

# ShropShare

VCS Annual Assembly 3 April 2014



## Discussion Session

### 1. What could the VCS teach the private sector?

**Table 2**

- Working in partnership
- Networking
- Supporting people
- Fulfil the need of the customer / needs led
- Sign posting
- Being innovative / disregarding profit margins (identified as top)

#### **Being innovative**

- Listen and engage – listen to clients
- Sign posting – understanding and offer choices
- Promoting goodwill

**Table 4**

- Working on very small budgets
- Working with volunteers
- Partnership working
- Blurring boundaries
- Inclusion – diversity of people (identified as top)
- Innovative

#### **Inclusion – Diversity**

- HR department take broader perspective on recruitment
- Need to build in support systems for wider range of employees
- Employ with conviction – supporting young people
- Wider outlook on recruitment

**Table 6**

- Commitment
- Communication
- Best use of limited resources
- Proactive approach
- Collaborative working
- Resourcefulness
- Flexibility
- Creative

- Thinking outside the box
- Open minded
- Tenacity
- Passion
- To be more sharing

### **Sharing resources**

- Back office services and resources for such – e.g. everything by email. VCS have to have a print out of all documents, hence need to have equipment to do this such as printer/ copier/paper/ink/pens.
- Need to teach businesses the impact of their actions on our resources (staffing, stationary etc.)
- VCS is driven my members and needs and is accountable to them.
- Not for profit as opposed to profit.
- VCS staff are passionate about their objectives – private sector could benefit from learning how the VCS staff work (project undercover boss).

### **Table 9**

- Communications
- Costs
- Social value
- Community engagement
- Accountable leadership
- Motivation other than money
- Non monetary incentives
- Staff loyalty
- Free advertising
- Added value
- Team building
- Community projects
- Less competitive and real achievement
- Sense of worth
- Reputation
- Communication anchoring

### **Table X**

- How to reach difficult groups
- Staff/ employee buy in
- Value of every £ spent
- Equality and access
- Corporate divorced from real life
- Voluntary sector connected to real life
- Value not money – success
- Outcomes rather than outputs
- Not balance sheet/ social return

## 2. What could the VCS learn from the private sector?

### Table 8

- Marketing better skills
- Sustainability in business planning (identified as top)
- Working to tight deadlines
- Learning to say no / being tougher / more assertive
- Trading places time
- Understanding each others role
- Accountability

### Sustainability

- Learning from entrepreneurs
- Taking risks
- Mentoring programmes
- Business advisors
- Learning to make quicker decisions
- How to move to full cost recovery
- Bringing like minded people together
- Business patrons
- Promotion to charities – what they will get
- Getting over cultural difference
- Invite private sector to boards, AGMs etc.
- Cope with reducing funding

### Table 10

- Commerciality
- Efficiency and ruthlessness
- Forward thinking
- Flexibility
- Social responsibility
- Customer research focused
- Offering more than meeting a need
- Reactive

### Work up

- Training of Board
- Right people on the Board
- Agreeing overall focus and developing sub groups
- Market analysis – identifying gaps, looking for funding, fit ideas to meet funding.
- Lobbying funding bodies
- Marketing awareness – services we can sell to each other.

### Table X

- Marketing
- Be more business like
- Profit not a bad word

- More enterprising
- Financial sustainability – understanding what people are willing to pay and appropriate pricing (identified as top)
- Efficiencies

### **Financial Sustainability**

- Sharing expertise / assets
- Understanding profit
- Financing assets
- Marketing / PR
- Pricing for tenders
- Technical assistance/advice around accounting/tax etc
- Sharing models / how to price services
- Research to development
- Communication
- Trading opportunities

### **Table X**

- Market self better – get message across
- Good financial systems/ raising income
- Good customer service
- HR support
- Good business planning
- Learn to be more ruthless – efficient (i.e. poor staff or volunteers are never sacked).

### **Re-evaluation in a changing landscape**

- Aims/vision/objectives
- Time based action plan
- No mission drift
- Performance management
- Staff/ volunteers use their time efficiently
- Focus on priorities
  - Recruitment – get better at it
  - Recruit the right trustees with the right skills
  - Recruit the right volunteers and staff with the right skills
- Visit a business you admire that has things right to share learning – **mentor development**

### **Table X**

- Adaptive (stuck in ways)
- How to focus on real needs rather than keep doing what you are doing
- Competence in planning, recruiting
- Be more business like and realistic
- Duplication
- Learn how to say no
- Loss leaders plus profitable

### **Being Adaptive**

- Focus on real needs – finding out what the real needs are
- Asking lots of questions – about why we do things
- Asking questions about what and how we do things – challenge
- Clarifying needs to help improve engagement with commissioners
- Communicating with potential beneficiaries of VCS services and finding out what real needs are.