

These comments were recorded in the 15 consultation events held during the three month Consultation on the Draft Commissioning Strategy. The written comments received from current service providers are also included

Consultation Comments on Draft Commissioning Strategy			City Council responses
A	Service Model		
1	Access	a	people need different routes of entry into Infrastructure Support
		b	Access to services: will it be one size fits all?
		c	A few organisations doing it gives more choice
		d	Want more than one point of access
2	Community Development	a	don't say 'hand-holding' - implies lack of independence
		b	VCS groups don't develop in linear way, can slip back developmentally
		c	outreach - community development service important to older people's VCS
		d	Community Development acts strategically to define what VCS Infrastructure should provide and also influence the city agenda.

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	e	The Strategy proposes a Community Development 'wrap around' service. The need for additional community development support has arisen because the Bristol City Council community development team has been moved from supporting the development of community groups, to supporting the neighbourhood partnerships and the cohesion agenda. Fourteen BCC community development staff have been redeployed. To replace that support from this budget will be impossible. The Council needs to be able to clarify the future role of its Community Development team before the final specification is produced, and/or find additional funding to support this work.	There is already a level of community development support within the current VCS infrastructure support system. The City Council is exploring sources of additional funding to support the new VCS Infrastructure support services. The City Council is currently exploring the future role of its Community Development team.
3	Model pros/cons	Pros	
	a	Continuity in VCS provision needed	The City Council accepts and understands this point and will contract for the new service for a minimum of three years.
	b	Record kept of previous work – with reference no. so track is kept of what help an organisation has had with its various issues	The City Council accepts this point and will reflect it in the Service Specification
	c	The Services model feels good	The City Council accepts this point
	d	Need a model that brings things together.	The City Council accepts this point
	e	model is brilliant but need to see evidence of impact	The City Council accepts this point and will reflect it in the Service Specification and through contract monitoring.
	f	One centre point is excellent. We need a model that brings things together. It makes sense as a customer to access via a single site	The City Council accepts and understands this point.
	g	This model directs focus back to the customer, not the provider.	The City Council accepts and understands this point. This is our aim.

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			Cons	
		h	Need to be more specific about outcomes we want to deliver.	The City Council accepts and understands this point. It will be taken up by the Specification Development Group.
		l	This model is potentially bureaucratic	The City Council accepts that this is a potential risk. The efficiency of the processes which support front line delivery will form an element for assessing proposals for the new services
		j	BCC needs to define what is meant by 'representation': it should be clear. How can we tell if it's working?	The City Council accepts and understands this point. It will be taken up by the Specification Development Group.
		k	No evidence has been provided to demonstrate that a one-stop shop for VCSE sector infrastructure services run by only one provider is the best option. There is no evidence of learning from existing good practice. It would be useful to test the market for a cross-sectoral shared web portal, free phone number and email address.	Integrated access to all services will be in the Specification but providers can propose how they will deliver it effectively.
		l	The links between the needs assessment and the outcomes are not explicit and therefore the relationship between stated objectives and the preferred delivery option is not transparent. For example, the objective to support service-led organisations in the city may be thwarted by a preferred delivery option that is designed to decrease the number of providers that are themselves member-led organisations.	The Final Commissioning Strategy will make the links between Outcomes and Needs Assessment explicit. The Cabinet Report will not propose a preferred Delivery Method. Potential providers will be able to put forward proposals for delivery by as many partner providers as they see fit.
		m	The strategy lists 'complementary networks' that the Council would expect bidders to have a relationship with. We are concerned that some organisations are named and not others.	The City Council accepts that the list in the Draft Strategy is not exhaustive or meant to imply that only those organisations mentioned are significant.
4	Enquiry & Assessment	a	like the idea of an assessment service'	The City Council accepts this point.

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		b	Enquiry: depends on buy-in from providers – need to share an ethos base.'	The City Council accepts and understands this point.
		c	Could enquiry service be funded separately? Very important.'	The City Council wants to purchase all the VCS Infrastructure under a single Specification as an integrated set of services rather than funding separate services
		d	Got to have very good information at the referral point	The City Council accepts this point.
		e	One concern is that we want a single way of doing the 'triage'	The City Council accepts this point.
		f	'Triage' – what we mean by it? Tends to have the meaning in military circles of deciding who to prioritise to survive! Perhaps not the best phrase.	The City Council accepts this point. We will use the term 'assessment' in the Final Commissioning Strategy
5	Role of BCC/ statutory sector	a	Where there is evidence of duplication of training provision, as reported by consultees, this can be remedied through co-ordinated commissioning and contract management.	The City Council accepts the point that co-ordinated commissioning and contract management can help address this issue.
		b	Innovation is identified as a benefit on page 3 of the strategy. We are unclear from the draft strategy how the proposed support services model and service delivery option would encourage or build in capacity for innovation at all levels of provision. It would be helpful if a clear indication could be expressed in the body of the strategy of how the council will work in partnership with the VCSE sector and what all statutory partners are proposing to offer to the voluntary sector to ensure a thriving third sector. What gaps will individual statutory partners fill in the contracted services, and what monitoring and review capacity will they resource?	The Cabinet Report will not now propose a preferred Delivery Model of a Single Main Provider. The relationship which the City Council is seeking to establish with VCS Infrastructure providers is one which supports innovation and service development and flexibility. It is also the intention of this commissioning to create a focus for continuing development between all statutory bodies and the VCS Infrastructure providers over the course of the Funding Agreement period. This could include the purchasing of additional services by statutory commissioners from the providers.

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6	capacity/affordability	a	The service could be inundated with requests - will services have the capacity to deliver?	The City Council accepts this is a possibility. The Specification will seek proposals which use the available resources as efficiently as possible to maximise delivery. The choice of a Funding Agreement/Grant mechanism to fund the VCS Infrastructure services is in part to seek providers with the capacity to bring additional funding into the city to add value to the funding which this commissioning can provide.
7	Innovation/flexibility	a	Describing and listing delivery activities (support services) as part of the strategy rather than commissioning outcomes implies that there will be no flexibility in the contract for VCSE infrastructure support services to identify and respond to new and emerging support needs. We are concerned that a consequence of this approach will be to stifle responsiveness and innovation.	The focus on services within the Commissioning Strategy reflects the needs and ideas which were expressed in the Needs Assessment work. Providers can propose how they will deliver the outcomes. The relationship which the City Council is seeking to establish with VCS Infrastructure providers is one which support innovation and service development and flexibility. It is also the intention of this commissioning to create a focus for continuing development between all statutory bodies and the VCS Infrastructure providers over the course of the Funding Agreement period.
8	co-ordination	a	An overarching strategy for VCS Infrastructure service is needed to unify the parts. There's a need for strong co-ordination	The City Council accepts this point. This is reflected in the Commissioning Strategy's emphasis on a co-ordinated set of services for the sector.
		b	The one stop shop model would need to have appropriate referral arrangements for a range of specialist support services, including employment law advice to community groups.	The City Council accepts this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group.
9	branding	a	Single brand for whole set of services: difficulties for some providers fitting into a new brand	The City Council accepts this point and will look to providers to address this in their proposals.
		b	promotion and branding is crucial	The City Council accepts this point
		c	single brand name - please don't make it an acronym!	The City Council accepts this point
B	Delivery Model			

