

Community Budgets Group 20 June 2011
Paper 3: The role of the VCSE sector in Community Budgets and Community Commissioning

Overview

1. This paper provides an overview of the current involvement of the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector in Community Budgets to date, encompassing Families with Multiple Problems and also neighbourhood budgets and Local Integrated Services (LIS)¹. The VCSE sector has an important part to play both in enabling the involvement of communities – in all their diversity – in public service decisions, and in service redesign and delivery. There are already a number of good examples of how the sector is being involved in the development of Community Budgets, but there are opportunities to extend that involvement and so gain the greatest benefit from their contribution.
2. The paper, which draws on comments from DCLG's VCS Partnership Board, invites views on how the VCSE sector has been engaged so far in CBs, and ideas on deepening their involvement. It offers some initial proposals to stimulate discussion.
3. It also aims to stimulate discussion on the further involvement of communities in local commissioning and service design.

Purpose

4. This paper seeks steers from the Group on the following:
 - a) Defining the role that the VCSE can play in all types of Community Budgets (see paragraph 5).
 - b) Views on the extent of VCSE engagement so far (see paragraphs 6 – 10).
 - c) Ideas on how to expand the involvement of VCSE and local residents in CBs, which might include:
 - i) working with VCSE sector and Local Government Group to agree a concise narrative on the rationale and value that VCSE involvement brings to Community Budgets; we could explore the potential to reinforce good practice at an event for Council and VCSE leaders
 - ii) asking senior VCSE champions to offer encouragement and support to CB areas on opportunities and approaches to greater VCSE involvement
 - iii) consider the potential for accelerating the pace in a couple of the LIS areas by supporting the local community to take more of a lead role in co-commissioning an integrated service package supported by a neighbourhood budget. This is

¹ LIS is a radically new approach which brings budgets and assets together at the local level and puts communities in control of commissioning (or co-producing) the services they need.

covered in more detail in the paper 4 on widening and deepening Community Budgets – agenda item 6)

- iv) ensuring, via DCLG's VCS Partnership Board and the Local Government Group, that the sector and CB areas are fully informed of opportunities and support available, e.g. the National Training Programme for Commissioners (with perhaps CB areas being prioritised for support), DfE's VCS programme to support delivery of the FMP campaign, the BIG Lottery Improving Futures Fund and the potential for Community Organisers and Community First grants to stimulate social action in CB areas

Consideration

5. Community Budgets offer real potential for the voluntary and community sector to become engaged in transforming the way that local services are designed and delivered, representing the needs of their community and ensuring that all voices are given a fair chance to drive change. The sector has an important contribution to make to the development of Community Budgets as it can be:
 - a critical friend to statutory agencies and local authorities, identifying scope for improved efficiency and cutting waste
 - an informed expert, advising on and representing the needs of the community, including the most disadvantaged and special interest groups eg children of drug users, prisoners, young carers etc.
 - an expert, and often locally-informed, service provider that can work with all communities to co-commission².

Does the Group agree, and are there other contributions / benefits that the VCSE sector can bring to CBs?

6. As Annex A shows, much of the work so far on Community Budgets for families with multiple problems has been partnership led with local authorities, other statutory agencies and VCSE bodies involved in developing plans to integrate service commissioning and budgets. For example many of the boards or steering groups responsible for developing these CBs have include the local Council for Voluntary Service and/or other voluntary organisation such as Barnardos.
7. There are also national developments which could encourage greater VCSE involvement in the delivery of CBs for families with multiple problems. DfE has funded 16 national voluntary organisations £5m in both 2011/12 and 2012/13 to support the development of service provision for families with multiple problems with current and future Community Budget areas (also set out in Annex A) and formed a strategic partnership (led by Barnardo's) of VCS organisations to advise it on the development of Government families' policy. Every Community Budget area has also applied for funding under the Big Lottery's £20m Improvement Futures programme to support

² A study by Turning Point estimated that community commissioning approaches can achieve better outcomes plus efficiency savings of between 15 – 20%.

innovative service between local authorities and VCS organisations working with families multiple problems.

