

VCSA Planning Meeting

Additional meeting of the VCSA Board



12 March 2015

The Lantern, Sundorne, Shrewsbury

Notes

1. Present

Jackie Jeffrey (Chair), Angela Parton, Laurel Roberts, Nicola McPherson, Heather Osborne, Jean Robinson, Rachel Wintle, Lindsay Barton, Pauline James, Kate McDonald, Sarah Dodds.

2. The Care Act

Guest speakers: Kathryn Downton and Rob Price from Shropshire Council
Kathryn informed the VCSA Board of all the proposals forming the current Care Act consultation. They include proposals under the following themes:

- Fees, charging and deferred payments
- Care Arrangement fees
- Charging (services charged for from the week that the support for care starts).
- Carers charging
- Charging: replacement care
- Universal Deferred Payment Scheme
- Deferred Payments: Administration fees
- Deferred payments: Interest rates
- Deferred payments: Adequate security
- Deferred payments: supported living accommodation
- Minimum income guarantee

VCSA Board members asked a number of questions to develop a better understanding of the proposals. Key issues discussed included:

- How costs would be calculated.
- The role People2People will play.
- The support self funders will have access to if they pay for it.
- Brokerage charges and the learning from other local authorities.
- The challenge of spending a budget when people do not have the capacity to manage money.
- Market place development.
- Timescales around charging and assessments.
- Types of replacement care and charging.
- Challenges for carers where the person cared for may not wish to give the carer a break from care.
- Use of VCS services where they are registered to check DWP documents.
- Changes impacting upon young people aged 18-24. Challenges where the family takes young people's budgets into the family 'pot'.

- Difficult commenting on proposals without a clearer idea of costs to be charged.

Actions

- VCSA Team to circulate presentation slides.
- All to consider submitting a response to the consultation.
- Forums to consider whether a forum presentation would be helpful to enable more to participate in the consultation.

VCSA Planning

3. Achievements 2014/15

SD, PJ and KM had prepared slides summarising the achievements from the last year. See presentation. SD briefly summarised the achievements and explained that they would be used to form the Annual Report and made ready for distribution for the Annual Assembly in May.

SD explained that a lot has been delivered but it is difficult to say whether that work has had an impact.

Suggestions for additional information included:

- Asking members for more information on closed services (not organisations).
- Trying to calculate the costs of meetings and time input from Board members. (Including travel time).
- Summarising the key achievements for each project within the written part of the report.
- Trying to list/ count the issues the Public Sector has asked VCS input on.

Action – Team to work on suggestions above.

4. On-going commitments and Representation

The Team had listed the on-going commitments it is aware of. Many related to Board Members involvement in partnership groups.

One of the questions raised by the Board was the work underway with the CCG and whether that could be supported long term without CCG financial input. Currently the Council is the only funder. The Board agreed that more conversations were needed with the CCG.

5. Challenges

SD explained the current changes in Shropshire Council that would impact upon the VCSA Support Team. The Team sits within Shropshire Council's Strategy, Research and Performance section. The whole section will be restructured over the coming months. It is likely that jobs will look very different and that people will

be expected to do a broader range of work rather than specialise in different areas. It is not known what posts and structures will look like. A consultation period will start within the next month or so and the impact on the VCSA will become clearer then.

The Board highlighted concerns and the need for clear points of contact with Shropshire Council and the support the Team provides with representation, communication etc.

The Board wondered whether funding is available to support VCS infrastructure and mentioned Lloyds TSB, Big Assist and Cadbury's but Laurel advised that funding for infrastructure is not now available and that the NAVCA report recently published had recommended local funding.