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1	Diversity of Market	a	Single Main Provider preferred Delivery Model risks setting up a monopoly which could have the effect of destroying the local market and be difficult to contract manage if there is no alternative supplier	In response to the Consultation the Cabinet Report will not propose a preferred Delivery Model but will focus on delivery of a co-ordinated, coherent set of unified VCS Infrastructure Support Services for the city. BCC accept this could be delivered by a consortium approach. The question of whether provider groups are more sustainable by merging is an issue which faces all services and can best be answered by the groups themselves. As regards BME groups and competition: consortia delivery would enable smaller groups to deliver as part of a larger bid. BCC fully supports an inclusive service and the Service Specification will require delivery of specific benefits to equalities groups, including BME. These will be informed by the Consultation feedback.
		b	Will groups be under pressure to merge?	
		c	Duplication of services can be responsive to particular needs – people want choice	
		d	A suggestion to mitigate against the Single Main Provider monopoly: limiting what they can deliver themselves and requiring them to subcontract out to a range of other organisation	
		e	VCS infrastructure providers must work with community organisations with right skills to deliver	
		f	Concern that service delivery should be inclusive and that BME organisations may not be able to compete in procurement with established organisations with more capacity. Disability organisations are also seeking ways of delivering into the Infrastructure service.	
		g	one main provider with a reduced, indeterminate number of subcontracted organisations may diminish the complexity and sustainability of the voluntary sector as a whole if its specialist support does not survive.	
		h	All materials must be accessible to BME communities, achievable via sub-contracting through existing structures	
		i	Danger of losing innovation in centralising – smaller groups could get left behind	

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2	for profit/not for profit	a	Question if private sector could bid to be the Single Main Provider and, if so, would they have the right principles to fit with the VCS?
		b	Point made that it would be good to lever in private sector support to the benefit of the VCS through Infrastructure services
			The Cabinet Report recommends a Funding Agreement/competitive grant funding mechanism for VCS Infrastructure Support Services. This is only available to not-for-profit organisations. Private sector providers could still supply an element of specialist support services into the whole VCS Infrastructure Service. It will be expected that the future VCS Infrastructure services will maximise benefits from the private sector - eg. through pro-bono work.
3	Size	a	Concerns expressed about Single Main Provider creates a big, potentially slow, bureaucratic structure which might make it hard for a range of voices to get heard.
		b	Would the big organisation make contract management harder?
			Delivery of benefit to the full range of equalities VCS groups in both practical support and influencing will be required of the new services. One benefit of a co-ordinated set of services will be that contract management monitoring will be consistent across all services. This is an explicit expected benefit from the new services.
4	Risk of Oppressive relationships	a	Risk that single provider could be oppressive / exclusive – centralising funds centralises power
		b	Can a single provider understand the needs of 400 communities in Bristol?
			The Cabinet Report will not now propose a preferred Delivery Model of a Single Main Provider. Consortia proposals by their nature are negotiated relationships between a number of providers. In the Draft Commissioning Strategy it was always envisaged that a number of providers would contribute to the model in order to address the diversity of the city's VCS.
5	Risks to current providers	a	Importance of not losing 'strengths' in the VCSO, the positive aspects of current services.
			The Needs Assessment highlighted a number of positives about current services. These will be reflected in the Specification.

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	b	Single Main Provider model will also undermine the current equal relationship between partners who specialise in distinct spheres of operation with some shared generic interests	The Cabinet Report will not now propose a preferred Delivery Model of a Single Main Provider. Consortia proposals by their nature are negotiated relationships between a number of providers. The City Council will welcome service proposals delivered through consortia arrangements.	
	c	The vehicle for the community leadership capacity, the Consortium Forum, will be compromised if the competitive option is adopted. The trust, fairness and transparency needed for leadership to work effectively will be threatened		
6	Values	a	Single Main Provider has to show how it's taking forward the User Led Organisations principles and good practice and the most advanced / forward thinking of principles around Disability Equality and the Putting People First agenda.	Point noted and will be referred to the Specification Development Group. The Specification will reflect the development of ULO as described in the Putting People First programme.
		b	Single provider/ organisation should demonstrate a culture/values which are open and value/understand diverse communities	The City Council supports this position. Point noted and will be referred to the Specification Development Group.
7	Alternative models	a	A number of suggestions were made that a consortium system with lead body could deliver effectively and should be considered.	In response to the Consultation the Cabinet Report will not propose a preferred Delivery Model but will focus on delivery of a co-ordinated, coherent set of unified VCS Infrastructure Support Services for the city. BCC accept this could be delivered by a consortium approach.
		b	alternative model: the commissioning of separate specialised services with separate contracts with infrastructure providers	The City Council does not accept this point. VCS Infrastructure Support Services will be commissioned as an integrated set of services, not in separate packages in order to provide the city with a co-ordinated, coherent set of support services.

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	c	3. The question was asked 'Could not the existing consortium have been marketed and capacity built to improve existing services?' as a way of delivering the new VCS Infrastructure Support Services?	The City Council is seeking the opportunity in commissioning the VCS Infrastructure support services of assessing a range of proposals and choosing the one that can best meet the Specification outcomes. The Council's legal advice makes it clear that we may not infringe European Union rules on State Aid in using public funding, however, and must make an opportunity available to a range of providers.
	d	We would like assurances that VSOs would have an equal opportunity to state their interest in bidding as a coalition, joint provider or consortium.	In response to the Consultation the Cabinet Report will not propose a preferred Delivery Model but will focus on delivery a co-ordinated, coherent set of unified VCS Infrastructure Support Services for the city. BCC accept this could be delivered by a consortium approach.
	e	We request that in the interests of fairness, council resources are committed to supporting the other two delivery options: the consortia option and the commissioning of separate specialised services	see the two responses above. The City Council does not support the option of commissioning separate specialised services.
	f	Are there any other options if BME groups reject the proposed model?	In response to the Consultation the Cabinet Report will not propose a preferred Delivery Model. The consultation with BME groups has clarified their needs and these will be built into the Service Specification. See Equalities section for more details.
C	Cost /Funding Concerns		
1	Contract Management costs transfer from BCC to providers?	a BCC contract management costs in current system - ?Will that money be transferred into new services to support the management role of the main provider?	No. Contract management costs are very low in the current system, as individual VCS Infrastructure services generally receive a 'light touch' monitoring approach. In fact the contract management role for the new services will be at a similar level from BCC.

