised that organisations need to get better at building up a body of evidence to show that what you're challenging is right – we certainly can't rely on anecdotal evidence. It was felt that the community activist/engagement role is being stifled within the current funding climate and it is becoming more difficult to be able to innovate. It

was felt that it is really important that funders retain flexibility to enable innovation within the sector which is one of its greatest strengths.

What practical and positive things can we do to protect and enable the VCFS to thrive in Manchester?

Each discussion group was asked to agree clear action points they would like to be taken forward can be taken forward as an action plan in partnership between Children’s Services and VCFS over the next year. The following eight areas of work identified were

<p>Continue to develop effective communication on all levels and proper consultation that really listens</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effective communication at all levels, proper consultation that really listens (real and meaningful) - Good communication with VCFS - Ability to inform strategy - Communication – dissemination – email - Consultation/representation - We need to be involved in decisions from the beginning - Develop a structured process e.g. consultation/conference for both partners
<p>Enable effective representation and VCFS involvement in governance arrangements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good representation at key meetings - more VCFS involvement in governance – particularly defining needs and setting up commissioning arrangements - VCFS should be more challenging - Need to avoid duplication of meetings – governance arrangements not always clear
<p>Develop a longer term funding strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long term funding – 3 years – better quality of service - LA accept PM systems of certain funders as evidence of quality - Set up working party - VCS show value for money if M&E systems are consolidated
<p>Include target in the Local Area Agreement ‘enable a thriving third sector’</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Target In LAA – thriving VCS - LAA – broaden out view of what invest to save is about and take long term view
<p>Increase training and development support to enable groups to respond to change - particularly for smaller groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training – marketing/selling - Support orgs in being more flexible to change and respond to changing needs - support in writing bids particularly for smaller groups - Larger organisations should support small groups in terms of setting systems up/accessing IT - Support for small grassroots orgs – development - Use vols from MMU or JCT for admin and research support

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Job swapping across sectors/train together - Encouraging people – city council to go to projects and vice versa – managing by walking about
Promoting/understanding of VCFS within the Local Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can do attitude – positive partnerships – signposting - Promoting understanding of the work of the VCFS - Perceptions/training on VCFS - Education of stat sector around why they need to be in partnership with VCFS and vice versa - increasing awareness in LA - Ownership of compact within LA
Clear point of contact in the Local Authority for developing VCFS strategy and guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need for clear point of contact for VCFS for guidance whether big or small issue - Key person within LA – need to be clear on proxy measures which are being lobbied for - Set up actively involved dialogue involving VCS and Statutory sector - Funding – clarity and appropriate timescales
Developing a way of measuring the diversity/value of the sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some way of measuring the diversity of the sector - Maintain the diversity of the sector - Clear exposition of values of VCFS - Develop a better picture of what investment VCFS brings into the city - Understand what other people are providing and who to refer to - Need for live and constantly updated service directory

Proposed Action Plan

Based on discussions in the morning and outcomes from the afternoon workshops, the following commitments have been identified as a way to address the key issues which were raised at the Growing Success conference:

1. Continue to develop effective communication on all levels and proper consultation that really listens

<i>Child & Family Support Forum / Voluntary Youth Manchester</i>	<i>Children's Services</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain communication through Child & Family Support Forum (CFSF) and Voluntary Youth Manchester (VYM) e-bulletin, meetings, website, newsletter, policy briefings - Hold regular meetings and events for network members to come together - Inform VCFS about local and national policy changes that impact children, young people and families - Support involvement in local, regional and national consultations - Make links with BME and faith youth groups network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raise awareness of the Compact with the new management teams at a district level - Ensure that local VCFS organisations are involved in any district level communication activities

2. Enable effective representation and VCFS involvement in governance arrangements

<i>Child & Family Support Forum / Voluntary Youth Manchester</i>	<i>Children's Services</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and support the participation of VCFS members on strategic boards/groups and share learning - Have a Strategic Lead Role which sits on the Children's Board and other groups to feed in views, highlight issues and emerging themes that need addressing - Share best practice around strategic engagement with VCFS, highlight barriers and evaluate impact - Support representation on the district commissioning panels - Work to develop positive partnership relationships with Children's Services and Youth Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review the existing governance and partnership structure and make sure the VCFS is effectively engaged in the revised arrangements - During 2008/9 continue to resource the engagement of VCFS representatives on district panels

3. Develop a longer term funding strategy

<i>Child & Family Support Forum / Voluntary Youth Manchester</i>	<i>Children's Services</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support development of VCFS commissioning plan, beginning in the first year with a planned transitional approach for funding for 09/10 - Work with commissioners to agree best practice for voluntary sector around procurement, contracting and full cost recovery - Support the development of a market development strategy for the VCFS - Identify and circulate alternative funding opportunities for organisations - Lobby for increased investment in infrastructure support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finalise the short term improvement in contracting with the VCFS for 2008/09 - Continue to develop a commissioning framework that supports the added value the sector can bring

4. Include target in the Local Area Agreement 'enable a thriving third sector'

<i>Child & Family Support Forum / Voluntary Youth Manchester</i>	<i>Children's Services</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support the development of a baseline over 09/10 to enable inclusion of this target in the LAA for next year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Help to ensure the target is included in the LAA at the earliest opportunity

5. Increase training and development support to enable groups to respond to change - particularly for smaller groups

<i>Child & Family Support Forum / Voluntary Youth Manchester</i>	<i>Children's Services</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support the development of a capacity building programme for VCFS organisations delivering services for C, YP and families - Oversee the Workforce Strategic Partners Programme in collaboration with Manchester City Council - Identify major skills/training needs within the CYP & families VCS - Be part of the delivery of support around identified skills gaps - Support the coordination of a joint approach to capacity building for CYP&F VCS across agencies as part of a "third sector strategy" for Manchester. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work alongside the sector and provide support when appropriate, maximising any opportunities for economies of scale from multi-agency working

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To explore how large VCS organisations can act as a 'hub' to smaller community based groups - Explore the possibility of job swapping across sectors/train together 	
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6. Promoting/understanding of VCFS within the Local Authority

<i>Child & Family Support Forum / Voluntary Youth Manchester</i>	<i>Children's Services</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enable communication between VCS and commissioners to improve understanding on both sides - Explore the opportunity for engaging with elected members and council officers in VCFS activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enable communication between VCS and commissioners to improve understanding on both sides - Explore the opportunity for engaging with elected members and council officers in VCFS activities

7. Clear point of contact in the Local Authority for developing VCFS strategy and guidance

<i>Child & Family Support Forum / Voluntary Youth Manchester</i>	<i>Children's Services</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Liaise with Graham Mellors (Strategy and Performance) to identify functions needed within Children's Services to develop VCFS strategy and guidance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Liaise with CFSF/VYM to identify functions needed within Children's Services to develop VCFS strategy and guidance

8. Developing a way of measuring the diversity/value of the sector

<i>Child & Family Support Forum / Voluntary Youth Manchester</i>	<i>Children's Services</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop the MACC/VYM databases - Work with children's services to build on the audit of organisations completed through the re-contracting process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider opportunities for maintaining and developing the audit

Next Steps....

Through the Child & Family Support Forum (CFSF) and Voluntary Youth Manchester (VYM) working in partnership with Children's Services we will revisit the action plan throughout the year and monitor progress against the key issues we have identified.

Kathy Brown has stepped down in her role as VCS Strategic Lead, and Ruth Craven from MACC is taking over this role from the beginning of June 2008. You can contact Ruth on 0161 834 9823 or email ruth@macc.org.uk for more information about this work.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Kathy for all her hard work supporting the strategic engagement of the children, young people and families over the last 9 months.

If you are not already, please do get in contact with the Child & Family Support Forum and Voluntary Youth Manchester and continue to feed in your views. The more voices we have the louder our voice can be heard! The following gives some information about the two voluntary and community sector bodies, while further details can be obtained via the contact details given.

Voluntary Youth Manchester

Voluntary Youth Manchester (VYM) was established in 2002 to facilitate and encourage the development and delivery of the best possible services for young people in Manchester.

Our main role is to support, promote and develop the local voluntary, community and faith youth sector, through a variety of means and mechanisms. These include:

- a regular e-mail bulletin addressing issues identified as important and valuable by the sector;
- a bi-monthly steering group meeting open to all VCFS groups working with young people;
- providing a consultative channel between relevant bodies such as the City Council and the voluntary youth sector;
- general advice and guidance on practice issues;
- being a voice for and from the sector in relevant forums in the City, such as in relation to Integrated Youth Support.

VYM is also managing the delivery of workforce development programme, with funding from the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC). The purpose of this is to establish a means of ensuring that staff and volunteers in services to young people, children and families across the voluntary, community and faith sector have the skills, experience, qualifications, training, etc to work to a consistent standard required to deliver quality services. Again this is being developed in partnership with the Child & Family Support Forum and Manchester City Council, to make sure that the best possible outcome is achieved.

If you would like further information about VYM please contact Ross Grant on 0161 832 0169 or at voluntaryyouthmanchester@gmail.com.

Child & Family Support Forum

The Child & Family Support Forum (CFSF) brings together voluntary and community sector organisations who work with and for children, young people and families in Manchester. The Forum works to strengthen the role of the sector as a provider of support and as a strategic partner in the city by:

- Recognising the needs of children and families in Manchester
- Developing understanding of the role of voluntary and community groups in improving the quality of life of children and families
- Highlighting the needs of a sustainable voluntary and community sector
- Improving access to services and choices for children and families
- Promoting the rights of children and families

- Recognising that the agendas of children, young people, parents, community groups and voluntary organisations are distinct though they often have much in common
- Support the involvement of groups in a range of decision making structures such as the Children's Board and Children and Young People's Partnership

We do this by...

- Sharing knowledge and information via email, newsletters, website, meetings and events
- Providing support and guidance on policy and strategy and highlighting issues and themes that need addressing
- Working to resolve issues of common concern
- Gathering evidence of the voluntary sector's contribution to improving outcomes for children, young people and families
- Linking into local planning structures

For more information on the Child & Family Support Forum and how to get involved go to our website at www.macc.org.uk or contact Ruth Craven on 0161 834 9823, or email: ruth@macc.org.uk

2.5 Nomination forms

**Voluntary and Community Sector Forum to Salford Children & Young
People's Partnership**

Nomination Form

Please submit details about yourself which will enable VCS Forum members to cast their votes accordingly.

Name

Organisation

Contact tel no

Email address

Post you are nominating for: Please tick

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Chair of VCS Forum |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Vice Chair of VCS Forum |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Locality Representative:
West/ North/ South/ Central (please circle) |

Information in support of my nomination:

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Will you be attending the Forum meeting on 27th June?

Yes / No

2.6 Representative protocols

Protocol for Participation

It has been acknowledged by central and local government that the voluntary and community sector has a key role to play as a strategic partner. This is reflected in the increasing number of boards/steering groups in the city which have a voluntary and community sector participant sitting on them.

Unlike statutory agencies, individuals participating on behalf of the voluntary and community sector are accountable (or in some instances not accountable) to diverse sectors of individual organisations. Consequently in an attempt to ensure accountability as far as possible, it is important that requests for participation are made through the relevant part of the Community Network for Manchester.

The role of Child & Family Support Forum

The Child & Family Support Forum undertakes to:

- set up and manage a process for appointing an appropriate participant onto a multi-agency board/group by:
 - being the first point of contact for statutory partners in order to set up voluntary and community sector participation to a board/group;
 - liaising with voluntary and statutory partners to develop a role description for the opportunity and circulate it within the sector;
 - gathering expressions of interest from people who are interested in taking on the role; and
 - setting up a process for the Child & Family Support Forum to agree on the most appropriate person to take on the role (this will depend on the level of the role and the number of people who are interested in taking it on).
- provide a mechanism for information flow:

from the participant to the Forum; and

from the Forum to the participant.

- support the participant to be accountable and transparent in their role.
- provide support for the participant in terms of admin, identifying and meeting training needs, circulating information etc.
- bring together voluntary and community sector participants on different boards/groups to share experiences, identify common threads of work and highlight any issues.
- provide a mechanism for mediation if working relationships deteriorate for any reason.
- review the role on a yearly basis.
- monitor and promote Compact compliance.

The role of the statutory agency or other partner requesting participation.

The statutory agency/partner undertakes to:

- use the Child & Family Support Forum as the first point of contact in order to set up voluntary sector participation on a board/group.
- recognise the independence of the Child & Family Support Forum in selecting participants in whom members of the voluntary and community sector have trust and confidence. In certain cases the board/ group will work alongside Child & Family Support Forum to ensure that the appropriate participant is selected.
- provide the information requested in Table 1 (as far as possible) when making a request for voluntary sector participation to the Child & Family Support Forum.
- be prepared to work in accordance with the Compact that sets out the protocol for the relationship between the voluntary and community sector and Manchester City Council and the members of the Manchester Partnership.
- offer an induction for the participant and identify key documents the participant should be familiar with prior to starting to attend meetings.
- recognise the different issues associated with consulting and representing a 'sector' as opposed to a single agency and take these into account in terms of the expectations of the voluntary and community sectors role (This may mean ensuring the participant has time to undertake consultation: the participant cannot offer guarantees or any such undertakings without consultation).
- be clear about any requirements for confidentiality.
- work with the Child & Family Support Forum to identify capacity building issues and way in which these can be supported.

The role of the voluntary and community sector participant

The participant will undertake to:

- be consistent in their attendance of meetings as far as possible
- ensure that a voluntary and community sector perspective is brought to the discussions and work of the Board/Group, rather than as an individual network or organisation.
- be a conduit, with support, of information flow to/from the Child & Family Support Forum and the Board/Group
- speak on behalf of the Child & Family Support Forum as far as possible. If participants are speaking on behalf of their own organisations they will make this clear to the Board/Group.

Dispute resolution

If there are concerns about anyone participating on behalf of the community network, or a network member has concerns about another participant, the situation will be dealt with informally in the first instance through discussions with the network support worker and the group/board chair. If the situation is not resolved then those involved should refer to the Compact, and the Compact conciliation process. This provides a process to resolve the issue, and to ensure it is dealt with in a transparent and fair way for all those involved.

Table 1: Participant for VCS Participation on a partnership meeting

1	Name and contact details of person requesting VCS participation	
2	Name of meeting	
3	Purpose of meeting	
4	Objectives of meeting	
5	Terms of Reference	(please attach)
6	Frequency of meetings	
7	Reasons for requesting VCS participation	
8	Current Board Membership	
9	Reporting Structure of meeting	
10	Expected level of involvement e.g. responsibility for specific pieces of work; information sharing etc	
11	Suggested information to go into the role description/person specification	
12	Induction	
13	Confidentiality requirements	

VOCAL Representation Protocol

Voluntary sector representatives cannot represent the views of all organisations but must endeavour at all times to provide the widest representation for the sector. Where the voluntary sector representative may gain a financial benefit for their organisation from the subject under discussion, they must declare a conflict of interest.

The role of the VOCAL Representative is:

1. To provide a broad voluntary sector perspective on issues under discussion and decisions made
2. To ensure that the voluntary sector is involved in the strategic commissioning of services for children, young people and families in Salford
3. To promote better understanding between voluntary and statutory agencies and to develop partners' understanding of the needs, strengths and limitations of voluntary organisations
4. To contribute to discussions on and to ensure the appropriate involvement of the voluntary sector in the resourcing, planning and provision of services to children and young people
5. To consult with other voluntary sector colleagues using agreed methods of communication to provide a mandate on specific issues and to disseminate information to all members of VOCAL and the wider voluntary sector
6. To attend and actively participate in all agreed meetings of the Salford Children and Young People's Partnership for the 12 month period of election
7. To attend or make other arrangements to feedback to all meetings of VOCAL
8. To inform VOCAL where you are no longer able to maintain commitment to the role of representative or where you may experience a potential conflict of interest
9. To induct new representatives during a handover period of the role

As representative of VOCAL to _____

For the period __21/06/07__ to __30/06/08__

I agree to the above protocol

Signature _____

Name & Organisation _____

Date _____

2.7 Impact Case Studies Form



Children's Services

Warrington Borough Council



Making a difference for Children and Young People in Warrington

Impact Case Study

We are gathering evidence of how individuals and organisations support children and young people in Warrington. Please let us know what you are doing to make a difference to the lives of children and young people.

Date of service provided: From.....

To.....

Description of situation event, activity, service area etc					
Who is involved? (Lead organisation/individual, other agencies/individuals)					
What was it like before the event/situation/activity Were children and young people achieving outcomes at an appropriate level? Why did the event take place?					
Approach What was done and how? Please attach supporting information if possible.	Age of child or children and young people involved (Please tick)				
	0 - 5	6 - 13	14 - 19		
What was the impact? Every Child Matters Outcomes – please tick all relevant outcomes What difference did your contribution make in improving the outcomes for young people and children?	Be Healthy	Stay safe	Enjoy & Achieve	Make a positive contribution	Achieve Economic Wellbeing
	Other impact?				
Does the case study involve children and young people from different ethnic background? (please give examples)					
Does the case study involve young people with disabilities? (please give examples)					
Does the case study involve Looked After					

Children? (Children in public care, who are placed with foster carers, in residential homes or with parents or other relatives.)	
Does the case study involve children and young people from other diverse backgrounds? Religion/belief, gender, sexuality, deprived ward, literacy, etc (please specify)	
Do you have evidence to verify an improvement in outcomes? Such as evaluations from young people, statistics, comments, example of impact on one young person, feedback (letters, emails), awards, etc	
Lead Contact Name, phone number, email, organisation	

Please return completed forms to Kanza Ahmed, Performance and Business Unit, Children's Services, New Town House, Buttermarket Street, Warrington WA1 2NJ or by email to kahmed1@warrington.gov.uk or phone 01925 444265 for more information. Thank You.