The Board discussed the changes within the Board. Jackie would be stepping down as Chair. Rachel would become Chair. A new Vice Chair is needed. Rachel spoke about her own circumstances and the fact that she may be prevented from becoming Chair due to work circumstances. The Board discussed this change for some time and agreed the following:

- A proposal would be made to the full Board meeting that Jackie would be invited to stay on as 'shadow chair' or similar position – to ensure consistency, support for the new Chair and add capacity to the leadership of the Board.
- The Board would wait and see what happens with Rachel's work circumstances and hope that Rachel finds a new role that allows her to move into the position of Chair.
- Vice Chair nominations will be sought.
- At least one new Vice Chair will be appointed. The full Board will consider nominations for Vice Chair at the next meeting and make a decision.

Action – Team to help the Board action the steps above.

The Board considered the challenges listed on the handout provided. Additional challenges include:

- The way volunteering is managed within locality pilot work and the impact that has upon volunteering in Shropshire and perceptions of volunteering/volunteers.
- The different approaches of countywide and LEP level commissioning v local commissioning.
- The challenges of lack of capacity and experience within local communities to manage local budgets and commission at the local level.
- The large primes and bodies competing with the VCS and likelihood that sub contracting will form the main income for many.
- The expectation that contract values reduce but services are maintained. More for less.
- The loss of capacity to innovate and develop new ways of working – everything is not too squeezed to allow for development.
- Short tender periods (e.g. Telford issued one with 10 days notice).

- Perceptions of elected members. There is a lack of understanding of the voluntary sector and the impact cuts are having upon local people.

The Board agreed that challenges could be shared with the wider membership and the membership asked for feedback.

6. Opportunities

The Board discussed the opportunities handout provided and decided to record opportunities against key challenges as a way of trying to address the main concerns.

Main Challenge	Opportunities
Perceptions of elected members	Work with community enablement officers – they support elected members and may be able to influence.
Local commissioning v county and LEP level commissioning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk to ip&e about its role in commissioning. • Continue to participate in discussions to shape services and the future. • Work with the university. • Support co-commissioning – CCG and SC. • Support the Governance work within the CCG. • Consider mapping national partners (SPC).
Reducing contract values and demand for more for less.	As above
Restructuring of VCSA Team and changes in Council.	Participate in discussions including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Change group - Re-design workshops and outcome from first 2 workshops.
Board leadership changes in April.	Develop a team approach. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jackie continue as Shadow Chair. - Vice Chair nominations. - 2 Vice Chair? - Search for funding.
National policy changes impacting on VCS.	Use Annual Assembly to ask members about challenges and how they can be addressed.
Loss of funding.	Keep an eye on LEP funding.

Action – Sarah Thomas to circulate Design Workshop notes/ report.

Action – Jackie and Sarah to request more information about next steps following the workshops.

Action – Invite Kate Garner and Neil Willcox to another meeting to talk about local level work.

7. Vision and Values

It was agreed that the Terms of Reference do not adequately communicate the VCSA’s vision. The following comments were noted to form a proposal for agreement at the next VCSA Board meeting:

Values

- Re-word the Equality value (include about militating against adverse impact on most vulnerable).
- Take the Compact out of the values section – include it as a separate section – the Compact contains values but it isn’t a value.
- Add something about the VCSA being people and community focused.
- Add something about making a difference.
- Add something about listening, advocacy and voice for community.
- Add trust.
- Add informed by experience.

Vision

“Our vision is that everything we do will have a positive impact for local people and our communities”

Role

Need to clearly explain difference in roles as service providers and as VCSA representatives (voice/influence).

Action – Make changes above to Terms of Reference and present a draft for the next Board meeting.

8. Priorities

The group discussed the different commissioning approaches being used and how they felt about them. At the local level there are a lot of discussions taking place that are not always resulting in open tender processes. This has advantages and disadvantages. It was agreed by the majority that the issue is in the process. The process must be open and clear so that interested bodies have the opportunity to participate if they can add value. If the process is now known then service providers can be disadvantaged and the perception is that deals are done behind closed doors.

Action – It was agreed that the VCSA Board should seek to influence so that robust processes are put in place.