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		<p>b With a systematic performance management framework and adequate capacity in the commissioning agency, all grants and contracts may be managed to reach the desired outcomes if the budget is realistic. But we are not clear whether the council has costed in the proposed contracting of performance management to the one provider plus an additional amount for the performance management of subcontractors by the one provider or whether the savings to the council, from ceasing to manage a range of contracts and managing only the contract with the single main provider, will be passed on to the single main provider.</p>	<p>Contract Management will remain with Bristol City Council. Systems to deliver and monitor performance will be expected to be part of proposals and the costings of potential providers. The City Council is exploring sources of additional funding to support the new VCS Infrastructure support services.</p>
		<p>c How much of the Council's cost savings will be reallocated to the lead contractor to reflect its contract management responsibilities, restructuring, and additional back office costs (and to prevent a funding cut?)</p>	

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2	Direct Delivery funds reduced to fund management	a	<p>The Care Forum is concerned at the implications of a strategy that stipulates the council's preferred delivery option based on ease of contract management, reduced costs and reduced risk, and particularly so given the potential shortcomings of the uncosted preferred delivery option. By bundling all of the support services under one provider rather than nurturing continuing strong partnership working between different departments, agencies and organisations, the preferred delivery option may have the effect of contradicting both the council priority to deliver a thriving third sector (LAA N17) by supporting specialised local market capacity, and the government's desired objective of fostering collaboration alongside competition. It is not clear from the strategy whether the council plans to provide a parallel or integrated grants scheme; and how contestability will be assured if only one provider bids.</p>	<p>The Draft Commissioning Strategy's preferred Delivery Model cited 'clarity of the BCC's Contract Management role' as an advantage, not 'ease of contract management'. The Cabinet Report will not recommend a preferred Delivery Model now and the City Council will accept consortia bids, with all the advantages noted in the Draft Strategy. But within Consortia it is common practice for there to be a Lead Organisation which holds the overall contract on behalf of the Consortium. The proposal to make make this opportunity available nationally is part of strategy to encourage a range of bids, maximising the likelihood of contestability.</p>
		b	<p>will single access re-structure take funds away from frontline services?</p>	<p>The City Council is exploring sources of additional funding to support the new VCS Infrastructure support services.</p>
		c	<p>If funding for Infrastructure support remains the same where will additional management costs come from? Any additional monies?</p>	

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		d	<p>If a transparent procurement process is followed that allows for full cost recovery by the lead provider and also by the subcontracted providers, the preferred option may lead to an increase in the management, core and commissioning costs for each part of the service that is subcontracted. For all of those services that the one provider delivers itself - over and above the services that it is currently delivering – may entail additional premises, management and administrative capacity, and additional costs may accrue to cover the additional commissioning process undertaken by the one lead provider. The end result will be a reduction of funding available for service delivery.</p>	
		e	<p>If the efficiency savings made by the council by managing fewer contracts are not added to the total amount of funding for the commissioned support service, then this amount will have to be subtracted from the services budget and services curtailed commensurately. In other words, this would effectively become a funding cut</p>	<p>Contract management costs are very low in the current system, as individual VCS Infrastructure services generally receive a 'light touch' monitoring approach. Providers should where possible demonstrate efficiencies in core support services through use of shared common services such as finance, Human Resources, newsletters, management, performance management and possibly through shared accommodation. The City Council is exploring sources of additional funding to support the new VCS Infrastructure support services, but we cannot guarantee this.</p>
3	Affordability/cost effectiveness of service model	a	<p>ICT set up - is there enough capacity for this? - needs to be there for wrap around service to be delivered</p>	<p>the City Council is exploring sources of additional funding to support the new VCS Infrastructure support services.</p>
		b	<p>If the model hasn't been costed, how will we know if it's possible?/It would be good if it would work - is it affordable?</p>	<p>The proposed model is explicitly an 'ideal' service. The Service Specification will specify minimum levels of service. The working relationship the City Council is seeking with providers is one which can build and develop the services over time.</p>
		c	<p>How well resourced will 'crisis resolution' be? Will funds be increased?</p>	<p>This is a decision for providers to propose within their bids.</p>

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	d	? additional £ for co-ordination.	the City Council is exploring sources of additional funding to support the new VCS Infrastructure support services.
	e	Will one lead organisation managing cost more money?	
	f	Triage – always about allocating insufficient resources	'Triage' refers to the assessment of need. It is intended to lead to efficient and effective use of the resources available.
	g	The proposed 'layers of service', the 'handholding' service, the 'development' services and the enquiry and triage service are all new. Since the outputs and the delivery option have been specified and if new services are to be included for the same circa £400k budget, it would be helpful to see a cost analysis of the draft strategy and specifically of the three proposed delivery options, the new services and any decommissioning of services	The delivery option will not be specified in the Final Commissioning Strategy. Not all aspects of the Service model are new - there is a community development focus in some of the existing providers Service Level agreement. A number of the specialist services in 'development' are currently funded.
	h	We are not confident that the proposals in the strategy are designed to deliver the variously termed objectives contained in the draft strategy. As there is no cost analysis of the different proposals, not even of the council's preferred option, we are concerned to know whether the model and the preferred delivery option will be cost effective.	The delivery option will not now be specified in the Final Commissioning Strategy.
	l	Presently, less than 1% of the Council's total expenditure on the voluntary, community sector is spent on infrastructure support services. It is our view that a measurable improvement in services will not be achievable without additional investment.	The City Council is exploring sources of additional funding to support the new VCS Infrastructure support services. One outcome of the new services is that integrated monitoring and performance management will provide effective measurement of impact for the funding which is available. This in itself will position the providers well to secure additional funding and contracts to enhance provision.