3.0 Local Compacts and partnership agreements



Halton Children & Young People's Alliance Board Compact

MULTI-AGENCY COMPACT

1. INTRODUCTION

The Government has clearly stated its view in “*Every Child Matters: Change for Children*” that there need to be local change programmes building services around the needs of children and young people in order to maximise their opportunities and minimise risk. This transformation can only be delivered through local leaders working together in strong partnership with local communities on a programme of change.

It is acknowledged that improving outcomes for children and young people can only be achieved by working effectively in partnership, valuing diversity and promoting citizenship. Local communities will also benefit when all agencies work well together and create a culture of continual improvement.

As stated in Children Act 2004 section 10(2): “*arrangements are to be made with a view to improving the well-being of children in the authority’s area so far as relating to:*

- a) *physical & mental health & emotional well-being*
- b) *protection from harm & neglect*
- c) *education, training & recreation*
- d) *the contribution made by them to society*
- e) *social & economic well-being*”

It is the aim of this Compact to outline how the partners in Halton will work together to deliver better outcomes for the children and young people of the borough.

2. CONTEXT

This Compact supports current legislation and government guidance, and will be updated to take into account any material changes.

The *Change for Children – Every Child Matters* agenda is enshrined within the Children Act 2004 but is also referenced within a range of other legislation and guidance across the partner agencies. These documents will be a source of reference for all parties in the delivery of their work as part of this agenda.

Services for children are currently provided by a range of agencies in the public, private and voluntary sectors. It is acknowledged that there are legislative duties, guidance, policies and codes of practice that different

providers must adhere to. However there are certain over-arching legislative requirements which impact on core services, in particular:

- The Children Act 1989
- The Crime & Disorder Act 1998
- The Data Protection Act 1998
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- The Education Act 2002, which includes the requirement for LEAs, maintained and Independent schools to make arrangements to ensure functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Likewise, there is guidance which impacts on not only local authority services, but also on relevant partners, including:

- *Working Together to Safeguard Children 1999 [to be updated 2005]*
- *National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services (DH with DfES, October 2004)*
- *Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need & their Families 2000*
- *Common Assessment Framework*

This is not an exhaustive list, but illustrates the underpinning trend for guidance to be issued which impacts on several services, which has been accelerated by the Children Act 2004. The Act introduces the following statutory duties for relevant partners:

Section 10	–	co-operation to improve well-being
Section 11	–	arrangements to safeguard & promote welfare
Section 12	–	information databases
Section 13	–	establishments of Local Safeguarding Children Boards
Section 17	–	children & young people plan
Section 20	–	joint area reviews
Section 22	–	co-operation and delegation

The Government intends the Children Act 2004 and its associated guidance to sit alongside and complement other over-arching strategic policy documents including:

- *The National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services*
- *Every Child Matters: Change for Children – Young People and Drugs*
- *Every Child Matters: Change for Children, Choice for Parents, the Best Start for Children: a ten year childcare strategy*
- *The Green Paper: Youth Matters*
- *The Framework for the Inspection of Children's Services*
- *Children's Workforce Strategy (draft)*
- *The 5 year Strategy for Children and Learners*
- *The Extended Schools Prospectus*

Nothing in this Compact is intended to supersede partners' other duties and obligations, however it is a key feature of the Compact that safeguarding and promoting children's welfare must be compatible with other legislative duties and obligations.

3. AIMS AND VISION

The Vision for Halton is currently being revised. However, the following represents the current broad vision for children, young people and families in Halton.

Within Halton the vision for children and young people is that they have the right to:

- Be safe
- Be healthy
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution to the community and society
- Achieve economic well being

We envisage Halton as a thriving and vibrant borough where people enjoy:

- A quality environment in which to live
- Healthy lifestyles
- The opportunity to fulfil their potential
- The opportunity to prosper
- Safe and attractive neighbourhoods

We have a particular responsibility to ensure that the well-being of our children and young people is promoted and safeguarded. In order to achieve this, agencies will support families and carers in bringing up their children. Services will be provided which are:

- Designed with children, young people and families at the centre
- Responsive and accessible
- Co-ordinated across agencies
- Developed in consultation with parents, carers, children and young people
- Valuing and learning from our diversity

The aim of partnership working is for all agencies to work collaboratively to improve outcomes for children and young people. Signatories to this Compact identify themselves as committed to these goals. It will also involve, over time, partner agencies working together to create new ways of working, leading towards a wider children's trust/alliance arrangement.

4. CHILDREN'S TRUSTS

Children's Trusts bring together all services for children and young people in an area, underpinned by the Children Act 2004 duty to cooperate, to focus on improving outcomes for children and young people. They will support those who work every day with children, young people and their families to deliver better outcomes – with children and young people experiencing more integrated and responsive services, and specialist support embedded in and accessed through universal services. People will work in effective multi-disciplinary teams, be trained jointly to tackle cultural and professional divides, use a lead professional model where several disciplines are involved, and be co-located where appropriate.

Children's Trusts put improved outcomes for children at the centre of all activity. At every level of activity, Children's Trusts need to be supported by effective leadership arrangements, robust performance management and the involvement of children and young people.

Children's Trusts are not legal entities, they are partnerships between different organizations that provide, commission, or are otherwise involved in delivering better outcomes for children and young people.

The Government expects that Children's Trusts will be led by local authorities with the Director of Children's Services accountable for the services provided by the Children's Trust, and the Lead Member for Children being politically accountable.

A set of effective local arrangements, operating at every level, will be a Children's Trust in action. These arrangements will involve: -

- Front-line staff providing integrated services
- The shared processes they use to support their work
- Joint audits, plans and commissioning arrangements with pooled budgets which set their priorities and deliver the necessary resources; and
- The inter-agency governance arrangements which agree the overall vision and sustain the approach

There are 6 essential building blocks that embody the features of a Children's Trust:

- Child-centred, outcome-led vision
- Integrated frontline delivery
- Integrated processes
- Integrated strategy (joint planning and commissioning)
- Inter-agency governance
- Pooled budgets

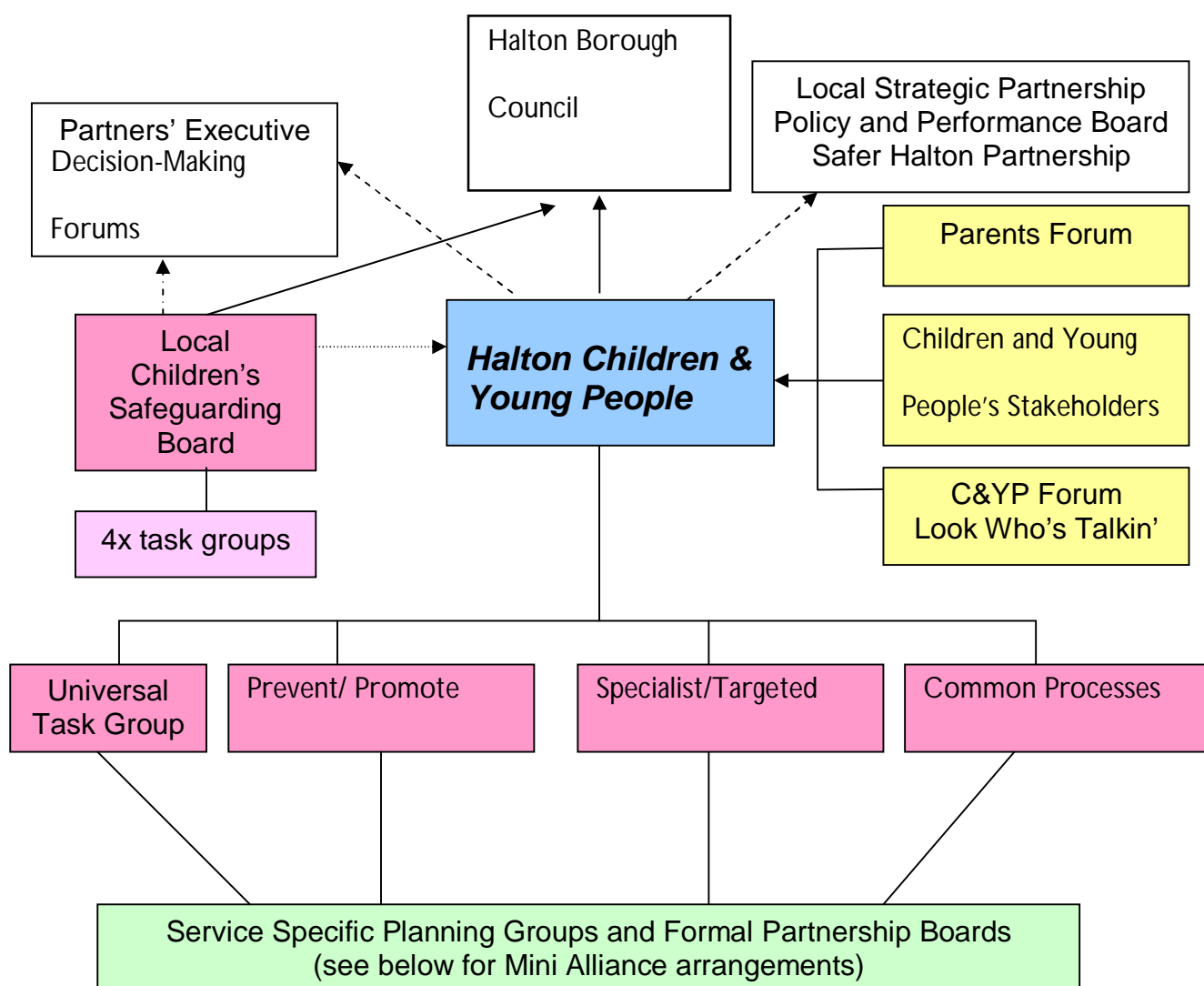
The new integrated inspection framework, led by Ofsted, will inspect how Children's Services work together and the development and outcomes delivered by Children's Trust arrangements in each area.

In Halton the decision has been taken to use the term "Children and Young People's Alliance" rather than "Children's Trust" as we believe it more accurately reflects the spirit of partnership and the full age range of the children and young people whose outcomes we aim to improve.

5. LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS

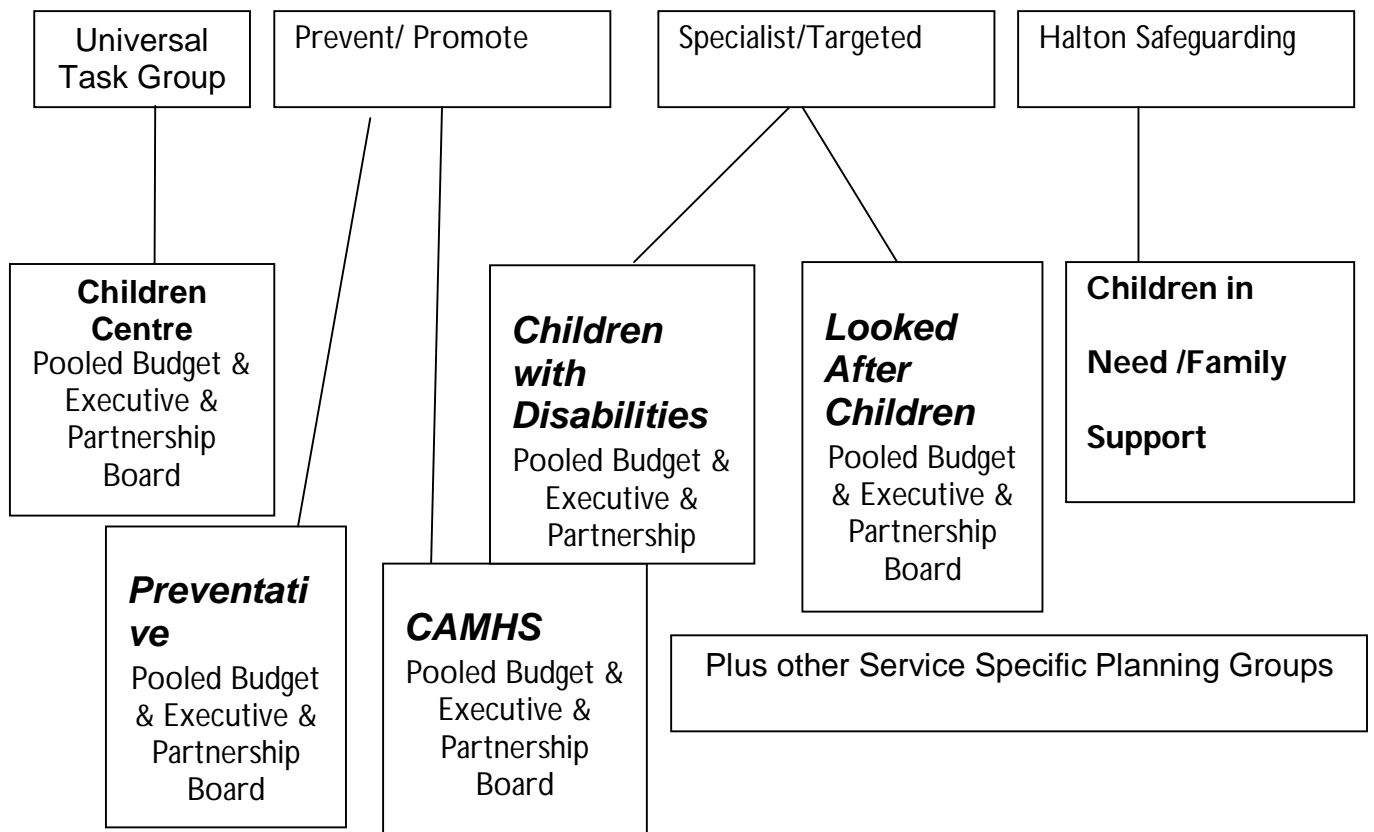
Each partner's contribution to the achievement of the vision, together with the delivery of their statutory responsibility and duties, will form part of the local strategic and operational arrangements.

The proposed structure of the strategic arrangements is outlined below:



The proposed model for a Children’s Alliance in Halton is to develop a number of service specific Children’s Alliances by April 2006, based on pooled budgets and joint commissioning arrangements, with a second phase developed during 2006/7. Between 2006-7 the initial phase of service specific Alliances will also seek opportunities for the co-location of staff teams and inter-agency governance. By 2008 we hope to roll these Alliances into one larger Children’s Alliance incorporating all services to children and their families.

In order to ensure the effective contribution of the proposed ‘mini-alliances’ to the overall delivery of the 5 outcomes, each of these mini alliances will form part of the strategic planning structure of the Halton Children & Young People’s Alliance and will report to the Task Groups within the Alliance structure:



Each Service Specific Planning Group or Partnership Board will be responsible for the Delivery of the service area strategy.

Each formal Partnership Board will be responsible for the oversight and day-to-day management of pooled budget via an Executive Board.

6. THE PARTNERS TO THE COMPACT

Children's Services Authorities are under a duty to work in partnership with a diverse range of organisations in order to promote co-operation to improve the well-being of children in their area. The Children Act 2004 s.10 (4) differentiates between 'relevant partners' who have a **reciprocal statutory duty** to co-operate in making the arrangements and 'other partners' who do not. Relevant partners include:

- Local authorities including district councils
- Police Authority and Chief Officer of Police
- Probation Board
- Strategic Health Authority
- Primary Care Trust
- Organisations (currently the Connexions Service) providing services under section 114 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000
- Youth Offending Teams
- Learning and Skills Council for England

In addition s.11 of the Children Act 2004 places a **statutory** duty on relevant partners to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health or development; and
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

The relevant partners under s11 are those relevant partners under s10 with the addition of the following:

- Children's services authority
- Special Health Authority
- NHS Trust or foundation trust
- British Transport Police Authority
- Governor of local prison or secure training centres

The same relevant partners, with the addition of CAFCASS (Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service), are required to co-operate with the local authority in the establishment and operation of the local safeguarding children board (LSCB).

S12 of the Children Act (2004) allows further secondary legislation and statutory guidance to be made with respect to setting up databases or indexes that contain basic information about children and young people to help professionals in working together to provide early support to children, young people and their families.

The following agencies can be *required* to disclose information for inclusion in the database:

- The agencies identified under s11
- Governing bodies of maintained schools
- Governing body of further education institution [Education Act 2002]
- Proprietor of independent schools [Education Act 1996]

The following agencies can be *permitted* to disclose information for inclusion in the database:

- Registered child minder / provider of day care [Children Act 1989]
- Voluntary organisations
- Commissioners of Inland Revenue
- Registered social landlord

‘Other’ partners may also be invited/wish to sign up to this Compact. They may be agencies actively engaged in work with, or on behalf of, children, young people and their families such as community, voluntary and business agencies which are outside the regulatory framework. By adopting the Compact voluntarily they can be included in planning and other activities to improve the outcomes for children and young people in Halton. Examples of other partners include:

- Children, young people and families’ representation groups
- Primary, secondary and special schools (private and grant-maintained) and Pupil Referral Units
- Nurseries and other day care providers
- Voluntary child care organisations
- Connexions (where not part of the local authority)
- GPs and other primary care professionals
- Community organisations
- Jobcentre Plus

This list is not meant to be exhaustive, but illustrates the range of partners whose activities impact on children and their families, and who could contribute positively to the Compact.