8. Some areas have shown the potential of what can be achieved through partnership with VCSE bodies: for example Swindon Family LIFE programme involves the co-creation of a new approach to family intervention bringing together public agencies, a social enterprise and the families themselves. The extent to which the VCSE has been engaged so far may have been affected by the speed at which the work has had to proceed and the need to achieve budget reductions, which in some areas has impacted on local support for local VCSE bodies and for community engagement structures. A lack of communication to the VCSE sector and communities at this stage may limit their capacity to respond in later delivery stages.
9. The complementary work to develop neighbourhood budgets and LIS approaches in thirteen areas aspires to devolve power beyond local authorities to neighbourhoods and involves working with key voluntary sector partners. As with CBs for families with multiple problems the proposals in these areas have tended to be shaped by the local authority with community engagement planned at a later point, rather than being built around the preferences of the local community. But there are exceptions, notably in Balsall Heath and Kingston-upon-Thames where the local community and VCSE is taking much more of a lead. Annex B provides a snapshot of progress in each area.
10. To a large extent this experience reflects the positive leadership role of local authorities, and we have seen good progress where Councils are helping to bring together new combinations of local partners including GPs, RSLs, police, fire & rescue, and VCSE advisory services like Citizens Advice Bureaux. But the potential of CBs to achieve truly transformational change in public services will be lessened unless the target groups, communities and VCSE bodies are at the heart of the process so that services are re-designed from the bottom up.
11. CBs also have the potential to transform the way in which VCSE organisations and communities are able to generate innovation through a collaborative approach to service design with local authorities. Flexible funding mechanisms have the potential to recognise the VCSE and community ability to deliver outcomes across multiple service areas and finance them through a fair funding deal.

Does the group agree that Community Budgets have the potential to transform the funding landscape for the VCSE in a positive way?

12. The ideas in paragraph 4c) above are intended to stimulate discussion on what more might be done to promote VCSE involvement in Community Budgets. These would align with wider work to tackle known barriers to VCSE and community engagement with the public sector identified at the 2011 VCSE Sector Summit – as summarised at Annex C.

Community Budgets: Involvement of VCS in first phase

Area	Information included in initial CB proposal ³
Barnet	The VCS have been fully consulted in the development of these proposals and Barnet Children's Fund is one of the partners on the Children and Young People Board.
Blackburn	Proposal includes examples of existing good practice on co-production and neighbourhood engagement which is helping to inform the development of community budgets and LIS. Governance is through a multi agency reference group involving VCS. Currently in discussions with a number of other organisations, including various VCS organisations and consortia, to ensure that their resources are aligned.
Blackpool	Multi-agency steering group established with senior personnel from VCS represented: Barnardos and Home-Start. Steering group is accountable body for the pilot.
Birmingham	Birmingham Voluntary Sector Consortium (BVSC) represented on Community Based Budget Families with Complex Needs Operational Group established for purpose of joint planning and aligning agency resources at the local level. BVSC one of the operational partners mandated to plan and deploy resources on behalf of their orgs at the local level.
Bradford	Governance rests with Bradford District Partnership on which VCSE represented.
Croydon	<p>CB proposal and implementation co-ordinated by the Early Intervention and Family Support Group which includes a Voluntary Sector Representative.</p> <p>In order to deliver the intensive service through the Community Budget, a Family Resilience Service will be developed drawing on multi-agency input and expertise. The Family Resilience Service will engage VCSE to deliver key aspects of its services and interventions through commissioning arrangements.</p>
Essex	<p>Essex Partnership (the Local Strategic Partnership) and the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board have overall governance responsibility. Both forums have extensive representation from public and voluntary sector bodies already involved in commissioning and delivering outcomes for all children and families in Essex including families with complex needs.</p> <p>In order to lead the initial phases of the project and drive outcomes through the design phase, an Essex-wide high-level steering group has been formed by a range of partners from local government, health, police and the voluntary sector. Members of this group will be invited to workshops including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Colchester CVS Essex Council for Voluntary Youth Services Rochford Action for Voluntary Services Tendring CVS Barnardos
Greater Manchester	Establishing a GM Community Budgets Investment Board that will oversee the design, development and delivery of GM Community Budgets. GMCVO will be invited to be represented on the Investment Board.