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		j	It is our view that a combination of all services is needed. The City Council's investment is not enough to pay for a complete range of infrastructure support services. Presently local infrastructure organisations such as Voscur raise additional funds and generate income to add to the City Council's investment, and are able then to offer free and low cost support to groups that need it.	This point is accepted. This is one reason why the Cabinet Report proposes a Funding Agreement/Grants funding mechanism for these services in recognition that the City Council is seeking to support providers who can bring additional funding into the city to develop the VCS infrastructure support model.
4	Transition	a	There is no proposal for how to fill the funding gap between the point at which the one main provider is commissioned (October 2010) and the point at which it can itself procure subcontracted services using a world class commissioning process. We are concerned to know how the council proposes to fund VCSE infrastructure support services in this interim period	In response to the Consultation the Cabinet Report will not propose a preferred Delivery Model but will focus on delivery of a co-ordinated, coherent set of unified VCS Infrastructure Support Services for the city. It's expected that proposals will come forward which have all partners in place. Funding of existing providers will continue until the new funding agreement starts.
D	Prioritisation of Infrastructure service areas			
1	Strategic requirements	a	what are the strategic priorities in supporting the VCS - BCC should prioritise strategically against them	The point will be referred to the Specification Development Group for consideration.
2	Income levels	a	eg. Manchester used an income bar of £50,000 a year for free access to Infrastructure support	The point will be referred to the Specification Development Group for consideration
3	distribution of funding	a	want 70% on practical support; 30% on representation	The point will be referred to the Specification Development Group for consideration
		b	Emphasis on community engagement development - This strand should be subcontracted out to ensure representation	The point will be referred to the Specification Development Group for consideration

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		c	Drive of services: need to ensure new communities get capacity building support	The point will be referred to the Specification Development Group for consideration
4	weighting	a	Where conflicting views are expressed in responding to the current consultation, how will these be weighted?	The Specification Development Group will assess the range of views and use its judgement to create a balance in making its recommendations to the Project Board.
E	Prioritisation in Delivery			
1	clear public benefit	a	prioritising criteria: use 'clear public benefit' for free VCS infrastructure support?	All these points will be referred to the Specification Development Group for consideration in making its recommendations to the Project Board.
2	sliding scale - capacity to pay	a	should have a sliding scale if fees are charged	
3	clarity/achievability of groups goals	a	need clear criteria for supporting organisations. Support plan with milestones and agreed exit	
4	priority on smaller groups	a	Focus on under £5000	
5	priority on user led groups	a	Alternatively – focus on 'service-user led' VCS.	
6	prioritise groups from deprived/underserved communities	a	Need criteria for prioritising its effort in terms of gaps in the city – therefore, 'overserve' groups in more need.	
		b	Delivery should be targeted and understand that there is an inequality between BME and others about accessing consultation processes and resources – level playing field	
		c	In the present system Somali groups don't get beyond the 'enquiry point'.	
F	Oversight of Delivery			
1	by Council/Statutory Sector	a	Dangers of council becoming 'detached' from communities it's serving? Need to build in feedback from voluntary sector.	The City Council accepts this point and will consider it in the design of Funding Agreement Management

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	b	Funders of infrastructure must get feedback from smaller BME orgs to ensure that infrastructure orgs are effective	The City Council accepts this point and will consider it in the design of Funding Agreement Management
	c	Is the council devolving responsibility and how will, BME needs be regulated?	The City Council sees its responsibility as commissioning a clear set of services to deliver against the agreed Outcomes. The needs of BME VCS have been articulated in the Consultation and will be built into the Specification. Overview of delivery for BME groups will be included in the design of Contract Management.
	d	What mechanisms of scrutiny will there be in place to ensure this doesn't happen?	
	e	Single provider must be subject to scrutiny to identify any possible (race) discrimination or any other discrimination	
	f	What scrutiny is involved so that the BME groups / communities do not lose out	
	g	Need ongoing dialogue processes during the contract – must be able to demonstrate continuing accountability	
	h	There needs to be a scrutiny mechanism: Can't just leave main provider to subcontract and leave it	The City Council accepts this point and will consider it in the design of Contract Management
	l	Problem – Council doesn't manage what is currently done. How will new system improve this? Council needs to improve its management of contracts	The contract management role for the new services will be more intensive from the City Council. Performance management indicators will be co-ordinated within the VCS Infrastructure services, enabling more focused, effective management overall.
	j	There need to be clear checks during contract period by BCC to get feedback from Somali – and other new communities	The City Council accepts this point and will consider it in the design of Contract Management

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		k	<p>It would appear that other partner agencies with an interest in the outcomes of the support service such as NHS Bristol would not control any part of the monitoring process as this would have been outsourced to the one main provider, and that subcontractors would not have any direct accountability to statutory funding agencies. We seek confirmation from Bristol City Council that this would be the commissioners' intention</p>	<p>Contract Management is not being outsourced. It will be retained within Bristol City Council. Other partners can participate in that process. The details of how Contract Management will happen are still to be designed. The successful provider(s) can contribute to that design.</p>
		l	<p>There are major concerns that the currently preferred and proposed model will give one organisation a monopoly over the commissioning of work from Bristol City Council. Whilst the current format is far from adequate in terms of transparency and accountability, we feel that creating a single body will further mystify the duties of the council. As such we would like to ask the council how it will ensure that this body is accountable and meets legislative requirements under the Race Relations Act, the duty to involve, and the duty of care that the council is responsible for.</p>	<p>The Cabinet Report will not propose a preferred Delivery Model so the issue of a single organisation monopoly is less likely. The City Council will expect providers to comply with Race Equality and any other Equality duties that apply to public bodies. This will be made clear in the Specification.</p>
2	by VCS itself	a	<p>model is brilliant but need to see evidence</p>	<p>The City Council accepts this point</p>
		b	<p>evidence of outcomes must be provided - not number of funder finder session but 'improved level of confidence/skills in being able to apply for funding' success in getting funding for organisations'</p>	<p>The City Council accepts this point - the focus of performance management will be on outcomes and steps which evidence outcomes</p>
		c	<p>new VCS infrastructure support must be accountable to the VCS community.</p>	<p>The City Council accepts these points and will consider them in the design of Contract Management</p>
		d	<p>VCS would need to hold a new provider to account</p>	

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	e	is there a way of involving VCS more in setting up infrastructure providers? How can they influence the services and what is delivered?		
	f	Measurable progress in terms of trust and belief in the transparency of the operations		
	g	Need ongoing dialogue processes during the contract – must be able to demonstrate continuing accountability		
	h	Want whoever provides to have VCS groups on decision making for the service		
3	redress of problems	a	What remedy would there be if one community was being disadvantaged?	Ultimately the City Council will hold Contract Management responsibility and would take responsibility for requiring redress if a consistent issue of disadvantage is identified.
G	Provider Selection			
1	local delivery	a	HR - local support would be best	The City Council notes this point
2	track record	a	need to examine the track records of organisations wanting to provide this service	The City Council accepts this point and will feed it into the Specification Development Group for consideration
		b	Increasing local delivery – could you ask for a track record of working with VCS in Bristol – ask to make it possible	The City Council notes this point and will feed it into the Specification Development Group for consideration
		c	Personalisation agenda: local authority setting up brokerage to assess and signpost to services: but contract winners don't have the skills – could learn some lessons	The City Council notes this point and the implied need to test out skills in potential providers
		d	The service specification need specific standards and address key issues for the BME VCSES, i.e. levels of representation, quality of scrutiny, experience of/and understanding of delivering community development.	The City Council notes this point and will feed it into the Specification Development Group.