The table below highlights the priorities discussed:

	Priority
1	Work to demonstrate impact- the difference achieved as a result of the VCSE.
2	Work together to form a clear identify for the VCSA so others better understand the VCSA and the VCS.
3	Work to understand the commissioning landscape and how different ways of commissioning fit together.
4	Work to better understand changes at the local level including the development of Governance Boards and local commissioning.
5	Extend and develop partnerships to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Rehabilitation Company • Schools and academies • University
6	Extend the Compact to cover bodies that the VCS works with including SSSFT and other health partners.
7	Work to influence change and positive improvements for communities of interest. In particular around transitions.
8	Work to communicate Policy and Understand policy impact at the local level – for example the Care Act.
9	Represent the Forums - Ask Forums to identify Forum priorities.
10	Represent the wider membership - Use voting at Annual Assembly to determine priorities.

Actions List (all actions together)

	Action	Lead	Progress
	Care Act		
1	VCSA Team to circulate presentation slides.	SD	
2	All to consider submitting a response to the consultation.	All	
3	Forums to consider whether a forum presentation would be helpful to enable more to participate in the consultation.	All/Forums	
	VCSA Annual Planning		
4	Ask members for more information on closed services (not organisations).	KM	
5	Trying to calculate the costs of meetings and time input from Board members. (Including travel time).	SD	
6	Summarising the key achievements for each project within the written part of the report.	VCSA Team	
7	Trying to list/ count the issues the Public Sector has asked VCS input on.	SD	
8	A proposal would be made to the full Board meeting that Jackie would be invited to stay on as 'shadow chair' or similar position – to ensure consistency, support for the new Chair and add capacity to the leadership of the Board.	Team and Board	
9	The Board would wait and see what happens with Rachel's work circumstances and hope that Rachel finds a new role that allows her to move into the position of Chair.	Board	
10	Vice Chair nominations will be sought.	VCSA Team and All	
11	At least one new Vice Chair will be appointed. The full Board will consider nominations for Vice Chair at the next meeting and make a decision.	Board	
12	Work with community enablement officers – they support elected members and may be able to influence.	Board	
13	Talk to ip&e about its role in commissioning.	SPC	
14	Continue to participate in discussions to shape services and the future. - Change group - Re-design workshops and outcome from first 2 workshops.	All (inc. Change Group)	
15	Work with the university.	All	
16	Support co-commissioning – CCG and SC.	All	
17	Support the Governance work within the CCG.	All	

	Action	Lead	Progress
18	Consider mapping national partners (opportunities for sub contracting).	SPC	
19	Use Annual Assembly to ask members about challenges and how they can be addressed.	VCSA Team	
20	Continue LEP Funding updates.	KM	
21	Sarah Thomas to circulate Design Workshop notes/ report.	ST	
22	Jackie and Sarah to request more information about next steps following the workshops.	ST and JJ	
23	Invite Kate Garner and Neil Willcox to another meeting to talk about local level work.	JJ	
24	Make Vision and Values changes to Terms of Reference and present a draft for the next Board meeting.	SD	
25	Local commissioning processes - It was agreed that the VCSA Board should seek to influence so that robust processes are put in place.	All	
26	Work to demonstrate impact- the difference achieved as a result of the VCSE.	VCSA Team and Board (All)	
27	Work together to form a clear identify for the VCSA so others better understand the VCSA and the VCS.	Board (All)	
28	Work to understand the commissioning landscape and how different ways of commissioning fit together.	Change Group	
29	Work to better understand changes at the local level including the development of Governance Boards and local commissioning.	All	
30	Extend and develop partnerships to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Rehabilitation Company • Schools and academies • University 	All	
31	Extend the Compact to cover bodies that the VCS works with including SSSFT and other health partners.	SD	
32	Work to influence change and positive improvements for communities of interest. In particular around transitions.	All	
33	Work to communicate Policy and understand policy impact at the local level – for example the Care Act.	All	
34	Represent the Forums - Ask Forums to identify Forum priorities.	All	
35	Represent the wider membership - Use voting at Annual Assembly to determine priorities.	VCSA Team	