

Workshop 1 - Models of VCSE consortia and collaboration

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The workshop explored collaboration for service delivery in a broad sense and looked at three common models for organisations working together.

There was lots of useful discussion in the workshop and interest in the idea of working collaboratively. There was awareness that some of the models could be very time and resource intensive. The models were explored and interrogated to some degree, but there was also a lot of discussion about the networks and infrastructure that might be needed before many of these models could be implemented. There did not seem great awareness of, or planning for, the implications of the proposals in the MOJ paper about outsourcing and large bidding lots.

Things people were keen to *gain* from collaboration included influence (of both specification and processes used), experience, skills, different specialisms, service improvement and access to delivery. Things people were keen to *give* to a collaboration included their own experience, expansion of a proven method, knowledge of service users and local knowledge. There was a comment that people also need to understand what they have to lose (what the risks are) of going into a collaboration.

There was a concern that some commissioning models and the resulting collaborations that resulted, for example DWP programmes, have created many 'tiers' of contract management by multiple sub-contractors, with a lot of money lost from service delivery and little left at the end for service delivery. Participants were keen for a good, but flexible commissioning model that might also use grants and be more accessible for VCSE providers.

Workshop participants were from public and third sector; there was good unified enthusiasm for the SFC networks and their potential, but a realisation that many had only really just started to get going and had a lot more to achieve. Many had not really undertaken commissioning, and people were not sure what sort of budgets or services would be commissioned. There was a consensus that additional resources into these networks would be beneficial to help joint working, help different sectors to understand each other better and plan for collaboration and delivery.

For collaboration to work locally there was agreement that some sort of local broker, to pull together interested parties, would be helpful.

Flipchart notes

Small discussion looking at what organisations might give and what they might get from working collaboratively

| Give? | Get? |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Connections• Local knowledge• Experience• Understanding• Specialist knowledge of market• Service improvement• Evidence• One point of contact• Values | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expertise• Data/evidence• Sustainability for sector• Influence• Dialogue• Understanding• One point of contact• Access to 'doers'• Contracts• Voice• Power• Evidence• Resources |