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3	Local knowledge	a	Infrastructure providers need to know Bristol and its communities	The City Council notes these points and will feed it into the Specification Development Group.
		b	Criteria in Tendering – must be able to demonstrate understanding of VCS in Bristol	
		c	Local knowledge and understanding is key – there is a current policy emphasis on local ownership and ‘Place’; we therefore request that this is an essential feature within the service specification.	
		d	Must be empathetic. Must be able to demonstrate an understanding of a community	
4	sustainability	a	A single provider: must demonstrate sustainability and credibility.	The City Council notes this point and will feed it into the Specification Development Group. This will apply to any proposed delivery structure, not simply a single provider
		b	Must have long-term stability. Confidence that the organisation is long term and financially resourced	
5	co-ordination	a	Capacity to co-ordinate	The City Council notes this point and will feed it into the Specification Development Group.
6	selection method	a	Could the single provider organisation be a nominated or elected group via VCS groups?	The City Council does not support this point. The Cabinet Report will not now recommend a preferred Delivery Model (a single main provider). The Report will not recommend appointment of VCS Infrastructure Support Service Providers by election. VCS representation in the Selection process will be included.
		b	We need confidence the new services will really deliver for Somali groups. Possibly have Somali representation in evaluating proposals to deliver the new service?	
7	Equalities	a	Everything should be delivered from a disability equality perspective	The City Council accepts this point and will feed it into the Specification Development Group.

Consultation Comments on Draft Commissioning Strategy			City Council responses	
		b	Requiring that Single Main Provider has to show how it's taking forward the ULO principles and good practice and the most advanced / forward thinking of principles around Disability Equality and the Putting People First agenda.	The City Council notes this point and will feed it into the Specification Development Group.
		c	Very good record and understanding of equalities issues.	The City Council accepts this point and will feed it into the Specification Development Group.
		d	Must be culturally competent and understand the sophistication of various needs within single BME groups e.g. Somali Community. Potentially very different / diverse	The City Council accepts this point and will feed it into the Specification Development Group.
		e	Must be empathetic. Must be able to demonstrate an understanding of a community	The City Council accepts this point and will feed it into the Specification Development Group.
		f	Experience of issues faced is key: do other providers have this? (racism)	
		g	Services need to demonstrate how they will deliver a race equality agenda	The City Council accepts this point and will feed it into the Specification Development Group.
8	representation	a	clarity about the Advocacy role of the Infrastructure provider(s): needs to be in the specification	The City Council accepts this point and will feed it into the Specification Development Group.
		b	Representation and empowering needs to be provided by a BME group – consultation needs to be done from within BME community	The City Council accepts this point and will feed it into the Specification Development Group.
9	quality	a	should employ 'intelligent quality' criteria, not just 'have you got the paper standards'	The City Council accepts this point and will feed it into the Specification Development Group.
H	Equalities			
1	BME VCS			
1.1	Outcomes for BME VCS	a	infrastructure need to deliver outcomes for BME VCS, including small BME organisations	The City Council accepts this point and will feed it into the Specification Development Group.

Consultation Comments on Draft Commissioning Strategy			City Council responses
	b	VCS infrastructure providers must assess the needs of BME groups	The City Council accepts this point and will feed it into the Specification Development Group.
	c	model is brilliant but need to see evidence of impact	The City Council accepts this point and will feed it into the Specification Development Group.
	d	BME organisations need to work with BME and non BME VCS to enable and improve communication and collaboration – based around trust and confidence and transparency	The City Council accepts this point and will feed it into the Specification Development Group.
	e	VCS Infrastructure needs to understand needs and be able to deliver services tailored to specific communities	The City Council accepts this point and will feed it into the Specification Development Group.
1.2	BME-led delivery	a	could be a BME-led organisation delivering but not essential. Most important thing is that the deliverer has the skills and understanding
		b	important thing is the end result for BME communities not the organisation providing the support
		c	service should represent/mirror the community
		d	- VCS needs small grass roots groups BME group status should be 'enshrined' not run by other non-BME groups.
		e	want BME Led Representation. Young people require role models – someone they can identify with
		f	Influence of BME is key
		g	Must be culturally competent and understand the sophistication of various needs within single BME groups e.g. Somali Community. Potentially very different / diverse
			The City Council appreciates these points, particularly that effective outcomes for BME groups are the most important issue. Some other opinions from BME groups have stressed the importance of BME leadership for specific elements of infrastructure support. See below
			The City Council will feed it into the Specification Development Group.
			It is accepted that a thriving third sector includes small grassroots community groups. A distinction will be made between BME representation and voice (BME-led) and other services, which could be generic or BME led.
			The Cabinet Report will not now propose the Single Main Provider as a preferred Delivery Model. The City Council supports this point and will feed it into the Specification Development Group
			The City Council accepts this point and will feed it into the Specification Development Group.
			The City Council accepts this point and will feed it into the Specification Development Group.

Consultation Comments on Draft Commissioning Strategy			City Council responses
	h	Representation / influencing must be delivered by BME led groups. This is an issue of empowerment	The City Council accepts this point and will feed it into the Specification Development Group.
	l	Must be BME influence on the formulation of questioning / framework of all strategic decisions	The City Council accepts this point and will feed it into the Specification Development Group.
	j	Must be translation and appropriate language	The City Council accepts this point and will feed it into the Specification Development Group.
	k	Networking with BME groups should be BME led	The City Council accepts this point and will feed it into the Specification Development Group.
	l	Must be cultural sensitivity around legal provision – BME specific groups are best placed to deliver this	The City Council accepts that legal support should be culturally appropriate/competent but does not accept that legal provision must be delivered by BME services.
	m	Representation and empowering needs to be provided by a BME group – consultation needs to be done from within BME community	The City Council accepts this point and will feed it into the Specification Development Group.
	n	Voice and influence elements need to have a specific BME presence	
	o	Networking needs to be facilitated by BME groups and policy and issue and equalities mentoring	A distinction will be made between BME representation and voice (BME-led) and other services, which could be generic or BME led.
	p	Legal issues and issues relating to religion etc need to be understood in training – cultural awareness	The City Council accepts this point and will feed it into the Specification Development Group.
	q	Modelling leadership so that VCS groups can move ahead, catering for BME VCS groups	The City Council notes this point
	r	delivery could be by a mixture - important that support is inclusive	The City Council accepts this point
	s	Empathy needed – non BME people have not experienced racism	The City Council notes this point
	t	Must be role-models with shared identities / experiences	The City Council notes this point

