



Shropshire VCS Assembly
c/o Strategy Research and Performance
Shropshire Council
Shirehall
Shrewsbury
SY2 6ND

Neil Evans
Commissioning Directorate
Shropshire Council
Shirehall
Shrewsbury
SY2 6ND

8th April 2014

Dear Neil

Thank you for your recent work to communicate information concerning Shropshire Council's Draft Commissioning Strategy through the VCS Assembly. The VCS Assembly Board recognises the importance of communicating widely and allowing all members to participate in the consultation and to allow feed back on the draft document. Although many VCSA Board Members may have contributed to the consultation on behalf of their individual organisations, the Board agreed the importance of a collective response.

Feedback from the VCS Assembly Board is summarised below:

- The document clearly communicates the Council's aim to become a commissioning body rather than a deliverer of services.
- The principles set out in the Commissioning Strategy are welcomed.
- The planned annual review of the Commissioning Strategy is considered a positive commitment, particularly in light of the significant change taking place. The VCSA Board would welcome future conversations concerning the Commissioning Strategy in order to support this review process.
- The VCSA Board welcomes the commitment Shropshire Council makes within the Commissioning Strategy to work closely with other public sector commissioning bodies and offer a more collaborative approach to meeting local needs.
- It is positive to see the Commissioning Strategy being linked to the Shropshire Compact.
- The VCSA Board is keen to have access to the toolkits referred to within the Commissioning Strategy and feels that the provision of more detailed documents and information on particular themes/issues will be a helpful resource.
- The VCSA Board is keen to continue its close working relationship with Shropshire Council's Commissioning Directorate and learn more about the planned implementation of the Commissioning Strategy.
- The Board is keen to understand the measures that will be applied to the Commissioning Strategy in order that its impact may be understood.
- In particular the Board welcomes the commitments made to early engagement and co-design and will support this process using the engagement mechanisms offered by the VCS Assembly. The VCSA is able to offer input in a number of ways using the sectors role as providers but also offering the independence and representation on behalf of service users and local communities.

The VCS Assembly Board also welcomes the commitment made by Clive Wright and Keith Barrow at the meeting with the VCSA Board, Cabinet and Directors in January. At the meeting Clive Wright responded to a request for information and offered to share commissioning intentions with the VCSA. This will assist the VCSA in its role representing the sector but also allow member organisations the information they need for organisational planning.

Please do not hesitate to contact the VCSA Board via the VCSA Support Team if we can further support this important process of change and the development and implementation of a robust Commissioning Strategy for Shropshire Council.

Yours sincerely

Jackie Jeffrey
VCS Assembly Chair on behalf of the VCS Assembly Board