7. ACCOUNTABILITY

This Compact sets down the framework of accountabilities in order to ensure that all relevant and other partners are clear about their roles and responsibilities within the local arrangements:

The Director of Children’s Services has the lead role in establishing and maintaining the inter-agency governance arrangements, including overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with the Compact.

The Lead Member for Children's Services has responsibility for ensuring that sound governance arrangements and a clear framework of accountability are in place, and has a leadership role in engaging local communities within the local authority and across partner agencies.

Halton Children and Young People Alliance Board. The Compact is jointly owned by all members, and the Alliance Board is responsible for monitoring compliance with the Compact, offering strategic leadership and direction and driving through change. The Board shall be accountable to the "relevant" partners.

The Board will consist of senior representatives of key partner agencies. Representatives will have sufficient seniority within their own agencies to make decisions, commit funding and resources and drive and manage change. The initial membership of the Alliance Board will be:

- Strategic Director Children & Young Peoples Services, Halton Borough Council
- Lead Member for Children's Services, Halton Borough Council
- Chief Executive, Halton Borough Council
- Chief Executive, Greater Merseyside Connexions
- Chief Executive, Strategic Health Authority
- Chair of Halton Area Child protection Committee/ Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- Strategic Director, Health & Community
- Operational Director, Financial Services, HBC
- Superintendent, Cheshire Police
- Chief Officer, Cheshire Probation Service
- 5 Boroughs Partnership
- Chief Executive, HHT, Housing Management
- Chief Executive, Halton PCT
- Director of Public Health
- Head of Child & Family Services, Halton PCT
- Head of Service, Halton & Warrington YOT
- Assistant Director, Barnardo's
- Executive Director, Learning Skills Council
- Principal, Halton College
- Headteacher, Bankfield School
- Headteacher, All Saints Primary School
- Operational Director, Children's Services, CYPD, Halton Borough Council
- Operational Director, Student Services & Lifelong Learning, CYPD, Halton Borough Council
- Children's Commissioning Manager, Halton Borough Council
- Children's Services Strategic Manager
- Representative of Halton faith groups.

Any changes in the initial membership shall be agreed by the "relevant" partners.

Responsibilities of the Board include:

- Developing joint measures for improving local outcomes for children and young people, including the establishment of pooled funds and the provision of staff, goods, services, accommodation or other resources as appropriate.
- Establishing the strategic direction of the Alliance
- Ensuring accountability to the public for the performance of the Alliance
- Developing and implementing the Children and Young People's Plan
- Developing mechanisms for realigning resources and commissioning new services.
- Sharing information including performance management information and details of staffing, intervention/activity budgets and locally agreed performance targets.
- Ensuring that effective information, performance management and risk management systems are in place.
- Developing shared local performance targets to measure outcomes.
- Receiving regular progress reports from the task groups.
- Giving consideration to, and where appropriate, ratifying all significant service developments, strategies and plans concerning children and young people.
- Ensuring wide participation in the planning and delivery of services via a robust communication, consultation and participation strategy, to include children, young people, parents and the Children and Young People's Stakeholder Forum.
- Developing and publishing a comprehensive complaints procedure.
- Developing arrangements that address failures of services in meeting targets and/or complying with this Compact.
- Ensuring there is good joint working, with integrated services where appropriate, to prevent duplication, address gaps in provision and optimise the use of resources.
- Publishing an annual report and business plan with clear objectives and targets. This should include financial details and budget plans.

Children and Young People's Stakeholders Forum

The Stakeholders Forum will act as a reference and consultation group for the Alliance Board and its related groups. The Forum will enable the two-way dissemination of information regarding services to children and young people. It will also enable consultation regarding all significant service developments, strategies and plans concerning children and young people. A wide range of local statutory, voluntary, community and private sector agencies will be represented on the forum.

Parents and Carers Forum

This Forum will act as a reference group for the Children and Young People's Alliance Board. The Forum will ensure that effective consultation with parents and carers is built into the design and delivery of services and will inform commissioning arrangements. The Forum will also enable parents and carers to receive information on key issues and to comment on relevant plans,

strategies and guidance, including the Children and Young People's Plan. Membership of the Forum will be open to all parents and carers of children and young people who reside in Halton.

Children and Young People Consultation and Participation Arrangements

Arrangements are in place for the establishment of a Borough wide Youth Forum, and for the election of a Member of Youth Parliament for Halton. The Youth Forum will act as a reference group for the Alliance Board. This will ensure that the views of children and young people are taken into account at all stages of the planning and delivery of services.

Task Groups and their Sub Groups

The key **objectives** of the task groups are as follows:

- Undertaking strategic planning of services relevant to the theme of the group, ensuring services are co-ordinated.
- Gathering and reporting information regarding local need, including unmet need, in order to inform the Joint Commissioning Strategy for Children and Young People.
- Monitoring and contributing to the work of the Mini-alliances Partnership boards and service-specific planning groups which fall within the remit of the task group, including receiving reports on the progress against strategies and the management of associated pooled budgets.
- Participating with other groups within the Children and Young People's planning structure to ensure the needs and views of children and young people and their families are taken into account in the planning process.
- Making regular reports to the Children and Young People Alliance Board, including up to date performance information.

The key initial **tasks** of the task groups will be:

- Developing, agreeing and regularly reviewing terms of reference.
- Developing appropriate protocols.
- Developing and agreeing reporting mechanisms.
- Liaising with the Alliance Board and other task groups regarding these developments to ensure consistency across the task groups.

Expectations of Board Members

Members of the Alliance Board have collective responsibility and accountability for its decisions. Members should strive to make decisions that

further the aims of the Alliance in improving the outcomes for children and young people in Halton rather than the interests of their own agency.

Members of the Alliance Board are expected to work in partnership in line with the *Nolan principles* for the conduct of people in public life:

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership

Furthermore, Board Members agree to comply with the *Principles of Good Public Service Governance* as set out in Appendix 1.

Expectations of Partner Agencies

Improved outcomes for children and young people will only be achieved and sustained by agencies working together to design and deliver integrated services around the needs of children and young people. This will require whole-system change, and the active commitment, co-operation and participation of all partner agencies.

All partner agencies agree to make the following commitments toward arrangements to improve well-being and safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Halton:

- Active membership of appropriate partnership forums (Children and Young People's Stakeholders Forum, Children and Young People Alliance Board, Local Safeguarding Children Board etc).
- Signing up to the vision at Chief Executive level.
- Signing up and contributing to the Children and Young People's Plan.
- Delivery of services within agreed multi-agency procedures and protocols.
- Clarity about each agency's contribution to each of the 5 outcomes.
- Ensuring that all new and significant service developments/strategies/plans are ratified by the Alliance Board to ensure a cohesive strategic plan is delivered across the partners.
- Ensuring that internal policies, procedures and protocols demonstrate evidence of the delivery of both Children Act 2004 s.10 & s.11 duties.
- Information sharing.
- Commitment to training and workforce development.
- Use of common processes such as the *Common Assessment Framework*.
- Signing up to locally-agreed performance targets regarding children and young people.
- Signing up to a shared Performance Management Framework.
- Contributing to the arrangements for improving the well-being and safeguarding children arrangements by the provision of resources including staff, goods, services, accommodation or other resources as appropriate.

- Contributing to the establishment and maintenance of pooled funds as appropriate.

8. ACTION TO BE TAKEN IN CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE AGENCIES ARE IDENTIFIED AS FAILING TO CO-OPERATE

If commissioned services fail to deliver services appropriately, this will be addressed via the contract monitoring process.

If service providers, agencies or commissioners are perceived as failing in their duty to deliver services appropriately, or not evidencing their co-operation to improve the well-being of children and young people, the chair of the Service Specific Group will seek to agree appropriate levels of practice and engagement. If the situation is not resolved at this stage, the chair will involve the chair of the appropriate Task Group. If the matter is not resolved, or no improvement is forthcoming, the issue will be addressed by the Chair of the Alliance Board, who will refer the matter to the Chief Executive of the agency concerned if no resolution is forthcoming.

Examples of situations where agencies will be seen as failing in their duties include:

- Consistent non-attendance at meetings.
- Evidence that the agency is practicing outside of agreed processes.
- Spending outside of agreed boundaries.
- Strategies being developed outside of agreed processes (e.g. not being taken to Alliance Board for agreement)
- Failure to contribute to the arrangements for improving well-being and safeguarding arrangements by the provision of resources.

APPENDIX 1:

THE PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PUBLIC SERVICE GOVERNANCE

The Independent Commission on Good Governance in Public Services has identified six core principles of good public service governance (OPM and CIPFA (2004) *The Good Governance Standard for Public Services*). In order to work as effectively as possible, arrangements under this Compact will be in line with these principles:

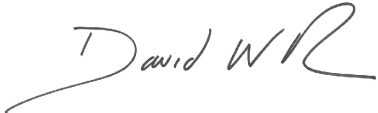
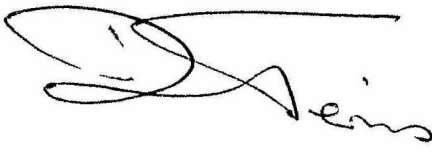
1. **Good governance means focusing on the organisation's purpose and on outcomes for citizens and service users**
 - Being clear about the organisation's purpose and its intended outcomes for citizens and service users
 - Making sure that users receive a high quality service
 - Making sure that taxpayers receive value for money
2. **Good governance means performing effectively in clearly defined functions and roles**
 - Being clear about the functions of the governing body
 - Being clear about the responsibilities of non-executives and the executive, and making sure that those responsibilities are carried out
 - Being clear about relationships between governors and the public
3. **Good governance means promoting values for the whole organisation and demonstrating the values of good governance through behaviour**
 - Putting organisational values into practice
 - Individual governors behaving in ways that uphold and exemplify effective governance
4. **Good governance means taking informed, transparent decisions and managing risk**
 - Being rigorous and transparent about how decisions are taken
 - Having and using good quality information, advice and support
 - Making sure that an effective risk management system is in operation
5. **Good governance means developing the capacity and capability of the governing body to be effective**
 - Making sure that appointed and elected governors have the skills, knowledge and experience they need to perform well
 - Developing the capability of people with governance responsibilities and evaluating their performance, as individuals and as a group
 - Striking a balance, in the membership of the governing body, between continuity and renewal



6. Good governance means engaging stakeholders and making accountability real



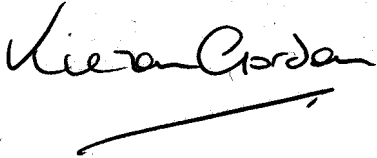
- Understanding formal and informal accountability relationships
- Taking an active and planned approach to dialogue with and accountability to the public
- Taking an active and planned approach to responsibility to staff
- Engaging effectively with institutional stakeholders

By signing up to this Compact, agencies agree to work in partnership and undertake their responsibilities as outlined in the body of the Compact.


25th January 2006

PARTNER	SIGNATORY
<i>Halton Borough Council</i>	 Chief Executive
<i>Halton Borough Council</i>	 Director of Children's Services
<i>Halton Borough Council</i>	<i>No electronic signature</i> Lead Member for Children's Services

Halton Area Child Protection Committee/ Local Safeguarding Children Board	 Chairperson
Police Authority	<i>No electronic signature</i> Superintendent
Cheshire Probation Board	 Chief Officer

Halton and Warrington Youth Offending Team	 Head of Service
Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority	<i>No electronic signature</i> Chief Executive
St Helens - Halton Primary Care Trust	 Director of Child & Family Health
Greater Merseyside Connexions	

	Chief Executive
Greater Merseyside Learning & Skills Council	<i>No electronic signature</i> Executive Director
5 Boroughs Partnership	 Director of Children's and Psychological Therapy Services
Halton Association of Secondary Headteachers	<i>No electronic signature</i> Representative
Halton Housing Trust	 Chief Executive
Director of Public Health	<i>No electronic signature</i> Director
Elected Representative of the Voluntary and Community Sector	 Assistant Director Barnardo's
Halton College	<i>No electronic signature</i>

	Principal
Anglican and Roman Catholic Diocesan Representative	 Headteacher, Runcorn All Saints' CE School
Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service	<i>No electronic signature</i> Team Manager

***Draft Agreement for Working in Partnership
Community and Voluntary Sector
Salford Children's Services Directorate - CSD***

Agreement

1. Introduction

This agreement is a public commitment between Children's Services Directorate and the voluntary and community sectors to work together in partnership across Salford to better meet the needs of and improve outcomes for children, young people and families. It builds on the commitments already made in the Salford Compact on Relations between the Statutory and Third Sector in Salford and the agreed codes of good practice¹.

This agreement recognises the specific contributions made by the voluntary and community sector in the development of the social inclusion agenda locally, the achievement of the 5 outcomes in Every Child Matters and the delivery of services to and engagement with young people, children and families. It recognises the role of Salford Children's Services Directorate as the lead statutory agency in the strategic planning and commissioning of services and identifies the ways in which a successful partnership with the voluntary and community sector can support this role.

2. Shared Vision

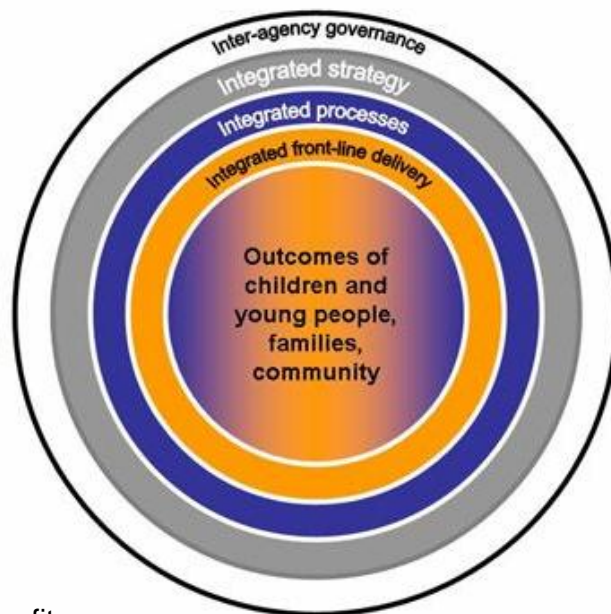
"Our vision in Salford is to work together to create a healthy, safe and enjoyable city; where all children and young people and their families and communities are valued. One where they can make a positive contribution and gain economic wellbeing whilst achieving their potential"². It is our vision to work together to improve the quality of life for communities in Salford and to better meet the needs of and improve outcomes for children, young people and families in a spirit of mutual respect and trust.

3. Shared Aims

1. This agreement will underpin the partnership relationship, improving communication and understanding and supporting the further development of mutual respect and trust.
2. The agreement identifies the ways in which the voluntary and community sector contributes to:
 - Interagency Governance – through the Children and Young People's Partnership structures and the Salford Safeguarding Children Board
 - Integrated Strategy – playing a full role in the development and review of the Children and Young People's Plan and plans that fall from this e.g. 13-19 Strategy, Parenting Strategy,
 - Integrated Processes – Common Assessment Framework, ContactPoint, Workforce Development, Commissioning
 - Integrated Frontline delivery – through Children's Centres, Extended Schools, Integrated and Targeted Youth Support and other partnership delivery arrangements

¹ Copies of the Compact and all of the Codes of Good Practice are available at www.communitiesinsalford.org.uk – select the Compact page

² Salford Children and Young People's Plan 2006



4. Shared Benefits

- Communities, young people, children and families gain where agencies work well together
- The objectives of individual organisations are more easily realised through partnership working
- The relationships between sectors will be improved
- Working together brings added value to all organisations involved in the process
- Achieving improved outcomes for children, families and young people
- Development of the workforces in both sectors

5. Salford Children's Services Directorate(CSD) – Role and Undertakings

Salford Children's Services Directorate is the lead statutory agency in the strategic planning and commissioning of services for children, young people and families. We aim to improve the development and delivery of CSD policy, services, processes and products, through effective engagement with the Voluntary and Community Sector. Implementation of this Strategy will help CSD to provide a more effective, efficient and socially inclusive service to a larger section of our customer base, which is otherwise hard to reach. Through working more closely with VCS organisations we will develop more effective engagement with hard to reach groups. We aim to make best use of the role and vital experience of the VCS in providing:

- a strong focus on the needs of service users
- knowledge and expertise to meet complex personal needs and tackle difficult social issues
- an ability to be flexible and offer joined-up service delivery
- the capacity to build users' trust
- the experience and independence to innovate

We undertake to:

- Work with key Voluntary and Community and Sector Partners through the sector's Forum to Salford Children and Young People's Partnership – VOCAL
- Ensure and resource the representation of the wider voluntary and community sector through VOCAL at the agreed partnership structures (see appendix A)
- Ensure and resource the full involvement of the wider voluntary and community sector through VOCAL Representatives in the development of integrated strategies
- Involve the VCS in the development and delivery of integrated processes, reviewing their use by and accessibility to the VCS
- Strengthen and develop the involvement of the VCS in the integrated delivery of front line services
- Respect and value the independence of the VCS
- Identify and develop opportunities for joint working, and for progressing new and innovative ways of providing services through the VCS as intermediaries and as specialists in understanding our customers' needs.
- Build capacity in the voluntary and community sector including when ensuring compliance with quality standards
- Build capacity in the VCS through integrated workforce development
- Encourage volunteering among CSD workforce by highlighting the benefits of volunteering and promoting volunteering opportunities and awareness of Salford's volunteering strategy
- Ensure compliance with the requirements of all the equalities legislation as well as the Compact Code of Good Practice on working with Black and Minority Ethnic Voluntary and Community Sector organisations
- Appoint a very senior (AD level) VCS Champion, to oversee the Directorate's engagement with the VCS
- Ensure awareness and implementation of the Salford Compact on relations between the Statutory and the Voluntary and Community Sector and publication and dissemination of this agreement throughout the Directorate so that the agreement is fully embedded into directorate business
- Implement the appropriate recommendations of the Treasury's Cross-Cutting Review on the role of the Voluntary and Community Sector in service delivery
- Acknowledge the differing responsibilities and accountabilities of the public and voluntary and community sectors
- Commit to resolve any disagreements in a constructive way, in a spirit of mutual understanding and respect

6. Salford Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) role and undertakings

'The voluntary and community sectors are made up of a wide range of organisations – from national charities staffed almost entirely by paid professionals to community groups run by a single volunteer.