³ This information has been collated from area's initial Community Budget proposals provided in Feb/March 2011 and has not been checked with the areas.

Hull	<p>The voluntary sector is a part of the Community Budget partnership and is represented on Steering Group. Hull has a commitment from a key voluntary sector agency to assist with Community Budget development one day a week. Hull has found this really helpful and is working with the organisation on the development of their whole family assessment.</p> <p>In addition to Steering Group, Hull has regular separate with leads from the VCS on Community Budgets.</p>
Islington	<p>The CB proposal has been developed through the Islington Strategic Partnership and the Islington Children's Board. All major partners have confirmed their support including the local voluntary and charitable sector. Budget includes pooled resources and cash in kind from VCSE.</p>
Kent	<p>Voluntary Sector are named as key partners in Kent's CB. Organisations such as Swale Council for Voluntary Services are on list of organisations currently involved.</p>
Leicestershire	<p>Proposal agreed by Voluntary Action Leicestershire. One of the key objectives of phase 1 of the CB is 'to Work with the voluntary and community sector to ensure that they are integral in the design and delivery of the programme and determine where services can be aligned'.</p>
Lewisham	<p>CB overseen by Lewisham Public Service Board which includes VCS agencies. Family Intervention and Targeted Family Support services are both delivered by VCS organisations. A reducing re-offending project is being delivered through a VCS organisation. New Families Budgets project will be open to VCS organisations to tender for.</p>
Lincolnshire	<p>Voluntary Sector rep on steering group. Pooled budget includes contribution from voluntary sector. Intend to explore variants of Social Investment Bonds which would seek to develop investment from the private and voluntary sector for particular aspects of the pilot.</p>
Swindon	<p>Participle's Swindon Family LIFE programme offers an example of the co-creation of a new approach to family intervention by multiple public agencies, a social enterprise and families themselves. At the core of the programme are a new set of relationships between public services and families and a concentration on developing their capabilities, networks and resilience. Members of VCSE have started to be trained alongside senior managers from other sectors to bring about system-wide change.</p>
Westminster, H&F, K&C, Wandsworth	<p>At the heart of Family Recovery is the Team Around the Family (TAF). The TAF provides access to a range of expertise drawn from partners in the public and voluntary sectors including children's and adults' social care, health, police, employment, financial advice and life skills. Will look to the voluntary and charitable sector to provide specialist support as they often have a better understanding of the frontline issues. Have the support of local partner agencies both in terms of approach and resources.</p>

National Voluntary Sector Organisation funded by DfE to support development of provision for families with multiple problems in current/future Community Budgets Areas

<p>Action for Prisoners' Families (APF) http://www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk/</p>	<p>To support families of offenders by improving the availability of training for those involved in supporting families of offenders.</p>
<p>Addaction http://www.addaction.org.uk</p>	<p>To deliver training (on-site courses/e-learning) to Sure Start Children's Centre staff to establish effective practice in supporting families where there is parental substance misuse.</p>
<p>Adfam http://www.adfam.org.uk</p>	<p>To deliver training to ensure that practitioners and volunteers are ready to work effectively with families where there is parental alcohol and drug misuse and enable them to deliver effective treatment interventions.</p>
<p>Alcohol Concern http://www.alcoholconcern.org.uk</p>	<p>To deliver training sessions to a range of professionals on alcohol, child protection and domestic abuse. The project will aim to target systematic change in adult services so that they are more confident to respond to child protection issues.</p>
<p>Children's Society (The) http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk</p>	<p>To help local services to identify and support young people who care for parents or siblings with long-term health problems and disabilities. The project will work in collaboration with Princess Royal Trust for Carers to improve support for young carers and their families.</p>
<p>CSV http://www.csv.org.uk</p>	<p>To develop models of volunteering support for families with multiple problems that can provide parents with mentors, befrienders and advocates. The project will recruit, train, support and match volunteers with parents who feel isolated, vulnerable and unable to cope, by working with schools and children's centres to identify parents who would benefit from individual and targeted support either in the home or at the school/centre.</p>
<p>Family Delivery Team (Interface associates UK) http://www.interfaceassociates.co.uk</p>	<p>To provide a national centre of expertise on best practice approaches in working with families with multiple problems. The project will offer advice and support to local authorities, voluntary and community organisation partners and other sector representative bodies on running services for families with multiple problems.</p>
<p>Partners of Prisoners (POPS) & Families Support Group http://www.partnersofprisoners.co.uk</p>	<p>To develop the 'Adult Courts Volunteer Family Support Worker Model' which currently operates as part of the POPS Integrated Continuum of Care model in Manchester, in order to further achieve better outcomes for offenders' children and their families across the North West and Yorkshire & Humberside regions.</p>
<p>Place2Be http://www.theplace2be.org.uk</p>	<p>To deliver evidence based early intervention and parenting support specifically to families with mental health problems and develop the capacity of the existing workforce, including schools, children's centres and volunteers, to deliver parenting support for vulnerable families.</p>