Consultation Comments on Draft Commissioning Strategy			City Council responses
	u	Need for community development role – strand that can be contracted out	The City Council will reflect this point in the Specification for potential providers to respond to in their proposals.
	v	Small grassroots VCS BME organisations need accessible help	The City Council will reflect this point in the Specification for potential providers to respond to in their proposals
	w	Similarity and sameness (peer) led services important to Somali community	A distinction will be made between BME representation and voice (BME-led) and other services, which could be generic or BME led.
	x	A BME provider needs to be an enabler, not acting to better themselves strategically	The City Council notes this point
1.3	Delivery Model/Service Model from BME perspectives	a	The proposed plan does little to address the particular experience of BME and other equalities communities in Bristol. This is so because it sets up an agenda that merges complex histories and experiences into a standardised model. The very “one size fits all” approach that policies such as the Local Area Agreement (LAA) attempt to move away from. With this in mind, we would ask the council how it intends to honour the thinking behind the LAA policy in the establishment of such a proposal.
		b	Does the model contradict a national recommendation that consortia models should be used not a single provider
		c	Worry that model is <u>political</u> imposition, that BME won't be represented/ have influence. '1 horse race'.
		d	Is the model final, can it be changed?
			The City Council's Draft Commissioning Strategy proposed a model which focused on co-ordination and integration of services to promote ease of access, legibility of the services on offer and clarity about outcomes for VCS groups. The Draft Commissioning Strategy explicitly acknowledged that it needed to refine the model in the light of feedback, particularly from Equalities communities. This happened during the Consultation and the responses are recorded here. Far from insisting on a 'one size fits all' approach the Consultation highlights the specific needs of different communities and the Specification will reflect those. Delivery proposals will need to outline how a set of services will respond to those different needs but deliver the benefit of integrated services and measurement of impacts.
			The Cabinet Report will not propose a preferred Delivery Model but will focus on delivery a co-ordinated, coherent set of unified VCS Infrastructure Support Services for the city. BCC accept this could be delivered by a consortium approach. Real impact for BME groups will be an essential requirement of the new services.
			In response to the Consultation the Cabinet Report will not propose a preferred Delivery Model but will focus on delivery a co-ordinated, coherent set of unified VCS Infrastructure Support Services for the city.

Consultation Comments on Draft Commissioning Strategy			City Council responses
	e	VCS infrastructure providers must work with community organisations with right skills to deliver	The City Council accepts this point - and will feed it into the Specification Development Group.
	f	how can BME orgs compete in a procurement process with more established organisations with more capacity?	BCC accept a co-ordinated, coherent set of unified VCS Infrastructure Support Services could be delivered by a consortium approach. This, and the requirements for BME VCS which will be included in the Specification gives BME organisations a clear opportunity to contribute to delivery proposals.
	g	What is the distinction between a single service/service provider?	The Cabinet Report will not now propose the Single Main Provider as a preferred Delivery Model. The distinction is that the draft Commissioning Strategy proposes that all VCS Infrastructure support services are badged under a single brand but a number of providers can contribute to providing the different service elements.
	h	How can 1 group run several disparate others?	It is very common for a number of providers to join together to deliver services against a specification and for one of them to act as the Lead Organisation.
	l	What will be the criteria for selecting a single provider?	The criteria will be worked through by the Specification Development Group and finalised by the Project Board. They will be influenced by ideas from this consultation. The selection criteria will be published at the start of the purchasing phase.
	j	There should be a focus on 'outcomes' as a starting point not <u>assuming</u> a particular top-down model.	The Cabinet Report will not now propose the Single Main Provider as a preferred Delivery Model. Draft Outcomes for the VCS Infrastructure Support Service were part of the Draft Commissioning Strategy and have been re-worked as a result of feedback from that process. Specific service support needs however were also expressed in the Needs Assessment and are reflected therefore in the Draft Commissioning Strategy. The Outcomes and Performance Indicators are being developed through the Specification Development Group and will form the basis of the Specification.
	k	Will a single provider overrule/undermine delivery of other groups due to bias? Has its own agenda?	The Cabinet Report will not now propose the Single Main Provider as a preferred Delivery Model.
	l	Are there any other options if BME groups reject the proposed model?	The Cabinet Report will not now propose the Single Main Provider as a preferred Delivery Model.

Consultation Comments on Draft Commissioning Strategy			City Council responses
	m	Should have been consultation / debate with BME communities when the model was created – more efficient	The proposed service model and proposed delivery models in the Draft Commissioning Strategy reflect the conversations which came out of the Needs Assessment process. The Draft Strategy Consultation process was the opportunity for everyone to comment on them. The City Council has been influenced by comments to change the Final Commissioning Strategy, as reflected in this consultation record
	n	BCC should research the effects of different models on BME communities	The Cabinet Report will not now propose the Single Main Provider as a preferred Delivery Model. But the Specification Development Group will take up a number of points raised through the consultation with BME groups and will specify effective outcomes which must be delivered for BME groups.
	o	The term “single provider” has negative implications as it implies only one provider of all services.	The City Council accepts this point
	p	BCC tends to make decisions without taking lead from BME communities	The City Council is genuinely seeking opinions on the Draft Commissioning Strategy and is very much open to being influenced. A number of consultation events were set up with BME VCS groups to achieve this. The evidence of this influence is in the changes to the Final Strategy and responses recorded in this consultation record.
	q	There is a precedent of single provider disadvantaging BME VCS groups	The Cabinet Report will not now propose the Single Main Provider as a preferred Delivery Model.
	r	Commissioning – other local authorities at different points – has the BME sector lost out in other models adopted elsewhere?	The City Council is aware that the Race Equality duty applies both to public bodies and to bodies that perform functions of a public nature.. The City Council will expect providers to comply with Race Equality and any other Equality duties that apply to public bodies. This will be made clear in the Specification.
	s	How does this fit under NI4? (Have not been asked or been able to influence)	The Consultation on the Draft Commissioning Strategy is the opportunity to influence. Information on the Consultation and the on-line response system was sent to 1,500 VCS groups in the city. The consultation event at which this remark was made has influenced the Final Commissioning Strategy, as recorded in this consultation record.