...The children's trust will need to take account of the diversity of the sectors when it involves voluntary and community organisations in its activities.³

³ Every Child Matters : Engaging the Voluntary and Community Sectors in Children's Trusts,
Department for Education and Skills

VOCAL is the forum of Voluntary and Community organisations working with children, young people and families in Salford. It brings together a wide range of organisations to⁴:

- provide broad ranging representation of the interests and views of voluntary and community organisations working with children and young people in Salford.
- represent these views to Salford Children and Young People's Partnership and other strategic or commissioning bodies as agreed by the Forum

VOCAL is accountable to its membership organisations and provides the opportunity for partners to work with the diversity of the VCS in improving outcomes for children, young people and families.

We undertake to:

- Operate an inclusive membership that aims to truly reflect the interests of diverse Salford voluntary and community organisations working with children, young people and families
- Share relevant information with VOCAL members and their wider networks about key developments affecting those working with children and young people in Salford
- Provide a central Forum through which consultation with a range of voluntary and community organisations and their service users may be undertaken and include other Forums in this process as appropriate
- Hold meetings open to all our members at least 4 times a year
- Encourage discussion of best practice in working with children, young people and their families, building the capacity of the voluntary and community sector to undertake such work
- Advocate for and lobby on behalf of the voluntary and community sector, providing a means to influence key decision makers
- Elect representatives to the Salford Children and Young People's Partnership Board ensuring that the expertise and interests of the voluntary sector are included in key developments
- Support representatives and the core strategic work of the forum through regular Representatives meetings
- Provide a means through which partnership working between statutory and voluntary organisations, and within the voluntary sector, might be developed, enabling a more strategic approach to developmental commissioning⁵
- Recognise the different and complementary roles of public agencies and the voluntary and community sector
- Highlight the importance of voluntary action and community involvement to an inclusive and democratic society and the importance of an independent and diverse voluntary and community sector
- Ensure awareness and implementation of the Salford Compact on relations between the Statutory and the Voluntary and Community Sector

⁴ VOCAL Terms of Reference, nominated Representatives and Representation protocol are available at www.communitiesinsalford.org.uk – select the VOCAL page

⁵ Developmental commissioning is “the process of assessing need, identifying resources available, planning how to use the resources, arranging service delivery, and reviewing the service and reassessing need...Commissioning creates the levers for service change” From *Vision to Reality: Transforming Outcomes for Children and Families*, 2004 Inter Agency group

and of this agreement throughout our membership so this agreement is fully embedded into VOCAL's business.

- Acknowledge the differing responsibilities and accountabilities of the public and third sectors
- Commit to resolve any disagreements in a constructive way, in a spirit of mutual understanding and respect

7. Resolution of Disagreements

Step 1 – resolve with parties involved

Step 2 – Third tier manager in CSD & VOCAL Reps/Vice Chair

Step 3 – VCS Champion CSD & VOCAL Chair

Step 4 – SCYPB

Alongside this legal advice may need to be taken at the early stages in some cases due to time limits of legal processes. This will operate alongside the above process.

Timescales within CSD complaints policy

8. Commissioning Plan

An action/implementation plan to demonstrate what we need to commission/do in order to make this work.

9. Review of this agreement

Annual Review by signatories or their chosen representatives

10. Glossary, Resources and Contacts

11. Signatories

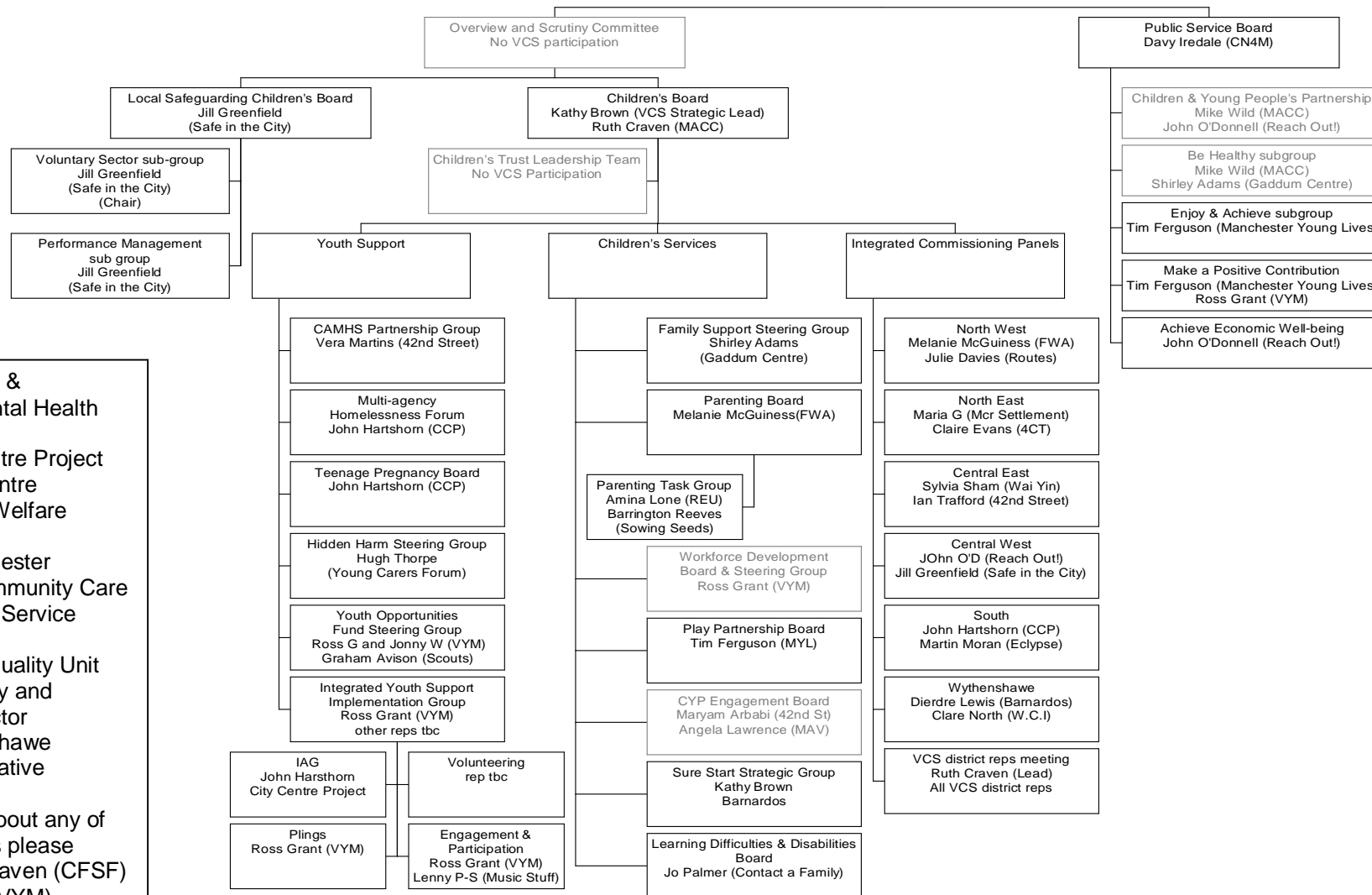
To be agreed – suggested:

Director CSD

Lead Member

VOCAL Chair

Salford CVS Chief Officer



CAMHS – Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service
CCP – City Centre Project
FC – Family Centre
FWA – Family Welfare Association
MACC – Manchester Alliance for Community Care
NSF – National Service Framework
REU – Race Equality Unit
VCS – Voluntary and Community Sector
WCI – Wythenshawe Community Initiative

For more info about any of these structures please contact Ruth Craven (CFSF) or Ross Grant (VYM)

5.0 VCFS Job Descriptions

5.1 Hub Chairperson Cheshire VCFS Hub

The HUB has acknowledged that it requires a person to undertake the role of Chairperson and in order for that role to be effectively filled possible volunteers need to understand what the role is about and the commitment required.

It is expected that the role of the chairperson will be focused on three key activities:

1. Setting the agenda
2. Chairing the HUB meetings
3. Reviewing matters arising (in preparation for meetings)

The above tasks will take place with support from Jon Reese (Children's Fund Administration support) & Alison Navarro in the short term and it is expected that as the HUB further develops more sustainable support to assist in the three key activities will be provided.

In delivering the above however it is also expected that the Chairperson will be in contact with the HUB rep and deputy to the CYPSP to offer support as well as on occasion acting as a sounding board on behalf of the HUB (where appropriate)

5.2 Children and Young People Voluntary Sector Representatives

Person Specification

Any person acting as the voluntary sector representative will ideally be:

1. From a voluntary youth sector organisation and will have the capacity and skills to fulfil a liaison role.
2. Able to demonstrate that they have a mandate from the voluntary youth sector for taking up this role. This may be through direct election, open forum selection or membership nomination
3. Interested and involved in working with children and young people
4. Aware of and have an understanding of the key processes currently being developed within Children and Young Peoples Strategic Partnerships, such as:
 - Common Assessment Framework
 - Workforce Development
 - ICT and Information Sharing
 - CommissioningHave the skills to discuss these issues within the Forum
5. Aware of and have links with a variety of agencies involved in supporting young people
6. Committed to acting as the representative of voluntary groups collectively rather than their own particular group
7. Aware of the quality standards that need to be achieved by an organisation that works with young people
8. Able to operate strategically within the Every Child Matters and Youth Matters agenda.

Role Definition

The role of the Voluntary Sector Representative will include:

1. Collecting together issues of importance from other voluntary youth groups in the area to bring to forum meetings
2. Disseminating the decisions made by forum to voluntary groups within the area
3. Acting as an advocate for the voluntary youth sector as a whole rather than their own organisation
4. Acting as a critical friend for the statutory services
5. Identifying the needs of young people and assessing priorities
6. Promoting joint working with statutory organisations to the voluntary sector leading to greater partnership working
7. Identifying which organisations are best placed to deliver specific services to young people, including allocation of funding
8. Liaising with other agencies and organisations to ensure that resources are best utilised, reducing duplication and competition.

5.3 Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector Strategic Lead Role (Children, Young People and Families)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Currently the children, young people and families element of the voluntary, community and faith sector in Manchester has a well developed supporting infrastructure through the Child & Family Support Forum and Voluntary Youth Manchester (both part of the Community Network for Manchester). There are limitations however on the capacity of these infrastructures to maximise the engagement of the voluntary and community sector (VCS) including faith based organisations.
- 1.2 Early in 2006 the Manchester Children's Board agreed to extend its membership to include a member of the VCS. In recognition of the need for this person to play a more dedicated role in improving the strategic engagement of the VCS, this role is now being expanded from a two-day a month voluntary role to a two day a week resourced post.
- 1.3 We are inviting proposals from individuals with operational and management oversight within a voluntary and community sector organisation providing services for children, young people and families in the city of Manchester to deliver this piece of work.
- 1.4 The engagement of the VCS is a key part of the Every Child Matters agenda. This piece of work aims to strengthen the ability of voluntary, community and faith sector organisations to be involved at every level of children's trust arrangements.
- 1.5 Without an appropriate infrastructure to allow communication and clarification of issues at different levels the full potential of the sector will not be harnessed. The infrastructure needs to be capable of not just providing a voice for the VCS but also to achieve demonstrable improvements in outcomes for children, young people and families
- 1.6 This piece of work will complement current work around strategic engagement provided by existing infrastructure support. It will provide an opportunity to participate on key strategic groups and develop a more comprehensive picture of how to maximise opportunities for collaboration between the VCS and statutory agencies to ensure the best opportunity to deliver the five outcomes locally will be gained.

2. Role Description

- 2.1 To act as a VCS champion for children, young people and families and play a lead strategic role accountable to the sector through existing networks
 - 2.2 To collaborate with partners to support the delivery of effective children's trust arrangements and improved outcomes by participating on key strategic groups including the Children's Board, Integrated Commissioning and District Collaboration Board and Workforce Development Board
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- 2.3 To highlight issues and emerging themes that need addressing to ensure the voluntary and community sector play a full role in the children and young people's agenda
 - 2.4 To share best practice regarding engagement of the VCS and highlight to Children's services and existing infrastructures any barriers identified
 - 2.5 To promote collaboration between voluntary, community and statutory partners to challenge poor practice and improve support mechanisms
 - 2.7 To contribute to developing best practice regarding the delivery of services by the voluntary and community sector in accordance with Manchester's commissioning strategy
 - 2.8 To maintain clear communication channels with the existing infrastructure including the Child & Family Support Forum, Voluntary Youth Manchester and local district networks
 - 2.9 To attend and actively participate in Child & Family Support Forum meetings
 - 2.9 The post holder will be responsible for the day to day administration of their work

3. Person Specification

3.1 Knowledge and Experience

- i. Senior operational and management experience within a voluntary and community sector organisation providing services for children, young people and families in the city of Manchester
- ii. A good understanding of central and local government legislation and policy in respect of children, young people and families and its implications for the VCS
- iii. A good understanding of the current issues facing local voluntary and community organisations working with children, young people and families in Manchester
- iv. An understanding of the role of the Compact in defining the relationship between the voluntary and statutory sector and how it should be used
- v. Experience of operating performance management systems
- vi. Significant experience of working with organisations and individuals within the VCS

3.2 Skills and Abilities

- i. Good communication skills and the ability to communicate at all levels with a variety of voluntary, community and statutory agencies
 - ii. Ability to engage in discussion to influence, support and inform strategic planning and decision-making
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- iii. Credibility within the voluntary and community sector to speak on key issues with clarity and authority
 - iv. Ability to work in partnership in a positive way with senior managers from other statutory and voluntary and community sector organisations
 - v. Ability to commit to on average 2 days per week to this role

4. Location and Reporting Arrangements

- 4.1 The person undertaking the role will remain employed by and located within their own organisation.
- 4.2 The contract will be between Manchester Alliance for Community Care (MACC) and the delivery organisation and will be dependent upon the nominated member of staff being available. It is not transferable to other employees without the explicit consent of MACC under instruction from the Child & Family Support Forum.
- 4.3 For contract monitoring purposes, the person undertaking the role will report to a small management group including MACC and other VCS groups and provide quarterly reports showing
 - progress against the agreed action plan
 - timesheets
 - financial evidence
- 4.4 In addition there will be a multi-agency reference group. The purpose of this group will be to provide mentoring support to the person undertaking the role and to help shape the direction of the work

5. Format of Bids and Selection Process

- 5.1 We wish to invite voluntary and community sector organisations to bid to deliver this piece of work. The bid document should be no more than 3 sides of A4 and include:
 - (i) a statement from the Chair or Chief Executive of the organisation nominating the member of staff which the organisation proposes for the role
 - (ii) a method statement outlining the relevant experience, knowledge and track record of the nominee
 - (iii) a statement from the nominee setting out his/her vision for the role and why he/she is interested in taking it on
 - (iv) an outline budget showing how the funds will be used to enable the nominee to deliver the role (other resources are available to support the delivery of this project e.g. meeting rooms, photocopying)

6. Bid Evaluation

- 6.1 Bids will be evaluated against the following criteria:
 - (i) Relevant experience and knowledge, skills and ability relating to section 3 Experience of working within Manchester
 - (ii) Knowledge of relevant legislation for children and young people's service providers (interview only)
 - (iii)
-

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- (iv) Commitment to working for the duration of the project to March 2008
 - (v) Commitment by your organisation to support the application and ability to provide day to day supervision

6.2 An initial short-listing of applicants will take place. Those short-listed will be invited for interview together with the Chair or Chief Executive of the organisation nominating the member of staff which the organisation proposes for the role

6.3 The contract is offered to fund a role for one person for 14 hours per week until March 31st 2008. There is however a long term commitment to continue this role post March 2008 and it is anticipated that this contract will be renewed on a year by year basis (pending an annual review).

7. Budget

7.1 A total of £12,500 is available until 31st March 2008.

8. Timescales and Milestones

8.1 The project completion date is 31st March 2008

8.2 The following schedule outlines the key milestones and timescale to be adhered to:

Milestone	Deadline
(i) Tender submissions	Friday 11 th May
(ii) Tender interviews	Friday 25 th May
(iii) Confirmation meeting	W/c 28 th May
(iv) First Children's Board meeting	4 th June
(vi) Reporting	Monthly from July 07
(vii) Project Completion date	31 st March 2008

9. Tender Submissions and additional information

9.1 The closing date for tender submissions is Friday 11th May. Please email submissions to ruth@macc.org.uk or post to Ruth Craven, MACC, Swan Buildings, 20 Swan Street, M4 5JW. If you would like to discuss anything within the brief you can contact Ruth on 0161 834 9823.

Salford Council for Voluntary service, Children, Young People and Families
Co Coordinator

Job Title Children, Young People and Families Co Coordinator

Grade Points 35 – 37 - CVS Co-Coordinator Grade

Hours 35 per week

Responsible to CVS Chief Officer

Main purpose of the post:

To act as a Voluntary and Community Sector lead for children, young people and families and play a lead strategic role accountable to the sector through VOCAL and Youth Nexus. To provide the strategic lead for children, young people and families work within Salford Council for Voluntary Service accountable to the Chief Officer and Trustees.