<p>Princess Royal Trust for Carers</p> <p>http://www.carers.org/home</p>	<p>To deliver a national programme to improve support for young carers and their families by developing: a whole family approach; sustainable links between the voluntary and statutory sector; sharing of evidence base of good practice across health, social care and education; and represent young carers to influence national policy.</p>
<p>Prison Advice and Care Trust (PACT)</p> <p>http://www.prisonadvice.org.uk</p>	<p>To deliver a national programme of “integrated family support” aimed at tackling multiple needs of offenders’ families and children. The project will recruit community based “integrated family support advocates” to develop partnerships between prison and probation (via PACT’s existing prison based family support workers) and local services for children and families.</p>
<p>Roma Support Group</p> <p>http://www.romasupportgroup.org.uk</p>	<p>To strengthen capacity within existing local services by promoting the understanding of Roma/Gypsy culture in order to deliver more effective early interventions for Roma/ Gypsy families.</p>
<p>Safe Ground</p> <p>http://www.safeground.org.uk</p>	<p>To enhance and develop specialist relationship and parenting skills through programmes working with prisoners to support and improve prisoners’ family relationships and better outcomes for their children.</p>
<p>Spurgeons</p> <p>http://www.spurgeons.org/</p>	<p>To support families of offenders to strengthen the family whilst a member is in prison, and through this reduce re-offending on release. The project will also aim to support the existing workforce so they have the knowledge and skills to support families of offenders.</p>
<p>Time for Families</p> <p>http://www.timeforfamilies.org.uk/</p>	<p>To deliver relationship courses in a third of English prisons and to train probation staff to run relationship courses for offenders in the community.</p>
<p>YMCA Derbyshire</p> <p>http://www.ymcaderbyshire.org.uk/</p>	<p>To deliver innovative frontline services targeted at families at risk of homelessness and/or family breakdown through the development of a replicable consortium model to enable sharing of local solutions / best practice.</p>

Summary of progress in areas being supported to develop neighbourhood budgets and Local Integrated Services (LIS)

DCLG is supporting work to establishing small area budgets in the following four areas:

Bristol

Bristol is focusing on the Ashley, Easton and Lawrence Hill area, and particularly Stapleton Road, which has a population of about 46K. This is the most deprived part of Bristol with high levels of worklessness and crime. It has a relatively young and ethnically diverse population and issues around substance misuse, gang culture, and teenage pregnancies. The focus is on minimising duplication and maximising what services can achieve by working with the local community. **This involves community engagement to understand the issues impacting on young people's lives, pinpoint changes needed to public services, and agreeing how a community budget should come together.** Possible budgets for inclusion include clean/safe/green (some of which have already been devolved to neighbourhood level), section 106 resources, children and young people services, and public health. **Neighbourhood partnerships provide a community engagement and governance structure, but at this stage the extent of the budget devolution is unclear.** There were political changes in the Council in May, and it is currently unclear whether/how this work will progress.

