

This is a response to the public consultation on modernising commissioning from Gabriel Chanan, of PACES Empowerment (www.pacesempowerment.co.uk).

I wish to comment on the third of the four questions listed on page 7 of the consultative paper, namely how commissioners could use assessments of full social, environmental and economic value to inform their commissioning decisions:

In order to strengthen communities and democratic accountability commissioners must commission community groups which are genuinely run by members and volunteers, and which are not social enterprises, to expand their own forms of service, not public services, and should commission community development teams to assist these groups to flourish and produce maximum effect. This should be quite separate from commissioning public services but should command major resources and be the leading edge of the big society policy.

There is a fundamental contradiction in expecting these goals to be achieved by commissioning social enterprises to take on more delivery of public services. Taking over state services makes voluntary organisations more not less dependent on the state and less not more able to voice the concerns of their communities.

This has implications for the other questions throughout the consultative paper.

See '*Big Society and Public Services: Complementarity or Erosion?*', www.pacesempowerment.co.uk

Sincerely

Gabriel Chanan