Main Tasks

- 1 To act as a Voluntary and Community Sector lead for children, young people and families and play a lead strategic role accountable to the sector through VOCAL. To provide the strategic lead for and co-ordination of children, young people and families work within Salford Council for Voluntary Service accountable to the Chief Officer and Trustees.
 - 2 To collaborate with partners to support the delivery of effective children's trust arrangements and improved outcomes by participating on key strategic groups including the SCYPP Board, 13- 19 Partnership Board, Safeguarding Children Board, Integrated Commissioning, Integrated Youth Support Service, Workforce Development and the Salford Agreement. To effectively represent and advocate for voluntary and community organisations in this role liaising closely with other VOCAL Reps.
 - 3 To highlight issues and emerging themes that need addressing to ensure that the voluntary and community sector play a full role in the children and young people's agenda.
 - 4 To share best practice regarding engagement of the Voluntary and Community Sector and highlight to Children's services and existing infrastructures (VOCAL, Salford CVS) any barriers identified.
 - 5 To promote collaboration between voluntary, community and statutory partners to challenge poor practice, improve support mechanisms and contribute to developing best practice in the delivery of services by the voluntary and community sector.
 - 6 To support the development of skills for collaborative working within the voluntary and community sector.
-

-
- 7 To support the development of joint strategies, initiatives and partnership agreements, consulting with and feeding back to the wider voluntary and community sector at key development stages.
 - 8 To lead on the agreed workforce development program for VOCAL (2007-2010) reporting back to VOCAL core Reps group, consulting with VOCAL members, liaising with Children's Directorate Workforce Development Lead and reporting back to the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC).
 - 9 To manage the Salford Safeguarding Standards project, including line management of any staff or contracted service deliverer, contract compliance and reporting mechanisms to CWDC and liaison with SCYPP & SSCB.
 - 10 To manage any staff appointed to lead on children or young people's development work e.g. Nexus Development Worker, Safeguarding Standards Accreditation Officer.
 - 11 To maintain clear communication channels with VOCAL members, Chair and Core Representatives group and Nexus members.
 - 12 To co-ordinate up to 4 VOCAL meetings per annum open to all VCS organisations ensuring the agenda and invited speakers reflect both the key interests of VOCAL members and contribute to strategic developments within SCYPP and LSCB.
 - 13 To support VOCAL Representatives in their role, attending and taking an active part in Core Representatives group and other meetings as requested.
 - 14 To liaise formally with members of relevant local, regional and national partners whose work is relevant to that of VOCAL & Nexus ensuring that the network is aware of emerging priorities.
 - 15 To work with the CVS Organisational Development Manager to ensure the effective development and implementation of work to support children, young people and families VCO's within the CVS Business Plan.

This job description is a guide to the work you will be required to undertake and represents a range of responsibilities commensurate with the grade of the post. The duties and responsibilities of this post will be subject to review within CVS annual staff appraisal.

Person Specification

Knowledge and Experience

- vii. Significant experience of working with organisations and individuals in the voluntary sector.
 - viii. A good understanding of central and local government legislation and policy in respect of children, young people and families, its implications for the VCS and context for Local Authorities.
 - ix. A good understanding of the current issues facing local voluntary and
-

community organisations working with children, young people and families in Salford

- x. An understanding of the role of the Compact in defining the relationship between the voluntary and statutory sector and how it should be used.
- xi. Experience of negotiating and/or managing services under contract to a statutory agency.
- xii. Proven management experience within a voluntary and community sector organisation providing services for children, young people or families.

Skills and Abilities

- vi. Good communication skills and the ability to communicate at all levels with a variety of voluntary, community and statutory agencies.
- vii. Ability to engage in discussion to influence, support and inform strategic planning and decision-making.
- viii. Ability to develop, support and sustain networks and to evidence accountability.
- ix. Ability to work in partnership in a positive way with senior managers from statutory and voluntary and community sector organisations.
- x. Ability to work on own initiative, plan and organise workload and meet short deadlines.
- xi. Demonstrate commitment to the implementation of equal opportunities in working practices.

Location and Reporting Arrangements

The post holder will be employed and supervised by and located within Salford Council for Voluntary Service.

In addition the post holder will report to VOCAL Reps group for progression of the agreed objectives against an annual work plan.

5.4 Workforce Development Champions

YOUTH FEDERATION

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CHAMPION

RESPONSIBLE TO OPERATIONS DIRECTOR

JOB PURPOSE

Workforce Development with individuals and organisations working with Children and Young people, across the Private, Voluntary and Independent Sectors.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Undertake networking and develop greater partnerships between the private, voluntary and independent sector and Cheshire Children's Services.
2. Undertake a mapping exercise to identify development needs around workforce development with private, voluntary and independent sector organisations culminating in a detailed training needs analysis and a training plan including current training provision within the sectors.
3. Build the knowledge and awareness of the private, voluntary and independent sector in workforce development issues.
4. Develop a particular focus on the development of programmes of workforce development in the following two areas
 - Rural Areas
 - Looked After Children
5. Develop and implement an action plan to ensure take up of the learning and training opportunities by voluntary and community organisations in conjunction with other agencies within Cheshire Children's Services.
6. Ensure voluntary and community organisations have access to relevant and good quality training provision, resources and funding for training provision. Sourcing / signposting to learning / training to meet needs including brokering the relationship between private, voluntary and independent sector organisations and providers.
7. Identify and bring together funding for Workforce Development.
8. Liaising with organisations on the effectiveness of training provision at both an organisational and individual level; collating and evaluating feedback ensuring needs are met.
9. Launch and celebrate the initial findings of the programme through a private, voluntary and independent Workforce Development Conference.

10. Produce a longer term action plan to identify opportunities to sustain and further develop this programme in future years.
11. Prepare regular reports for the Operations Director on the number of participants in specific initiatives and events to ensure that the Federation maintains high levels of interest from existing and potential funders.
12. Notwithstanding the Job Purpose and Duties and Responsibilities included in this job description, The Workforce Development Champion must be prepared to undertake additional tasks, duties and responsibilities at the discretion of the Operations Director and which fall within the strategic and corporate objectives of the Federation (and as appropriate YFTL)

October 2006

See overleaf Annex A

Annex A

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CHAMPION

Responsible to

Operations Director

Responsible for

No direct Human Resource responsibilities

Corporate Responsibility to the Operations Director for

- Developing greater partnership links between the PVI Sector and Cheshire Children's Services.
- Building the knowledge and awareness of the PVI Sector in Workforce Development Issues.
- Building on existing programmes and identify programme development particular in the development of rural communities and grow your own worker programmes within Looked after Children.
- Identifying opportunities to sustain and further develop this programme in future years.
- Compliance with Quality Assurance and Monitoring procedures.

Financial Parameters

Income/expenditure budgets

Non budget expenditure up to pre agreed limits

6.0 Voluntary Sector Reviews

WARRINGTON VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR REVIEW A REVIEW OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE COUNCIL AND THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR (VCS) IN WARRINGTON SUMMARY REPORT NEIL TURTON CONSULTING NOVEMBER 2007

Warrington VCS Review

ABOUT THE REVIEW

In April 2007 Warrington Borough Council commissioned a review of the relationship between the Council and the voluntary and community sector (VCS). The purpose of the review was 'to identify the most efficient and effective way of working to enable the Council and VCS to work together responding to the needs of Warrington residents within the resources available'. The review was set-up to ensure that Warrington is ready to implement the new arrangements detailed in the recent Local Government White Paper: Strong and prosperous communities.

The review was lead by the lead consultant from Neil Turton Consulting who reported to a multi-agency Project Team that consisted of representatives from Warrington Borough Council and the VCS. The review used a range of methods, including interviews and focus groups with over 200 representatives from the VCS and the Council; an analysis of the Warrington Community Information Directory (WCID); a review of current contract, grants and service agreements across all council directorates; a survey of 575 local people using the Citizens' Panel; a review of relevant local strategies and national policy; and learning from good practice.

THE VCS IN WARRINGTON

The review found that Warrington has a large, diverse and active Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS). However, there were a wide variety of views about the purpose of the VCS, with a range of expectations. Although there was no clear picture, the following statements attempt to characterise the VCS.

- The size of the sector
- There are approximately 1,100 VCS organisations in Warrington.
- 42% of VCS organisations work borough wide and 38% operate in a defined local area.
- The estimated annual turnover of the VCS in Warrington is about £40m.
- The nature of the sector
- Most organisations are small, with 40% having a turnover of less than £1,000 per annum, and a further 30% having between £1,000 and £10,000 per annum.
- Almost a quarter of the VCS is related to children and young people (24%), with a further 13% related to hobbies, recreation, arts and social clubs.
- Use of the sector
- 23% of residents said they had used a service or facility provided by the sector in the last 12 months.
- 97% said they were either 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the last service / facility they used.
- On average there are 50% fewer VCS organisations in the most deprived 'inner' wards
- Volunteering
- There are around 22,000 volunteers, which is about 11% of the population of Warrington.

- 34% of residents said they had volunteered in the last 12 months.
- The estimated economic impact of volunteering is about £29m per year.
- Views about what works well
- Good local knowledge, able to engage with local people, reach those the Council could not and have greater local accountability.
- Provide a diverse range of activities, have specialist knowledge and a wide range of skills
- Are flexible, responsive, less bureaucratic and use innovative and creative approaches
- Have passion, commitment and willingness
- Views about what doesn't work well
- Reliant on short-term funding and dependent on the Council
- Not aligned to priorities (e.g. inner wards) and not focused on outcomes
- Fragmented, lack co-ordination and collaboration
- Lack skills (e.g. business & finance)
- Lack capacity, infrastructure & resources

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE COUNCIL AND THE VCS

On the whole the review found a positive relationship between the Council and the VCS. From the Council's perspective there was a varied relationship, with some good examples of work, but characterized by an ad hoc nature. The VCS also reported a varied relationship with the Council, the quality of which was largely dependent upon individual officers and members. However, There is an underlying goodwill and a desire to improve the relationship: to be clearer, strategic, and more consistent. The relationship between the Council and the VCS can be simplified into four main categories: financial, infrastructure support, involvement in decision making, and involvement in service delivery. The following sections describe the current situation in each area and highlight the key issues arising from the review.

FINANCIAL AGREEMENTS

The current situation

Issues arising from the review

During 2006/07 Warrington Borough Council had a total of 792 financial agreements totalling £6.2m with 410 VCS organisations.

The Council spent £3m of its own funds on 723 agreements.

1. Chief Executives
£426,462
2. Children's' Services
£565,603
3. Community Services
£1,225,637
4. Environment Services
£579,278
5. Corporate Services
£297,447

The remaining funds were paid by the Council as the accountable body for other funding sources, e.g. Nursery Education Grants, Supporting People, etc. There were a high proportion of grants (526) distributed by the Council, with 36 contracts and 6 service agreements.

Of the 86 contracts, service agreements and large grants reviewed, most compared well with local priorities. The only area of duplication highlighted by commissioning managers was in the provision of advice services. This needs addressing through the Council's commissioning process.

Each Directorate had their own procedures for the arrangement of funding agreements with the VCS. Children's and Community Services had recently reviewed and improved contracting arrangements in-line with policy guidance. However, the Chief Executives Unit and Environment Services did not have clear commissioning plans for their spend, which totalled over £1.1m in 2006/07. These funds must be allocated using a consistent approach across the Council in-line with Council procedures.

The VCS did not feel involved in the commissioning process, and Council members and VCS organisations were largely unsure of what should be commissioned. Although contracting had been addressed, commissioning is now a key priority. Comments from council members suggest that the VCS is not seen as a strategic partner.

Feedback from the review suggested that the VCS were not able to refocus their attention to new priorities. Mechanisms are required to ensure that the Council, the VCS and partner agencies can respond together. This is a clear role for Warrington Partnership.

The review found that the small grants were very effective, but could be managed locally and better fit strategic priorities.

INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT

Current situation

Issues arising from the review

Infrastructure support to the VCS is provided by the following agencies.

- Warrington Borough Council. A range of support is provided across directorates, including Community Development Team (Community Services), Children's Services Partnership Officer and the Small Grants Service (Environment Services).
- Warrington Council for Voluntary Service
- Warrington Volunteer Centre
- The Gateway Centre
- Members of Warrington Borough Council
- Other VCS organisations provide specific infrastructure support
- A range of themed networks provide peer support

There was a lack of clarity over who is responsible for infrastructure support. Almost no one felt that the support was effective. The view among council managers was that the support was patchy, ad hoc, and uncoordinated. Those VCS organisations that had received support felt that it was useful, but only if they knew how to access it.

It is estimated that about £440,000 is spent on infrastructure support to the VCS. Suggestions for improvement include having a single point of contact, a mixture of agencies, better co-ordination and independent support.

INVOLVEMENT IN PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING

Current situation

Issues arising from the review

There are a number of networks and forums in Warrington which bring together the Council and VCS. Each directorate has its own methods of involvement.

There is a structure to feed in views to the Local Strategic Partnership via the Community Network.

The interviews with VCS organisations found overwhelmingly that they do not feel involved in local decision making or in planning services.

Some found that the networks and forums available do not feel meaningful

Some organisations did not feel informed or aware of the issues

Often there is a lack of capacity to get involved in meetings

There was a feeling of 'tokenism' in some consultation, with a key concern in not getting feedback about how views were used

JOINT WORK IN ACTIVITIES AND SERVICE DELIVERY

Current situation

Issues arising from the review

The Council and VCS work together in service delivery, to run joint events and form partnerships; e.g. shared premises, joint training, and events.

There has been no overall strategic approach to working with the VCS.

The VCS have varied experience of working with different Directorates, with most positive feedback about Community Services.

The VCS experience a lack of joined-up work across the Council, when working with more than one team.

THE LOCAL COMPACT

The state of the local Compact is a good indicator of the state of the relationship.

Over 60% of interviewed from the Council and over 80% from the VCS said that the Compact was not working. The reasons include:

- The nature of the relationship between the Council and VCS is unequal: the Council hold all the power
- The PCT and the Council have both stopped grants at short notice
- It is too complex, not well understood and sets standards that are not achievable
- There is a lack of ownership and it is not embedded across the Council
- It has not had an impact on joint planning, contracts, or the LSP

ABOUT THE DRIVERS FOR CHANGE NATIONAL POLICY

Strong and Prosperous Communities¹ promotes an enhanced role for the VCS as a strategic partner, with a stronger role in the LSP. The White Paper also advocates that the VCS has a key role in representation and influencing policy. The report also highlights that the sector requires adequate capacity building, the need for key

principles for commissioning, the importance of grants in building social capital, and measures to make it easier to transfer assets to community organisations. A range of government documents, for example Our Health Our Care Our Say², Partnerships in Public Services³ and The future role of the third sector in social and economic regeneration⁴ all describe the central role that the VCS need to play in delivering services to the public and encouraging social enterprise. To achieve the government's aim of increasing the role of the VCS in the delivery of public services, Hearts and Minds⁵ recommends strengthening support to the sector and improving commissioning arrangements through measures such as the National Programme for Third Sector Commissioning, introducing three-year funding agreements and adopting full cost recovery.

LOCAL POLICY AND STRATEGY

The key local strategies are given below together with their impact regarding the VCS.

Strategy

Impact

Warrington Community Strategy & Local Area Agreement

Warrington Partnership needs to play a more central role in support and co-ordination of the VCS

Stronger Together in Warrington

There will be a greater role in neighbourhood management and co-ordination

Engagement Strategy

The VCS will be involved in a planned programme of consultation via themed networks and forums.

Procurement Strategy

A central purpose is to achieve efficiencies, which will also apply to contracts with the VCS

1 Strong and Prosperous Communities: The local government white paper.

Department for Communities and Local Government. October 2006. 2 Our Health Our Care Our Say: A new direction for community services. Department of Health.

January 2006. 3 Partnerships in Public Services: An Action Plan for Third Sector Involvement. Cabinet Office. December 2006. 4 The future role of the third sector in social and economic regeneration: final report. HM Treasury. July 2007. 5 Hearts and minds: commissioning from the voluntary sector. Audit Commission. July 2007.

THE FUTURE RELATIONSHIP

THE ROLE OF THE VCS

The current situation is characterised by a lack of clarity and poor co-ordination. To improve the relationship there first needs to be a better understanding of the role of the sector. The review model attempts to achieve this by describing an 'essential triangle' of objectives through which the VCS can help deliver national and local policy initiatives. These three roles of the VCS are: promoting service delivery to achieve agreed outcomes, developing social capital in local communities, and engaging local people in decision making. The sections below describe each role in more detail and give recommendations for improving the relationship: to be clearer, strategic, and more consistent.

DEVELOPING SOCIAL CAPITAL IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES

The primary role of the VCS is to harness the efforts of local people working together to develop social capital, improve their health & well-being, social inclusion, quality of life and happiness. The review found that the vast majority of VCS organisations fall into this category, numbering about 850 across Warrington. The capacity of these groups to effectively engage with their local communities is crucial to the overall quality of life of Warrington but the review found that the infrastructure support was ineffective, despite costing over £440,000.

Recommendation 1. Infrastructure support to small, local VCS organisations should be improved to become more effective and efficient.

Infrastructure support should be improved through the following measures.