Birmingham

Birmingham is looking to develop neighbourhood budgets in two places:

- Parts of Lozells, Handsworth, and Soho covering a population of about 30K. This is a deprived part of the city with a relatively young and ethnically diverse population, and particular issues around violent and gun crime. The Council is looking to develop a "post-neighbourhood management" approach to involving the community in local services. A community hub will be developed in a former bank building, bringing together local services including employment advice, clean/safe, community health, housing and access to advice, with space for community activities. In parallel, local services are being "re-networked" with more streamlined arrangements for community involvement. Some work has been done to identify service spend in the area, but the current focus is on ensuring the coordinated deployment of resources rather than a pooled budget. Work needs to progress on agreeing a governance mechanism. **Whilst drawing on previous forms of community engagement and residents' surveys to inform priorities, the work has been public service-led so far.**

In Balsall Heath, the local Forum has requested a neighbourhood budget as a way to sustain its clean/safe, community development and empowerment activities. Progress has been made in clarifying the services/amenities that residents value, in exploring governance options for the budget, and in starting to map the public service spend and other resources in the area. There are a number of complex issues which will take time to work through, not least to overcome people's perceptions about how services should be aligned and delivered. More work needs to be done to address these issues, and bottom out the scope of the budget, secure public service commitment of funding (or other

resources), and agree a new governance mechanism. **The process has been inspired and led by the local community forum, with DCLG facilitating, bringing partners together, and providing some technical expertise.**

Stoke-on-Trent

Stoke-on-Trent Council has been focusing on the Burslem area (pop. c12K) which is one of the most deprived parts of the City. They have been developing a programme called 'Local Matters' to redesign the Council's approach to working with communities to address public service inadequacies and build social capital. Multi-agency groups (Council, police, fire & rescue, NHS) are starting to consider various work streams including:

- mapping of neighbourhood spend and understanding where efficiencies can be made
- rationalising assets
- re-engaging with communities
- data/intelligence sharing
- service redesign, including multi-agency teams and co-location where relevant

Community engagement and possible service co-design are recognised as important but have not yet advanced. There are plans to explore community agreements and volunteer programmes. Restructuring within the Council, and political changes in May, has impacted on the neighbourhood budget work, and it is unclear at this stage whether or how the work will progress.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne

The neighbourhood budget proposal focuses on the Cowgate/Kenton Bar area (pop. c15K) and involves two elements:

- asset transfer to the community to create a base / resource for community-led activity
- peer-led support and more integrated services for families with multiple problems

There are fairly low levels of VCS activity and social capital in the area, so the process so far has been Council-led, and this is reflected in the local governance structures. Work is now starting to clarify the budgets to support the process and to build the capacity of local residents. It is unlikely that this will result in a neighbourhood budget of any great size, but rather more integrated services through more flexible direct service provision, supplemented by resident-led support for families and community management of assets.

Cabinet Office is working with 9 areas to explore the Local Integrated Service model. Highlighted excerpts of VCSE and community involvement from 4 areas are below:

Warrington

The project focuses on the 11 most deprived SOAs in the borough to reduce inequalities by delivering holistic, end to end services in radical new ways, with the key focus being income and health and wellbeing. The project will lead to a significant redesign of services, with increased focus on commissioning from the community sector and reduction in specialist provision from the public sector.

The manager of the Warrington CAB (also chair of Warrington 3rd sector hub) is a member of the core steering group for the LIS. VCSE organisations are currently involved in the following elements:

- Work undertaken by the Volunteer Centre linking with Job Centre Plus on the benefits to the jobseeker of volunteering.
- Warrington carers centre offers specialised support and advice for people with responsibilities in this area.
- Warrington Disability Partnership (WDP) offers support to those currently being taken off incapacity benefit and finding themselves on JSA. WDP and the CVS also jointly run the Lavender Hill project aimed at the over 50s facing barriers to work.
- Several services supporting those with alcohol or other substance misuse issues and their families
- Many VCSEs delivering the lifelong learning programme.
- Job clubs are being run at neighbourhood level and the third sector meets regularly with the job centre to discuss issues and solutions.

Cheshire West and Chester

The scope of the LIS is based on four service areas with a focus on improving the outcomes, addressing gaps in provision and creating efficiencies by using existing staff and resources to create a tailored service to address the needs of the Ellesmere Port residents for: Children and young people; worklessness; community safety; and teenage pregnancy.