Consultation Comments on Draft Commissioning Strategy			City Council responses	
1.4	Oversight and accountability for BME groups	a	Funders of infrastructure must get feedback from smaller BME orgs to ensure that infrastructure orgs are effective	The City Council accepts this point and will consider it in the design of Contract Management
		b	new VCS infrastructure support must be accountable to the VCS community.	The City Council accepts this point and will consider it in the design of Contract Management
		c	Is the council devolving responsibility and how will BME needs be regulated?	The City Council sees its responsibility as commissioning a clear set of services to deliver against the agreed Outcomes. The needs of BME VCS have been articulated in the Consultation and will be built into the Specification. Overview of delivery for BME groups will be included in the design of Contract Management.
		d	What scrutiny is involved so that the BME groups / communities do not lose out	Ultimately the City Council will hold Contract Management responsibility and would take responsibility for requiring redress if a consistent issue of disadvantage is identified.
		e	What remedy would there be if one community was being disadvantaged?	Ultimately the City Council will hold Contract Management responsibility and would take responsibility for requiring redress if a consistent issue of disadvantage is identified.
		f	want to see measurable progress in terms of trust and belief in the transparency of the operations	The City Council accepts this point and will consider it in the design of the Specification and Contract Management
1.5	Specialist services	a	Issue around BME access/knowledge regarding ICT/online services.	The City Council accepts this point and will consider it in the design of the Specification
1.6	Community Development	a	Better communication / community engagement – making sure issues of translation are addressed / community groups are consistently consulted	The City Council accepts this point and will consider it in the design of the Specification
		b	Emphasis on community engagement development for BME groups	The City Council accepts this point and will consider it in the design of the Specification.
		c		
		d	All materials must be accessible to BME communities, achievable via sub-contracting through existing structures	The City Council accepts the first point. It is up to providers to negotiate their relationships in developing their delivery proposals to meet the Outcomes in the Specification.
1.7	reach of services	a	All materials must be accessible to BME communities, achievable via sub-contracting through existing structures	The City Council accepts the first point. It is up to providers to negotiate their relationships in developing their delivery proposals to meet the Outcomes in the Specification.
		b	Service delivery must tailor to all the varied BME groups not just one single BME group or a single provider	The City Council accepts this point and will consider it in the design of the Specification

	Consultation Comments on Draft Commissioning Strategy		City Council responses
	c	Delivery should be targeted and understand that there is an inequality between BME and others about accessing consultation processes and resources – level playing field	The City Council accepts this point and will consider it in the design of the Specification
	d	smaller BME organisations need to get the support they need	The City Council accepts this point and will consider it in the design of the Specification
1.8	understanding and addressing racism and race equality		The City Council accepts this point and will consider it in the design of the Specification to ensure effective outcomes for BME groups
	a	Experience of issues faced by BME VCS groups is key: do other providers have this?	
	b	Must be empathetic. Must be able to demonstrate an understanding of a community	
	c	Single provider must be subject to scrutiny to identify any possible (race) discrimination or any other discrimination	The Cabinet Report will not now propose the Single Main Provider as a preferred Delivery Model but this point is accepted to apply to any model of providers and will be build into Contract Management
	d	How transparent will this body be – will it fulfil duties of Race Relations Act?	The Cabinet Report will not now propose the Single Main Provider as a preferred Delivery Model. The Race Equality duty applies both to public bodies and to bodies that perform functions of a public nature.. The City Council will expect providers to comply with Race Equality and any other Equality duties that apply to public bodies. This will be made clear in the Specification.
	e	Services need to demonstrate how they will deliver a race equality agenda	The City Council accepts this point and will take it up in the design of the Specification. Contract Management processes will ensure that providers demonstrate delivery outcomes and benefits for BME VCS groups
	f	Provider must be transparent / accountable not a monopoly. How / who will regulate what it does re Race Relations	
	g	No mention of the culture/values of a single provider/ organisation..... 1 provider should be open and value/understand diverse communities	The City Council supports this position. Point noted and will be referred to the Specification Development Group. The Cabinet Report will not now propose the Single Main Provider as a preferred Delivery Model.
1.9	Concern for future of current providers		The City Council acknowledges this point. In seeking proposals for the future service provision there is no guarantee that any particular provider will be successful in the selection process.
	a	Worry that commissioning could impact on BDA	

Consultation Comments on Draft Commissioning Strategy			City Council responses	
	b	Much of BDA's work is scrutiny – this element could be watered down	The Specification will require that Representation activities must deliver demonstrable benefit for BME VCS groups.	
	c	If the organisation is from outside Bristol it would cause outrage from BDA and network of organisations	In seeking proposals for the future service provision there is no guarantee that any particular provider will be successful in the selection process. The City Council accepts that local knowledge and locally-based delivery are important for successful delivery and the Specification will require providers to demonstrate their ability to deliver this.	
	d	What will happen to current VCS infrastructure groups if they have to take direction from a single national (not Bristolian) provider	The Cabinet Report will not now propose the Single Main Provider as a preferred Delivery Model. It is possible that a non-Bristol provider could negotiate a delivery consortium with existing VCS providers. This is a matter for providers to decide for themselves in responding to the Specification.	
1.10	service levels and effectiveness	a	Service levels must be increased / improved on existing output of provision	The City Council will forward this point to the Specification Group. The Specification will seek to guarantee the current level of delivery as a minimum
		b	needs to help greater collaboration and consultancy within areas/neighbourhoods. Less duplication and more efficiency	The City Council accepts this point and will take it up in the design of the Specification.
		c	BME communities need greater resources to achieve equality	The Specification will focus on the delivery of effective outcomes for BME VCS groups from Infrastructure Support Services. Proposals will be assessed against how effectively they will deliver those outcomes and how they propose to use their resources to achieve it.
		d	BME VCS groups must be able to work together and with external groups	The City Council accepts this point and will take it up in the design of the Specification.
1.11	new communities	a	New communities need to get access to the services – all of them, not simply Somali VCS groups.	The City Council accepts this point and will take it up in the design of the Specification.
2	Somali VCS	a	New communities: there's a gap between them and the current VCS support services. This needs to be closed	The City Council accepts this point and will take it up in the design of the Specification.
		b	In the present system Somali groups don't get beyond the 'enquiry point'.	The City Council notes this point. The Specification will require demonstrable outcomes for Somali VCS groups.