- There should be a single point of contact at the Council, and with other public authorities, to address all queries and signpost to relevant Directorates and/or teams.
- There should be a single, preferably independent, team responsible for all aspects of infrastructure support to local groups, with easy access to the full range of support at neighbourhood level. This 'Community capacity Building Team' should be brought together from the Council (Community Development Team, the Small Grants Service, & Strategic Volunteer Manager), Warrington CVS and the Volunteer Centre. Warrington Partnership should identify a lead agency to take this forward and pool resources from across partner agencies. The Partnership itself should consider this role.
- Develop community anchors, which are local groups with the capacity to support others in the local area and able to take on the ownership and management of community assets.
- A shift in culture from all partners by developing more trust and better understanding of one another's strengths and limitations.

Recommendation 2. Simplify grant funding mechanisms to small, local VCS organisations to ensure resources are focused on priority areas.

This should be achieved through the following measures.

- Pool all small grants, across all public agencies, including the Council & PCT.
- Set-up and manage small a 'Neighbourhood Grants Fund' locally in each of the 5 proposed neighbourhood co-ordination areas. Each area will have its own small grants fund, with a panel deciding priorities locally, but with funds administered centrally.

PROMOTING SERVICE DELIVERY TO ACHIEVE AGREED OUTCOMES

An increasingly important role of the VCS is to achieve agreed outcomes for residents of Warrington through the effective and efficient delivery of high quality socially inclusive services, based on need. The principle mechanism to achieve this is the commissioning process with a contractual relationship between public authorities and the VCS provider. The review found that the key area for improvement is in the commissioning process, with improved capacity required in both the Council (and other public authorities) and the VCS.

Recommendation 3. Improve commissioning processes across all public authorities. Measures to achieve this should include:

- Develop a 'VCS Assembly', a joint forum, to bring together local VCS public service providers, council officers from commissioning directorates and council members.
- All public agencies to develop 'intelligent' commissioning arrangements, based on good practice guidance and in partnership with the VCS
- Phase out all service agreements in favour of either grants or contracts. The financial agreement should be determined by the nature of the outcome to be achieved, with multi-year agreements where appropriate.
- End the funding role of the Chief Executives department, transferring all agreements to Community Services and subject to a consistent commissioning process.
- Ensure that advice services are commissioned in-line with due Council procedures. Community Services need to scope needs, review existing advice SLA's, commission a specification and tender the service.
- Improve joint commissioning arrangements, avoiding multiple contracts and monitoring arrangements
- Ensure application of Compact principles on commissioning and procurement
- Use local authority purchasing power, support VCS in cutting overhead costs.
- Promote a shift in culture from all partners so that public agencies better understand the benefits of services provided by local VCS organisations and the barriers they face, and local VCS service providers better understand nature of the market they operate in and the constraints on public funds.

Recommendation 4. Improve capacity building support to VCS organisations involved in or interested in the delivery of public services and to develop social enterprise. Capacity building should be achieved through the following measures.

- Provide support for VCS organisations to understand and be involved in the commissioning process from the Council's commissioning directorates and other public authorities, for example to help understanding Direct Payments and Individualised Budgets.
- Focus the grant resources managed by the Regeneration Team within Environment Services as a 'VCS investment fund' to support one-off projects to develop the capacity of service delivery VCS and social enterprise in-line with priorities identified by the Sustainable Communities Strategy. Examples of projects supported could include market research, implementing quality standards, training, etc.
- Improve joint working and collaboration within VCS, for example to develop partnerships, collaborations, or 'supply chains' of opportunities with VCS grps.
- Increase sharing of processes and resources, both between the VCS, the Council and partner agencies, and within the VCS itself, is required to achieve efficiencies whilst maintaining high quality services.

ENGAGING LOCAL PEOPLE IN DECISION MAKING

The third key role of the VCS is to facilitate the involvement of communities in local decision making, through forums and networks for information sharing, responding to consultation, advocating & campaigning. The VCS groups to achieve this are based on communities of interest and communities of place and have been identified in the Engagement Strategy, e.g. Older Peoples Engagement Group, Warrington Disability Forum, Children & Young Peoples Forum, and Warrington Ethnic Communities Association, Network Hub, etc.

The overwhelming feedback from the VCS is that they did not feel involved in local decision making, yet there are a range of existing measures that enable this to happen. The review seeks to reinforce and strengthen these, in-line with the Engagement Strategy and the principles of Neighbourhood Management.

Recommendation 5. Implement a planned programme of consultation and involvement with identified groups identified in the LSP's Engagement Strategy

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT

Recommendation 6. Establish a process for on-going strategic development of the relationship between the VCS, the Council, and partner agencies.

To ensure that the plans described above are implemented it is proposed to establish a Third Sector Policy Group - a joint collaborative group to act as the focal point of the relationship between the Third Sector, the Council and other local partners, to monitor, mediate and regulate. To be effective, the group needs to maintain a strategic perspective but be able to ensure practical action can be taken by the constituent organisations. One of the first tasks of the group will be to implement recommended changes to the local Compact.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Most of the proposed structure could be implemented from existing resources. However, there are gaps in current provision and additional resources are required, e.g. to manage and co-ordinate the work of the Community Capacity Building Team, achieving neighbourhood working, and in the transferring community assets. The additional resources could be sourced from central government (e.g. in dealing with community assets), but primarily from Warrington Partnership. The activities described clearly link to LPSA targets, which attract a reward grant for successful completion, as the work of these local VCS groups directly contributes to the ambitions of the Warrington Partnership.

CONCLUSION

The challenge of this review has been to draw together the diversity of views regarding the multiplicity of relationships between the Council and the myriad VCS organisations. The picture is one that almost defies simplicity, yet the recommendations bring more clarity and transparency to the relationships, in-line with government policy, local priorities and the ethos of the VCS in Warrington. The review found a reasonably good relationship between the Council and the VCS, but one that is rooted in an unequal relationship and conducted in an uncoordinated and inefficient way. The review also found much optimism for a clearer, fairer, more equal relationship with the Council: an improved relationship will bring added value to both parties.

The measures proposed to achieve an improved relationship go beyond the responsibility of the Council. The review suggests that it is the responsibility of the LSP, Warrington Partnership, to ensure a productive, effective and efficient relationship, as the health of the VCS is central to its vision

7.0 Local Commissioning Strategies

WARRINGTON CHILDREN'S TRUST JOINT PLANNING AND COMMISSIONING STRATEGY

Warrington's Children and Young People's Plan 2006-2009 confirms 'Our vision is that every child and young person in Warrington has the opportunity to reach their potential. That means providing opportunities for all, with co-ordinated, responsive, preventative and targeted services for those who might otherwise miss those opportunities'

Introduction and Background

The children's trust is the mechanism through which the Director of Children's Services will discharge statutory obligations to safeguard and promote the well-being of all children, as required under the Children Act 2004.

The DfES declares that '...the primary purpose of a Children's Trust is to secure integrated commissioning, leading to more integrated service delivery and better outcomes for children.'¹

The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) has considered at length the obligation to have children's trust arrangements in place by 1 April 2008, and has agreed that :

- The trust will take an over-arching view of all services for children within Warrington (local authority boundary)
- The trust will commission services (defined by the DfES statutory guidance²) to deliver the priorities within the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) for Warrington³
- The CYPSP will, with any necessary modifications, be transformed into the Board of the children's trust
- The CYPSP confirmed its plan to establish a commissioning trust for children at its meeting in March 2006⁴.
- The children's trust in Warrington will not be a provider of services directly but will undertake the commissioning of all children's services to achieve the objectives set out in the Warrington Children and Young People's Plan and underpinned by the Every Child Matters 'Change for Children' agenda.

Purpose

This '**Joint Planning and Commissioning Strategy**' will:

- Share the agreed definition of 'commissioning' to be applied in Warrington
- Detail the services and outcomes encompassed by the strategy
- Define the underlying principles which will shape services to children and families
- Identify the core standards which will be applied to all services commissioned for children
- Describe the joint planning and commissioning cycle
- Describe how the commissioning function will be discharged and resourced
- Identify the initial priorities for jointly-commissioned services, in line with the CYPP

- Describes how performance will be monitored and reviewed
- Indicate priorities for consideration within the governance arrangements required to support the children's trust arrangements
- Set out a timescale and programme for implementation
- Describe how the children's trust will seek to work with partners (i.e. schools, GP practices, hospital trusts etc) to deliver a comprehensive range of services to all children, young people and families in Warrington.

Definition

'Commissioning' is an unfamiliar term to many working within children's services. However, this does not mean that this is an alien concept: merely that the terminology used varies from agency to agency, sector to sector. In the interests of clarity, Warrington CYPSP, as forerunner to established Children's trust arrangements, has agreed a definition of 'commissioning' as: **'The process of specifying, securing and monitoring services in order to meet an identified and prioritised need – both now and in the future'**

Traditionally, planning for services has relied heavily on mapping the usage of existing services and projecting future demand. As a result, the needs of children and young people have often been assessed with reference to the services available, rather than a consideration of which services should be provided to best support their known needs.

'Commissioning' can be discharged at many levels within an organisation:

- Strategic – influencing the over arching direction for all services
- Operational – allowing services to define elements of their work within an overall framework
- Individual – establishing bespoke services for individual children or small groups

Outcomes for Children

This **'Joint Planning and Commissioning Strategy'** is key to the delivery of the five 'Every Child Matters' outcomes for all children and young people in Warrington, namely:

- Be Healthy
- Stay Safe
- Enjoy and Achieve
- Make a Positive Contribution
- Achieve Economic Well-being,

In addition the strategy will support the particular focus on improved outcomes for the two specific groups highlighted in Warrington's Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP), identified as:

- Children who are Looked After (or in the care of the local authority)
- Children with disabilities

This strategy contributes to the discharge of obligations under the Local Area Agreement (LAA) - Children and Families Block, which focuses on three outcome areas complementary to those established in the CYPP, as follows:

- Improving services to disabled children and their families
Working in partnership to make positive changes to the behaviour and lifestyles of young people
- Increase the employment, education and training opportunities for young people with learning difficulties and disabilities, and those leaving care.

Our success will be judged by measuring improved outcomes for children and young people. Services from all sectors, will contribute to our success in safeguarding and promoting the well-being of all children and young people within Warrington.

Services

Partner agencies have agreed that the children's trust will commission all services for children and young people within Warrington.

This '**Joint Planning and Commissioning Strategy**' is equally applicable to all agencies and providers, from any sector, who are involved in the delivery of services to children, young people and families in Warrington.

Some agencies are placed under a 'duty to co-operate' with the local authority under the Children Act 2004, namely:

- The Police Authority
- Youth Offending Team
- Strategic Health Authority
- Primary Care Trust
- Learning and Skills Council
- Connexions (providing services under the Learning and Skills Act 2000)
- '..... other such persons or bodies as the authority considers appropriate'.

These agencies are all represented on CYPSP Board. They were cosignatories to the CYPP; they endorse this strategy and will ensure its implementation within their organisations. The CYPSP enjoys strong representation from the voluntary sector and schools

There is a diverse range of other organisations with which the local authority and other key strategic agencies work to ensure effective and comprehensive partnership arrangements. In particular, front line service providers, especially schools and GP practices, and representatives from the voluntary and community sectors, such as play organisations, youth work providers, culture and leisure services.

Annual Expenditure in Children's Services

There are considerable levels of public funds being applied across all the main statutory agencies in Warrington. Work to disaggregate the spending on children's services, distinct from other activities undertaken by agencies, will

take some considerable time to complete. However, the commitment to plan and apply resources collectively has been taken and will underpin this strategy.

Detailed explorations of funding and resource applications pertinent to services being considered for conversion to a joint commissioned format will be undertaken.

Public funds are used to purchase services from private or voluntary sector partners. The services delivered through these arrangements will be captured into the planning and performance management cycle as contributing elements of the CYPP.

The CYPSP anticipate that charitable funds available to voluntary organisations will also be applied to support the priorities identified in the CYPP.

Guiding principles

This '**Joint Planning and Commissioning Strategy**' and all the work which flows from it, will at all times have regard to guiding principles laid out below.

We will:

- Listen to children, young people and their families, hear what they say and involve them in the design of services to meet their needs
- Champion equality of opportunity and outcomes for children and young people – individually and collectively
- Ensure services appropriately reflect local diversity; are inclusive and fair
- Make the best use of available resources – linking service and financial planning cycles
- Work collaboratively to deliver the best outcomes for children and young people – inter-agency, cross-sector innovative practice, drawing on the expertise of staff engaged in front-line delivery of services.
- Maintain a strategic vision for continued improvement
- Work to support the development of capacity within the children's services market in all sectors. The principles of the local compact for the voluntary sector in Warrington⁶ will be applied to ensure the full involvement in this work..

Commissioning Standards

The standards detailed below will be applied across all children's services in Warrington, underpinning the relationship with all service providers.

These commissioning standards will form the basis of all inter-agency or cross-sector agreements relating to services for children, young people and families. Where services are wholly commissioned from one agency, the monitoring of those services will include an element of challenge against these commissioning standards.

All services commissioned in Warrington will:

- keep children and young people safe from harm (LSCB)
- deliver improved outcomes for children and young people
- actively involve children, young people and families in the design, delivery and evaluation of services
- contribute to the establishment of integrated processes across the whole of the children's services area (ISA, CAF, TAC)
- engage in integrated, cross-sector training and workforce development plans
- comply with the common policies and values as agreed by the trust Board8 - particularly Inclusion, and Equality of Opportunities
- Ensure value for money and seek to ensure equality of opportunity in resource allocation
- comply with performance management procedures required by the Board in preparation for the Joint Area Review (JAR)
- comply with prevailing statute and regulation
- take collective responsibility for the deliver specified service improvements, holding each other to account and offering appropriate challenge

Joint Planning and Commissioning Cycle

In order to be undertaken effectively, commissioning must have a close alignment to the joint planning process, driven by a robust Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP).

The steps below demonstrates the process being applied, with the needs of services users – our children and young people – at its centre.

These 'commissioning steps' are:

Step 1: Understand the Current Position

- Undertake a 'need assessment' - consider the current pattern and recent trends in outcomes for children
- Establish a clear baseline
- Look at outcomes for particular groups of children who may require a differentiated approach
- Capture and reflect the views of children, young people and their families, local communities and front-line staff

Step 2: Strategic Planning

- Agree the scale of the challenge locally
- Identify resources
- Set priorities for action reflecting local and national priorities
- Establish a planning process which allows all staff working in children's services to trace their contributions to improving outcomes
- Plan to address the implications for the children's workforce
- Capture and reflect the views of children, young people and their families, local communities and front-line staff about the priorities identified

Step 3: Procurement

- Map the pattern of service against required outcome priorities
- Decide what services are needed – quantity, scope and location Establish service specifications
- Apply collectively agreed commissioning principles
- Arrange budget pooling and other financial mechanisms
- Develop the local market - reflect the views of services users and suppliers in the design of services and its style of delivery
- Let contracts with providers where appropriate
- Contribute to inter-authority procurement procedures where this is indicated
- Generate efficiency savings

Step 4: Performance Management and Review

- Monitor and review all services (included those contracted elsewhere)
- Capture and reflect the views of children, young people and their families, local communities and front-line staff
- Review the joint planning and commissioning process – is it working?
To do this well, we will ensure the input of relevant experts at every stage Of the process – children and young people, parents and carers, voluntary sector organisations, a range of professionals skilled at working for children and families, information management, performance monitoring, financial and legal expertise.

The Commissioning Function

A single Joint Planning and Commissioning Team¹¹ (JPCT) will be established reporting directly to the Director of Children’s Services. The JPCT will draw on the existing expertise from across children’s services. It will fulfil its functions to complement the strategic planning and commissioning work of the CYPSP .

Joint Planning and Commissioning Team (JPCT)

The JPCT will be directly accountable to the Director of Children’s Services to ensure the Trust’s priorities for children and young people are delivered. It will operate at a strategic, over-arching level across all children’s services, not confined to those managed by the Council.

Its role will be to undertake:

1. Commissioning function

- Co-ordination of over-arching strategic commissioning standards joint policy/ethos (inclusion, access etc) of the trust
- Establish specifications for jointly commissioned services identified as CYPP priorities. (JC Managers located in ‘host’ agencies)
- Specify jointly commissioned practices across CSA (i.e. staff induction, information sharing etc)
- Ensure consistency of operational and individual commissioning procedures
- Oversee contractual arrangement and procurement procedures pertinent to the commissioning function

2. Performance

- Review/preparation of the CYPP
- Production of quarterly monitoring packs relating to each outcome for children
- Co-ordinate needs analysis that underpins the development of CYPP priorities
- Take a lead role in establishing involvement and participation strategies, ensuring a clear voice for children, young people/families
- Secretarial and/or governance support to Trust Board
- Service of CYPSP/Trust board and sub-groups in line with the agreed governance strategy
- Organise communications – i.e. about the trust and its work – to service users and the wider children’s workforce
- Provide a clear and effective link into the Local Strategic Partnership

The work of the JPCT will be supported through staff within contributing agencies, acting as a ‘virtual team’. The make up of this ‘team’ will be determined once joint commissioning priorities have been finalised.

A Commitment to Transparency

The JPCT will discharge their commissioning function in a transparent manner. Standards will be applied evenly to all sectors, agencies and providers involved. Fig 1 above recognises the contribution to service design that providers can make, and which will be encouraged.

Commissioner Provider Separation

Reporting directly to the Director of Children’s Services, the JPCU will commission all services for children and young people within Warrington – even where such services remain the responsibility of a sole statutory agency. The commissioning standards and principles accepted by all partners will be singularly and severally applied to all partners. In reviewing performance and outcomes for children, the JPCU will challenge service providers of every type to scrutinise their delivery against these agreed standards.