There are three key groups involved in LIS, these are, Ellesmere Port Voluntary and Community Organisations (EPVCO), the Faith Sector and grass roots community groups:

- EPVCO have been commissioned work with the Our Place Team to establish constituted groups in each of the 10 neighbourhoods, provide training and create opportunities for communities to meet with organisations who can make a difference in their community.
- The Faith Group has had invested £200,000 (matched with funding raised by the faith group of £600,000) invested in it to develop a multi-functional community facility addressing affordable childcare, healthy eating, mentoring for young mothers, accessing training and employment and intergenerational projects.
- The 10 neighbourhoods groups are at varying degrees of development but the Stanney Community Forum, Rossmore Resident Groups and Westminster Residents Groups have taken forward Environmental Action Plans

Kingston on Thames

Focussing on the Norbiton ward of Kingston, the community will be involved in identifying the key priorities and services to be involved in the project. A Professional's Technical Working team made up of professionals from NHSK, RBK, MET Police, Kingston University and Kingston Chamber of Commerce support the work of the LIS and will support the developing Community Working Group.

- A Community Working Group made up of 14 community members is working to develop a working programme committing a minimum of 4 hours of their time a month. Other community members are also being recruited, informed and supported to take part.
- Voluntary Action Kingston are represented on the working team, and other VCSE organisations are involved on an ad hoc basis, including Age Concern Kingston.

Tameside

The LIS pilot is focussing on tackling families with complex needs, with particular attention to reducing service overlaps, tackling offending levels and worklessness. VCSE organisations are involved at many levels:

- St Peters Partnership a third sector organisation is our delivery partner in the St Peters Local Integrated Services (LIS) and is taking a leading role in the formation and delivery of the Local Integrated Services (LIS) in ST Peters working with communities to co-design services. St Peters Partnership is also a community organiser host organisation and will be bringing this input and expertise to the pilot.
- New Charter, Tameside's biggest registered social landlord is rooted in our local community, helping residents to deal with the day to day issues which being part of the community in Smallshaw brings.
- All VCSE organisations are involved in our pilots through representation of the umbrella organisation Tameside Third Sector coalition on the LPSE and the Local Integrated Services (LIS) Steering Group.
- The VCSE is also engaged in the delivery in key pieces of activity such as the mapping of all contact with residents in their homes across the two Local Integrated Services (LIS) neighbourhoods.

Barriers to VCSE engagement with statutory services

1. Typical barriers to better joint-working cited by local authorities and the voluntary sector during the 2011 Sector Summit⁴ and Modernising Commissioning Green Paper consultations included:
 - Lack of a neutral space to discuss difficult issues eg statutory providers failing to work with voluntary and community organisation
 - A procurement (output) rather than a commissioning (outcome) based approach to voluntary sector service provision
 - A lack of recognition of the time and resources needed for the VCSE to engage eg services being commissioned at 'less than cost'
 - Difficulties over measuring cost-benefits and full social value of services provided
 - The speed at which services were expected to be designed and delivered
 - Not being treated as an 'equal partner' in discussions with other local partners

2. Potential solutions to these barriers include:
 - The Cabinet Office National Programme for Commissioners (NPC) to train commissioners in best practice using models and case studies from local areas
 - Also within the NPC is the Commissioning Improvement Programme, bringing together key voluntary sector, private sector and public sector leaders to tackle local barriers to commissioning
 - The Chris White Social Value Bill will place a requirement on all commissioners of services to consider social and environmental value when appropriate.
 - The CO Infrastructure Programme will help organisations develop sustainable business models, which could include adopting a Community Commissioning role

Barriers to community and individual engagement with statutory services

3. Engagement of residents in Community Budgets and LIS is being done by:
 - Approaching direct service users
 - Holding consultation events
 - Setting up community and neighbourhood panels
 - Participatory budgeting programmes
 - Ward Councillor engagement

4. Opportunities to enhance resident involvement include:
 - The roll out of Community Organisers, led by Cabinet Office
 - Engaging with the "Your Local Budget" work on ideas for extending participatory budgeting approaches
 - The Cabinet Office's Community First programme, providing communities with grants to take local action

⁴ Convened and chaired by the Ministers for the Cabinet Office, Civil Society and Decentralisation. It concluded a consultation with the VCSE sector on how to identify waste and efficiency in public services and to engage the VCSE sector in devising solutions. Over 400 responses were received.