Single-agency and Joint Commissioning

‘Strategic planning and commissioning arrangements need to maintain and improve service delivery whilst simultaneously helping to bring about fundamental changes in the way those services are delivered.’¹²
By applying clear commissioning standards to services that remain under the management of a single agency or provider, the Board will be able to bring focus and energy to establishing remodelled services better able to meet the needs of children and young people identified as ‘vulnerable’ in our CYPP. In many instances, these services will be procured from a host of providers and be able to apply the benefits of pooled or aligned budgets.

It is very likely that many providers, particularly those from the statutory sector, will be acting both as ‘single-agency providers’ and contributing to jointly commissioned services. Where services are procured from pooled or aligned budgets, one agency or provider is likely to be taking a lead responsibility for that function.

This complex, layered approach will be simplified through the careful application of commissioning standards established and good performance review procedures (see fig 3).

Responsible Commissioner – cross-border arrangements

Both Warrington Borough Council and Warrington Primary Care Trust have responsibility for children who receive services outside the borough boundary and for children who live outside Warrington but receive services in the town.

Identifying Joint Commissioning Priorities

The CYPP identifies two service areas of particular focus for Warrington. These, together with the three complementary priorities that have been agreed as part of our LAA provide a clear start point for identifying services which may benefit from a different commissioning approach.

The Common Processes Sub-group of the CYPSP will make specific proposals to the Board by April 2007.

Governance

The comprehensive role of the Children's Trust in relation to all children's services is reflected in the statutory obligations of the Director of Children's Services. It is stated within this guidance that the DCS will have three key roles:

- a) The professional responsibility and accountability for the effectiveness, availability and value for money of the Local Authority children's services,
- b) Leadership both within the Local Authority.....and beyond it so that services improve outcomes for all and are organised around the children and young people's needs; and
- c) Building and sustaining effective partnerships..... in order to focus resources ...jointly on improving outcomes for children and young people, particularly in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children'.

The success of the commissioning work of the children's trust depends upon the governance arrangements that underpin the commitment from the partner agencies to the Trust. This '**Joint Planning and Commissioning Strategy**' gives

A clear direction of travel statement which will be underpinned and strengthened by the governance strategy currently in development. The governance strategy will be established in line with the Good Governance Standard¹⁴ pay particular regard to:

- The core purpose of the trust, and its commitment to achieving the improved outcomes for children
- The reporting relationship to the Local Strategic Partnership
- Accountability protocols for partner agencies working within children's trust arrangements
- Decision making processes – transparent, fair and accountable
- Sharing information about the overall level of resource applicable to children's services in Warrington

- Funding arrangements for integrated or jointly commissioned services the diversity within the sector, involving voluntary, community and private organisations
- Involving children, young people and their families in the design and delivery of services

Performance Monitoring and Review

The primary function of Performance Monitoring and Review will be to support the DCS in the delivery of the statutory obligations through the establishment of effective performance management arrangement, including effective reporting.

The function will develop arrangements to:

- Ensure there is a clear understanding of the overall contribution of services across Warrington in ensuring improved outcomes across each of the Every Child Matters areas.
- Ensure effective arrangements in place to deliver the priorities identified in the Children and Young People's Plan and report progress in delivery and issues arising.
- Ensure commissioning standards are met by all providers, and introduce arrangements for ensuring compliance and reporting noncompliance.
- Introduce effective arrangements for collating evidence to support the contribution made by services in Warrington to the Every Child Matters outcomes and identifying/reporting any areas for improvement.
- Co-ordinate the inspection processes such as the Annual Performance Assessment and Joint Area Review.
- Provide effective performance management arrangements and support to initiatives such as the Local Area Agreement.
- Co-ordinate data from key partners and agencies to provide information to inform needs analysis.

Operational Plan for Commissioning

This **Joint Planning and Commissioning Strategy** is, by its very nature, general in its approach.

A comprehensive operational plan for the establishment of a commissioning function to service the Warrington children's trust will follow.

MIDDLESBROUGH'S CHILDREN'S TRUST
JOINT COMMISSIONING STRATEGY 2008 – 2011

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Appendices

Appendix A – Summary of Scoping the Market for Children's Services – October 2004

Any other please note and provide

FOREWORD

Welcome to the first multi agency joint commissioning strategy for children and young people's Services in Middlesbrough. This commissioning strategy provides information around current and future commissioning intentions of Middlesbrough's Children's Trust and is focused specifically around the priorities identified in the Children and Young People's Plan 2008-2011.

This strategy describes the joint priorities for Middlesbrough's Children's Trust, which will be commissioned to ensure that services provided meet families, children and young people's needs.

This document should be read in conjunction with the Children and Young People's Plan 2008-2011, which provides an overview of the priorities, planning and delivery of children's services that has been agreed by the partnership.

It is acknowledged that joint commissioning is an area that is developing and aligning of current single commissioning practices is also going to be evaluated for efficiencies and effective joint practice.

Middlesbrough and its partners are committed to working to ensure children, young people and their families receive the services that best meet their needs. This commissioning strategy reflects that commitment and will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis to reflect any changes in need.

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGY

The purpose of this Strategy is to establish a strategic framework and processes through which Middlesbrough's Children's Trust will commission services for children, young people and their families that meet the priorities identified in the Children & Young People's Plan.

DEFINITION OF COMMISSIONING

The word 'commissioning' means different things to different people. It is therefore important to state clearly the definition of 'commissioning' as used within this strategy, which is:

"... the process of specifying, securing and monitoring services to meet people's needs at a strategic level. This applies to all services, whether they are provided by the Local Authority, NHS, other public agencies or by a provider or voluntary sector"

(Audit Commission: Making Ends Meet 2003)

Commissioning is the process, which meets local need and involves both specifying and securing high quality provision. Priorities are those, which are needed to improve the outcomes for children and young people and are fully informed by their views and those of their families. The provision secured must be cost effective and provide value for money.

Middlesbrough's Children's Trust accept this definition, recognising that the process of specifying services includes need assessment and service mapping (further detail around the commissioning cycle is included below).

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF JOINT COMMISSIONING?

The purpose of commissioning is to secure the best services to meet need:

- With the best value for money
- With the greatest positive impact for Children & Young People
- Whilst ensuring equality of access across Middlesbrough

The fundamental benefit of a joint commissioning approach and a key driver is to enable a greater focus on delivering improved outcomes. It will also impact and support a shift of resources to early intervention through greater understanding of services commissioned and avoiding duplication. Commissioning provides an opportunity to understand better the effectiveness of current service provision against need and outcomes, learn from best practice, incorporate guidance and the potential to share resources and be more diverse.

JOINT COMMISSIONING

Joint commissioning ensures:

- That needs of children, young people and their families (rather than agencies) are at the heart of our services

- Encourages agencies to work more effectively together to deliver services that are better co-ordinated and more responsive.
- Encourages agencies to work in a more co-ordinated and open way when gathering and analysing information/data.
- Provides an opportunity for staff normally working in isolation or very insular to come together and share working practices, priorities, challenges and barriers in order to try and diversify the workforce and increase understanding between the partner organisations. This could hopefully see the development of Joint Commissioning Teams and ensure a wider knowledge base within the workforce having cross agency understanding of internal processes.
- Promotes a focus on evidence based approaches – what works and why as opposed to carrying on regardless or this is the way it has always been – (challenging current practice and services)
- Develops coherent and comprehensive strategies for the most vulnerable children and young people that will improve outcomes and deliver long term objectives.
- Identifies duplications and gaps in services
- Better value for money; can be resolute in reduced costs of service delivery whilst maintaining or improving quality
- Provides a sharing of priorities and negotiation for agreeing future priorities and a way forward
- Provides an independent perspective regarding performance of services which, where necessary, can encourage “decommissioning”, “re-commissioning” or opportunities for “outsourcing” services (this allows for the discontinuation of less effective services with a view to developing better ones)

KEY PRINCIPLES OF COMMISSIONING

The following principles will underpin commissioning activities of Middlesbrough’s Children’s Trust:

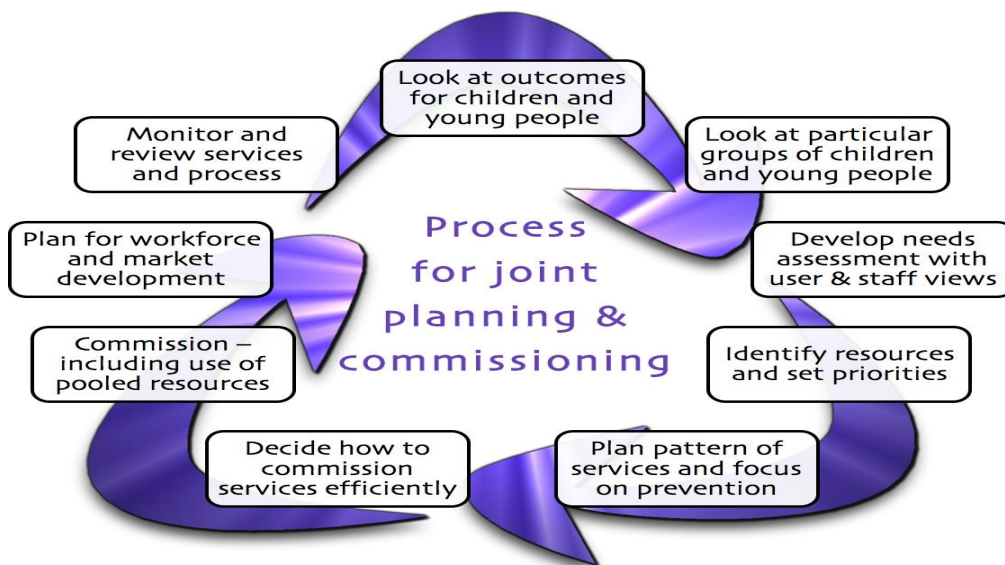
- A clear rationale for improving outcomes for children, young people and their families will inform all commissioning decisions;
- The viability of joint commissioning should be considered in the first instance when agencies undertake commissioning of services;
- Service developments will be based on a clear analysis of need, key priorities and achieving positive outcomes;
- There will be continuous involvement of all stakeholders⁶ to evaluate and inform all the stages of the commissioning process;
- To ensure consistency for young people transferring to adult services;
- Decision making processes will be transparent and fair;
- The commissioning process will support, develop and capacity build the local market using an appropriate mix of statutory, voluntary, third sector, community and private sector providers.
- Joint commissioning will always have clear specifications that outline the level of service to be provided and the outcome to be achieved;
- Equal importance will be attached to all elements of the commissioning cycle;

⁶ When involving children, young people and their families it will be in line with Middlesbrough Children’s Trust Participation Strategy

- All services commissioned will demonstrate their effectiveness through joint monitoring and review processes;
- Length of Contracts – where contracts are required these, as a minimum, should aim to be three year rolling contracts with annual reviews – to give stability to both provider and client that will enable high quality staff to be recruited and retained and support the delivery of sustained outcomes,

THE COMMISSIONING CYCLE

The Dfes (now DCSF) have produced a diagram, which depicts the nine steps to effective joint planning and commissioning:



Source: Every Child Matters: Change for Children - Does

The above diagram depicts the various stages of the commissioning process throughout which there is a focus on the involvement of children, young people and their families. The cycle can be broken down into four stages within which there are a series of processes that will need to be undertaken in order to ensure each element of the cycle is completed.

These stages are:

Stage 1 - Where Are We Now?

Within this stage consideration needs to be given to steps 1, 2 and 3

Stage 2 - Where Do We Want To Be?

Within this stage consideration needs to be given to steps 4 and 5

Stage 3 - How do we get there?

This stage considers steps 6 and 7

Stage 4 - How do we review and monitor?

This stage takes into account the last two steps 8 and 9.

When the commissioning cycle is followed as described above it provides a robust, clear and consistent approach to commissioning, incorporating opportunities for joint commissioning where appropriate.

It is recognised that not all services are likely to be improved through joint commissioning but the framework requires commissioners to consider this option in all commissioning activities.

WHAT TRIGGERS THE COMMISSIONING PROCESS?

There are two categories when considering triggers for commissioning which are reactive and proactive.

Reactive is where there is an external trigger which cannot be anticipated and is often sprung on commissioners, such as:

- Statutory responsibilities
- Legislative changes
- New national targets & priorities
- New grant funding streams

Proactive is where planning plays an integral role and allows for anticipated or planned triggers, these would be:

- New models of service delivery or interventions
- Poor performing areas
- Short term grant funding
- Value for money reviews
- Better understanding of need, new need or new local priorities
- Review of existing contracts
- Choice
- Consultation feedback

MIDDLESBROUGH CHILDREN'S TRUST JOINT COMMISSIONING GROUP

Work is ongoing through the development of the Children's Trust to widen the remit of the current Joint Commissioning Group from substance misuse to all services for children and young people.

The main function of the Group will be to ensure that Commissioning through the Trust is delivering outcomes as outlined in the Children & Young People's Plan. It will also evaluate the effectiveness of current commissioning arrangements, develop proposals for different commissioning arrangements, explore the appropriateness of pooled budgets and recommend them to the Trust Board.

NATIONAL AND LOCAL PROSPECTIVE

National Prospective

The Every Child Matters (ECM) agenda has allowed Government to provide clear guidance on how it expects local areas to work together towards delivering the five ECM Outcomes:

- Stay Safe
- Be Healthy
- Enjoy & Achieve
- Make A Positive Contribution
- Achieve Economic Well-Being

It has also produce guidance around its expectations for joint planning & commissioning with the publication of the Joint Planning & Commissioning Framework, which states:

“Effective joint planning and commissioning is at the heart of improving outcomes for children and young people through children’s trusts.

Joint planning and commissioning is a key produce and manifestation of children’s trust strategic inter-agency governance arrangements. This in turn leads to and is supported by better integrated processes and integrated front line delivery.

The transition to joint planning and commissioning is a step change that requires clear leadership. Effective joint planning and commissioning necessitates new partnership, redistribution of power towards the user, strategic understanding of how all outcomes in the local area is met and a more commercially minded approach to procurement – all focused on the child and young person.”

Children Trusts are expected to develop joint commissioning strategies, which are clearly linked to the Children & Young People’s Plan (CYPP). In order for joint commissioning to be effective this will need to be supported by a move to pooled budget arrangements, integrated front line services and allow the ability to monitor service delivery and evidence improvements against the ECM outcomes.

There will always continue to be national expectations that will impact upon delivery of services and to date some of those are:

- Roll out of Children’s Centres 2010
- Extended Schools by 2010
- 10 year Childcare Strategy by 2015
- NSF Standards met by 2014
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)
- Targeted Youth Support (TYS)

Local Prospective

Local priorities are contained within the Middlesbrough Children & Young People’s Plan, which has just been reviewed and a new three year plan has been produced. The Plan contains high level statements of intent which are supported by a number of action plans and other sub documents.

JAR – MARCH 2008

Middlesbrough is currently in the midst of the JAR and the outcome of this inspection will have a clear impact upon the planning and commissioning of services, which will need to be reflected in this strategy.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Context

Middlesbrough is at the heart of the Tees Valley conurbation in the north east of England. It has a population of approximately 138,000 people, of which approximately 37,000 are aged 19 and under and 20,202 are aged between 5-15 and 9,175 are aged 4 and under. Middlesbrough has one of the highest minority ethnic populations in the Tees Valley at 6.3 % and this rises to approximately 14% of the school population. There is considerable diversity with 55 different languages being spoken.

Within Middlesbrough there are over 57,412 homes and approximately 66% of these homes are owner-occupier while registered social housing landlords provide around 28% of homes. Sixteen of the borough's twenty three wards are within the 10% most deprived wards nationally and unemployment rates remain relatively high (4.6% September 2007 against a national rate of 2.2%). Entrenched long-term unemployment is a particular problem.

However, large scale regeneration projects are well underway, with Middlesbrough's flagship Middlehaven project a key development. Over £500 million pounds of public and private money will be invested into the 250 acre site over the next 20 years to create 2,500 homes and office space for 5,000 workers.

For more detailed information please refer to Middlesbrough's Children & Young People Plan 2008-11.

Listed below are services provided to children, young people and families in Middlesbrough and the key priorities areas are highlighted in bold. These service areas normally have involvement of all agencies

SAFEGUARDING

Substance Misuse

The Children's Trust Board has been presented with and approved Middlesbrough Young Person's Alcohol & Drug Strategy 2008/09, this document is awaiting formal approval from the National Treatment Agency (NTA). This document provides a clear overview of the needs within Middlesbrough and a delivery plan has been developed which provides a clear statement of intent.

CAF

VULNERABLE GROUPS

Looked After Children

- Foster Care Provision – both in-house & external – review of current practices and a need to explore the future commissioning activity around
- Residential Provision – lack of appropriate resources within Middlesbrough and the North East – opens up opportunities to explore regional commissioning on a multi agency basis.

Children with a Disability

- Aiming High for Disabled Children: Better Support for Families
- Direct Payments and Individualised Budgets
- Short Break Services

Teenage Pregnancy

NEET's (Not in Education, Employment or Training)

CAMHS

Locality Teams/CAF

Early Years

Parenting in Parenting

Targeted Youth Support

Connexions

UNDERSTANDING THE MARKET

National Prospective

The DfES (now DCSF) commissioned Price Waterhouse Cooper (PWC) to undertake an analysis of the children's services market in 2004, which resulted in the publication of 'Scoping the Market for Children's Services – October 2004'.

A full copy of the report can be found at www.dfes.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/RW24.pdf.

The main areas of the report, which impact upon this strategy are summarised in Appendix A.

Local Prospective

Historically Middlesbrough was a traditional industry town with the majority of the market being heavy industry, iron and steel, shipbuilding and chemicals. Middlesbrough has managed to retain some of these strengths, however, massive industrial restructuring has seen a big change in the towns economy.

The main economic driver is now the service sector and the town centre provides most of the towns employment. The service sector currently provides 89.2% of the towns employment, which is well above the national average of 82.1%. The majority of service sector employment is within the public administration, education and health services as it accounts for 42.6% of all employment.

There is a big voluntary sector presence within the town, which is supported through the Middlesbrough Voluntary Development Agency (MVDA). The voluntary sector is held in high esteem and is keen to work with the Children's Trust in assisting improved delivery of outcomes for children and young people. The MVDA currently has a seat on the Children's Trust Board.

Services In Middlesbrough

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The Middlesbrough Children's Trust has developed a three year Workforce Development Strategy and for wider context in respect of workforce development that document should be referred to.

There is recognition that 'commissioning' is an area that would benefit from workforce development. Within the North East Region there is not a significant pool of experienced workers and often when jobs are advertised the person appointed will come from one of the other Local Authorities. As commissioning covers a number of areas from service development/planning to procurement, a variety of roles and skills are required.

Workforce development is a specific area to be considered when looking at options for the future and the potential benefits that could come from the creation of a joint commissioning team or unit.

At present as the Joint Commissioning Group is virtual all commissioners within the stakeholders are either in small teams or an individual. At present the commissioning support functions for stakeholders are:

Local Authority/ Connexions/YOS	-	Contracting & Commissioning Manager Contract Officer Monitoring & Review Officer
Health (PCT)	-	Director of Health Children's Services Development??? Assistant Director of Service Development (Children) (are these correct titles)
LSC	-	Needs completing
Police	-	Needs completing
Probation	-	Needs completing
MVDA	-	Needs completing

FINANCIAL POSITION

IN ORDER TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION WE WILL NEED FINANCIAL INFORMATION FROM ALL PARTNERS.

PLEASE CAN EACH STAKEHOLDER PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

- OVERALL BUDGET AVAILABLE FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES
- AMOUNT OF OVERALL BUDGET SPENT ON IN-HOUSE PROVISION
- AMOUNT OF OVERALL BUDGET SPENT ON STAFFING
- AMOUNT OF OVERALL BUDGET SPEND ON COMMISSIONED SERVICES (SPLIT IN AMOUNT OR % WITH VOL & PRIVATE)
- ANY BUDGET INFORMATION THAT CAN BE CONFIRMED ABOUT 2008/09, 2009/10 & 2010/11)

ALSO NEED TO MENTION CURRENT POOLED OR ALINED BUDGETS THINK THESE ARE:

- CAMHS
- SUBSTANCE MISUSE GRANT
- ANY OTHERS????

ALSO DO WE NEED TO REFERENCE LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT ????

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

JOINT COMMISSIONING ACTION PLAN – 2008-11

ACTION	RESOURCE IMPLICATION	TIMESCALE	LEAD PERSON	EXPECTED OUTCOME	MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS
½ day workshop for Children’s Trust Board to complete Commissioning Maturity Matrix	Staff Time	April 2008	Contracting & Commissioning Manager	Increased understanding of Children’s Trust Board in respect of ‘Commissioning’ Clear understanding of Children’s Trust ability in respect of joint commissioning.	½ Workshop completed Report to Children’s Trust Board
Establishment of the Childrne’s Trust Joint Commissioning Group	Staff Time	April 2008	Contracting & Commissioning Manager	Initial virtual JCG established to focus on joint commissioning	Reporting to Children’s Trust Board – 6 weekly
Children’s Trust Board to agree a lead commissioning stakeholder	Staff fime	April 2008	Chair of JCG	Lead stakeholder in place – allow to agree formal procurement process to be followed in respect of joint commissioning	Children’s Trust Board Agree Lead Stakeholder.
Identify mechanism for data co-ordination across stakeholders	Staff time	December 2008	ECM Project Manager	One system for data collection and sharing – consistency Potential for joint team/unit to be developed.	Report to Children’s Trust Board
Mapping of all existing commissioned services of all stakeholders.	Staff time	December 2008	Chair of JCG	Multi-agency register of all commissioned services	Estalbishment of Register Report to Children’s Trust Board

ACTION	RESOURCE IMPLICATION	TIMESCALE	LEAD PERSON	EXPECTED OUTCOME	MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS
Review Section 10 & 75 (previously S31) Agreements and identify any gaps or new opportunities.	Staff time	March 2009	Chair of JCG	Clear understand of pooled resources. Identify current arrangements that require formal agreement. Identify new areas where pooled resources will require formal agreement.	Reporting to Children's Trust Board – as necessary.

REFERENCE LIST

1. Middlesbrough's Children & Young People's Plan 2008-2011
2. Middlesbrough Children's Trust Making Change Happen For Children & Young People Involvement & Communication Strategy 2008-2009
3. Joint Planning & Commissioning Framework for Children, Young People & Maternity Services
4. Scoping the Market for Children's Services – October 2004
5. Middlesbrough Children & Young People's Workforce Development Strategy 2008-2011.
6. National Services Framework for Children, Young People & Maternity Services
7. Middlesbrough Young Person's Alcohol & Drug Strategy 2008/09
8. Aiming High for Disabled Children: Better Support for Families

SUMMARY DOCUMENT OF – SCOPING THE MARKET FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES

The scope of the study identified 19 services/functions which were:

1. Adoption
Services associated with a child moving to a new parent or family on a permanent basis.
2. Behaviour & Learning Support
Services associated with learning support and behaviour improvement, primary in schools.
3. CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)
Specialist and multi-disciplinary services for children with mental health needs.
4. Child Care
Services that provide alternative arrangements for parents/carers whose children require short term care and supervision.
5. Child Health Promotion
An extensive range of services provided by a number of professionals, all aimed at health care needs of children.
6. Children's Centres/Sure Start
Services providing support to infants, children and parents, including early education integrated with full day care, parental outreach, support for parents with special needs, and health services.
7. Children's Homes
Services providing residential accommodation for children who are looked after.
8. Connexions
Services providing integrated advice, guidance and access to development opportunity for young people aged between 13 and 19 in order to help them make a smooth transition to adulthood and working life.
9. Education Psychology
Services engaged with the promotion of children and young people's emotional well-being, achievements, progress and inclusion within the educational and social context.
10. Education Welfare
Services primarily aimed at improving attendance at school and assisting in the reduction of unnecessary absence and truancy.
11. Family and Parenting Services
Services that support families and parents to raise children.
12. Fostering
Services associated with the placement of a child within an alternative family

13. **School Improvement**
Includes school inspection services and more general support and advice.
14. **Social Worker and Social Care Services for Children**
Broad range of services for children, young people and families as defined by the Children Act 1989 and including functions such as child protection.
15. **Special Education Needs**
Services for children and young who have learning difficulties that require special educational provision.
16. **Special Schools**
Schools that provide education and support to pupils with statements of Special Educational Needs, normally at the severe end of the spectrum of need.
17. **Speech and Language Therapy**
A range of educational and non-educational services aimed at improving the speech, language and communication skills of children and young people.
18. **Strategic and Operational Management**
Services aimed at the planning, design, delivery and management of front line services.
19. **Youth Services**
Services aimed at supporting young people in respect of their personal development needs.

7.1 Local Grant Agreements

Initial response to the partnership re the funding environment for those working with children, young people and families Tameside January 2008

Background

These thoughts come from

- The core group of representatives from the network for those working with children, young people and families in Tameside, Tameside Community Union.
- The experience of the TCU network facilitator engaging in the community,
- Guidance from G. O.N.W in support of the VCS Engage agenda, and
- In response to the research undertaken by the Joint Scrutiny Panel 'to consider the strategic effectiveness of the voluntary and community sector in Tameside'

Points to consider

- There are concerns about diminishing/ shifting pots of money for the voluntary, community and faith sector.
- This impacts projects in the following ways – the loss of valued staff, the loss of the skills base that the organisation has invested in, the loss of flow and motivation around project development.
- There is an acknowledged skills gap in terms of the process of tendering and procurement, including the evaluation and monitoring of work.
- The report created by the scrutiny panel is in the main, very good, however it focuses on established voluntary organisations – and does not take into account faith groups, the nature of franchising in the sector, and the development of embryonic organisations.
- The youth opportunity and action grant funding has been very successful, the Connexions funding application form was really accessible and the Health is for Life Community Education grants funding has been great for small groups as well.
- There are diverse funding streams, but few are paid upfront, or made available for a period of up to five years (for larger projects)
- We hope that small projects are assisted so that the creativity, and ability of the sector to engage with those termed 'hard to reach', is encouraged. On the flip side of this – new initiatives should not put stability of projects at risk!
- Funding for core costs is difficult to find.
- Requests have come from the community that there is a similar method of funding as the Youth Opportunity Fund and the Youth Action Grant for those working with 5- 13 year olds.

We know that these are shared concerns, and believe in the positive atmosphere of partnership work within the TCYPSP. The network seeks to bring positive solutions to the partnership table. We hope that this will strengthen our partnership work in order to achieve the best outcomes possible for children, young people and families of Tameside.

We ask that the partnership consider the following

1. There is an understanding that there is mixed expertise around the commissioning process and network members would like to learn together with commissioners so that there is a shared understanding and expertise from the beginning.

2. The voice of the network wants to be heard in the planning of the commissioning strategy from the beginning and would want real involvement – representation and wider consultation in the process of producing the commissioning strategy and strategy group.
3. We would want a written statement stating what the commissioning vision is - in terms of the voluntary, community and faith sector.
4. We request baseline information around the funding of the V.C.F. sector in Tameside, in the context of total monies spent.
5. We request that a partnership approach is taken to giving the entire voluntary sector the same deal in terms of commissioning. Recently, there was suspension of Children's Fund project commissioning for six months so the commissioning strategy was enveloped in this time scale, which was positive news. However, one service was not given the same 6 months grace. The ramifications of this meant that this organisation has not had the opportunity to attend training or receive the support which other projects will get in the next 6 months
6. Planning for Problems/Managing future issues as they arise – we request the development of a safe place to discuss any issues around procurement, tendering, commissioning, S.L.A.s and evaluating and monitoring. Patterns that emerge from the discussion of issues could be recorded so that there can be future learning from these
7. Evaluating and monitoring. It would be good if there were templates provided for effective monitoring and evaluation. Small pots of money should have equitable monitoring attached to them and projects should not be burdened by unreasonable monitoring expectations.
8. Real cost recovery. Projects have lost their funding through not being cost effective – could this be clearly defined for everybody, could there be discussions around real cost recovery for all partners – inclusive of PAYP - and guidance as to how projects are benchmarked against each other for comparison – thus avoiding any fettered decision making.
9. Commitment to times set out in the documentation- there have been times when commissioners across the partnership have not kept to the timescales they set in the documentation. They have then not contacted the organisations to tell them why, or what is going on.
10. Participation of service users in commissioning – we look to the participation network to ensure that there are best practise guidelines for the participation of service users in planning, producing documentation and participating in panels.

In conclusion – the good news!

Within this report there are several requests to the partnership and it is clear that a joint working approach is needed. T3SC have brought in resources for a short term pilot project in commissioning and procurement. T3SC held a conference last year to encourage commissioners and third sector organisations to come together to begin to address issues around commissioning. This piece of work builds on the lessons learnt from this conference and put together an action plan to start to address the issues.

The project work consists of 5 key aims

1. Identify barriers of commissioning to the 3rd sector
2. Work with 6 organisations in detail to help them go through the tendering process
3. Collate good practice lessons for 3rd sector orgs to ensure they are competitive
4. Clarify the procurement process and raise awareness of this across Tameside's V.C.F. sector.
5. Work with commissioners across Tameside to share good practice and encourage more 3rd sector commissioning.

Grant Agreement - Draft

Name of organisation:

Ref no.

1. Introduction

Tameside Youth Service supports programmes of work that help meet the national agenda around the five outcomes of Every Child Matters. The priority age range is for work with young people in the 11 – 19 year age group, and the expectation is that young people will participate fully in the planning, preparation, delivery and evaluation of an innovative, accredited programme of work.

Tameside Youth Service has a responsibility to ensure all funding given to organisation is well-managed and accurately accounted for. It also has a duty that organisations in receipt of funding from the Youth Service must meet Health and Safety guidelines and have necessary safeguarding policies and procedures.

Tameside Youth Service and any organisation it provides funding to, must also take joint responsibility for recording the work undertaken by young people and the outcomes they individually achieve. This information will then be collected on the Youth Service MIS System and used to monitoring and evaluation purposes. Tameside Youth Service is committed to providing necessary support to organisations with monitoring and evaluation procedures.

This agreement outlines the responsibilities of both the Youth Service and [Name of Organisation] in ensuring the effective delivery of youth activities in Tameside.

2. [Name of Organisation] responsibilities

[Name of Organisation] agrees to the following

- a) To spend the grant of £x from the Youth Service for the following purposes [outline objectives of the project and budget headings/amount]

[insert SMART objectives and budget for the project/services to be delivered]

- b) To ensure Health and Safety systems and procedures are in place including risk assessments of all activities and working environments (buildings, outdoor settings etc), and seek necessary information and permission from parents/guardians prior to undertaking activities.
- c) To ensure that all volunteers and staff working with young people are CRB checked and adhere to Child Protection Policies and procedures.

- d) To provide the Youth Service with a copy of our Safeguarding Policy.
- e) To ensure all staff and volunteers involved are suitably qualified and trained (including undertaking Child Protection/safeguarding training). All qualifications must be recognised by appropriate governing bodies.
- f) To ensure that all equipment is maintained to a high standard.
- g) To ensure that the necessary insurance is in place to cover the activities undertaken with young people including for any buildings used.
- h) To maintain an up-to-date register of young people involved including name, age, date of birth, postcode, ethnicity and postcode. This information will then be recorded on the Youth Service MIS system.
- i) To monitor and record accredited and recorded outcomes achieved by young people.
- j) To produce and submit reports on a 3 monthly-basis to the Youth Service, including a full summary of expenditure.
- k) To contact the Youth Service if there is a need to change the use of the grant and seek permission prior to making any changes.
- l) To inform the Youth Service if the named contact for the organisation changes.

[Name of Organisation] understands that if we breach these responsibilities that our grant may be withdrawn.

3. Tameside Youth Service Responsibilities

Tameside Youth Service agrees to the following:

- a) To provide a grant of £x for the purposes outlined above (2.a). Grant payments will be given on a quarterly basis on the receipt of agreed monitoring information.
- b) Provide access to training events organised by the youth service.
- c) Provide access to equipment if available and appropriate for the funded activities
- d) To nominate a named officer who will be responsible for the monitoring of the programme in respect of this agreement.
- e) To partnership with [name of organisation] to improve the recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers and ongoing support for the Voluntary Sector.
- f) To support [name of organisation] to develop an effective training package for staff and volunteers as part of its commitment to workforce development.
- g) To promote young person centred practice and support organisations to ensure effective youth involvement in the planning and running of youth activities.
- h) To invite and support [name of organisation] to attend regular multi-agency partnership meetings in geographical areas i.e. the four area Children's Services Teams.

Tameside Youth Service has the overall responsibility within Children's Services to increase the number of individual contacts, recorded and accredited outcomes with young people in the 11 – 19 year age group.

Resolution of Disputes and Termination Procedures

Disputes procedure should any party fail to comply with the terms of this Agreement.

If the matter is considered as a serious breach by either party, the following course of action will be taken: -

- a. a request for a meeting can be made by either party to take place within ten working days;
- b. if not resolved then a meeting is to be arranged between Tameside Youth Service's lead officer and the Management Group / Trustees of [name of organization] to take place within ten working days;
- c. If the matter is still unresolved it can be: -
 - referred to an impartial arbitrator agreed by both parties – or –
 - if either party is failing to provide youth work to the agreed standard, they may be required by the other party to remedy the matter or the other party may withdraw support from the Partnership Agreement.

Procedure for early termination of the Agreement.

The Agreement may be terminated by: -

- a. what is regarded by either party as a major breach of the Agreement – or –
- b. the insolvency, liquidation or cessation of operations, or the winding up of either party, except for the purpose of amalgamation or reconstruction which can result in termination upon three months notice. Upon termination there will be a full accounting between the parties and settlement of any business. Failure by either to enforce the terms shall not be construed as a waiver or breach of the Partnership Agreement.

Annual Continuation

Procedure for renewal of the Agreement.

Subject to the successful delivery of the agreed activities, as evidenced in submitted monitoring and evaluation reports, Tameside Youth Service in consultation with [name of organization] will consider the continuation or otherwise of the Agreement

They will convene no later than 14th February 200- and report no later than 28th February 200-.

Name of Project.....

Contact Officer

Tameside Contact Officer

Actual start date of scheme

Actual end date of scheme

On behalf of Tameside Youth Service: - Name..... Signature
Position
Date

On behalf of ----- : - Name..... Signature
Position
Date

Acknowledgements

With acknowledgement and thanks to:

Blackburn CVS

Cheshire VCFS Hub

Halton Children and Young Peoples Alliance Board

Lancashire VCFS Consortium

Manchester VCS District Panel Representatives Group

Manchester Alliance for Community Care (MACC)

North East Regional Youth Work Unit and Middlesborough Childrens Trust

Sefton CVS

Salford Nexus

Tameside Third Sector Coalition (T3SC)

Warrington VCFS Forum

Youth Federation