	Consultation Comments on Draft Commissioning Strategy		City Council responses
	c	Starting point is lower for new Somali groups – that's part of the reason why Somali groups don't go further, there's no specialist understanding of our needs and the low point we're starting from. Somali expertise is needed.	
	d	We need confidence the new services will really deliver for Somali groups. Possibly have Somali representation in evaluating proposals to deliver the new service?	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group to consider in designing Evaluation criteria and methods.
	e	How will we be able to tell if the new VCS Infrastructure services are having an effective impact on Somali groups once they started?	The City Council notes this point and will take it up in the design of the Contract Management process.
	f	There need to be clear checks during contract period by BCC to get feedback from Somali – and other new communities	
	g	Services have to create independent services - not nurture dependence. Monitoring system has to measure for greater effectiveness.	The City Council notes this point and will take it up in the design of the Contract Management process
3	Refugee Asylum VCS	a	Developing/using properties, access funding to renovate and then rent properties out.
		b	VCSOs finding more about different communities in the city.
		c	Learning about 'British'/other cultures, develop a programme. (British life and language') opportunities for sharing cultures, build confidence/ knowledge.
		d	an 'enquiry' line/email etc. What about interpretation/translation
		e	Need for initial support and also ongoing support/training for managing finance/book keeping/payroll/budgets.
			The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for consideration
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Consultation Comments on Draft Commissioning Strategy			City Council responses	
4	Women's VCS	a	need help to connect to other women's groups across barriers to get a stronger voice	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for consideration
		b	want women's leadership training	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for consideration
		c	bring women together more, encourage training for new women leaders	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for consideration
		d	bring women from different communities together more	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for consideration
		e	promote benefits of volunteering for women more - support childcare,	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for consideration
		f	find range of ways for women to influence	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for consideration
		g	gender issues in VCS - low pay, underpaid staff affects women a lot - discuss raise awareness of these issues	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for consideration
5	Disabled-led & Services-for-Disabled VCS			
5.1	Values	a	Everything should be delivered from a disabled equality perspective	The City Council supports this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
		b	The Distinct differences and issues between Disabled led Organisations and Services for Disabled People organisations need to be understood clearly.	The City Council notes this point and will link it to the point below.
		c	Require that Single Main Provider has to show how it's taking forward the ULO principles and good practice and the most advanced / forward thinking of principles around Disability Equality and the Putting People First agenda.	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
		d	Personalisation agenda and individual budgets: how is VCS infrastructure working alongside the PPF agenda?	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development

Consultation Comments on Draft Commissioning Strategy			City Council responses
		e the main provider organisation should have absolutely no mandate for 'representing' disabled people – they have to facilitate disabled groups doing that for themselves	The City Council supports this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
		f Not getting disability 'lost in a general equalities agenda' – issues are distinct	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for consideration
5.2	Awareness	a VSC Infrastructure – need to know more about Disability issues.	The City Council notes this point
		b Influencing other VCS to work better, not only decision makers.	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
		c Contribute to Awareness raising	
		d Awareness raising – getting media coverage: using the power of the Single Main Provider Organisation to get media focus.	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
5.3	Model	a There should be an obligation in the specification to commission/sub-contract out. Tailored training – lots of Disability organisations earn funding from tailored training – how do they deliver into this??	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development. Consortia delivery may enable specialist providers to deliver into the services
5.4	Representation	a Have a percentage of disabled people on the board of the Main Provider Organisation or co-ordinating group?	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
		b the main provider organisation should have absolutely no mandate for 'representing' disabled people – they have to facilitate disabled groups doing that for themselves	The City Council supports this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
		c Representation - how to avoid the Single Main Provider becoming <u>the</u> voice of the whole sector	The City Council notes this point. Representation will be about enabling the varied voices of the sector to be heard.
5.5	Services needs	a Assistance with venues; finding them	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
		b Fundraising: centralised fundraising capacity	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development

Consultation Comments on Draft Commissioning Strategy			City Council responses	
6	Faith VCS	a	Needs of faith groups need to be understood by VCS Infrastructure	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
		b	Bristol Multi Faith Forum could inform VCS Infrastructure	The City Council notes this point
		c	Lots of faith groups don't have much infrastructure	The City Council notes this point
		d	Faith groups don't identify as "VCS" groups	The City Council notes this point
		e	Statutory sector has to adjust to faith groups which want to contribute to decision making	The City Council notes this point
7	LGBT VCS			
7.1	Service needs	a	support and development to minority BME groups eg: LGBT BME sector needed.	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
		b	Community Development: there's a lack of on-going contact now from BCC's Community Development Workers.	The City Council notes this point
		c	Lack of challenge from Community Development Worker. – focused on outcomes.	The City Council notes this point
		d	Physical resources: desire for LGBT centre.	The City Council notes this point
		e	LGB VCS: creating space to support LGB VCS – needs to be a physical space – LGB centre.	The City Council notes this point
		f	Get conversation between VCS and statutory services on VCS and purpose of funding eg: 'funding outcomes' to push to resolve social issues.	The City Council notes this point
		g	Want to build capacity of LGB VCS.	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
		h	Support LGB network/forums.	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
		i	All monitoring has LGB on it; all literature is LGB-aware.	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development

Consultation Comments on Draft Commissioning Strategy			City Council responses
	j	Bring LGB VCS groups together to influence the VCS service in delivery.	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
	k	Equalities to be cross-stranded throughout delivery regardless of agency delivering.	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
	l	Want to see guidance on Equalities requirement – Infrastructure to account for range of groups.	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
	m	Equalities groups – getting same level of service.	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
	n	Equalities – consistent standards from all partners and providers in delivery.	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
	o	LGB Equalities is high on the agenda	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
	p	Need criteria for prioritising its effort in terms of gaps in the city – therefore, 'overserve' groups in more need.	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
8	Older Peoples VCS		
8.1	Values	a VCS support services have to be enabling	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
8.2	Access	a one-stop shop is an improvement - support idea of a gateway into services	The City Council notes this point
8.3	Services	a want funding support on writing bids	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
		b But need to be aware of Conflicts of interest if VCS Infrastructure is asked to support bid-writing from competing organisations?	The City Council notes this point
		c consultation to learn from 'failed bids'	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
		d development of buildings needed - good rentals, affordable, disabled access	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
8.4	Community Development	a outreach - community development service important to older people's VCS	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development

Consultation Comments on Draft Commissioning Strategy			City Council responses	
8.5	representation	a	outreach - community development service important to older people's VCS	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
		b	influencing city issues like improving uneven pavement	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
		c	have to have confident representation at strategic levels	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
		d	representation of Elders on management of VCS infrastructure	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
		e	representation of disabled people on management of VCS infrastructure and staffing	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
		f	effective BME representation in staffing and management	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
9	Young People's VCS			
9.1	Model	a	Good idea – voluntary sector should sort its problems out	The City Council notes this point
		b	Great idea: single management provider	The City Council notes this point. The Cabinet Report will not propose a preferred Delivery Model but will focus on delivery a co-ordinated, coherent set of unified VCS Infrastructure Support Services for the city.
9.2	Services	a	How to let people know about one-stop route: MARKETING	The City Council notes this point.
		b	Delivery: Voluntary-led groups – delivery in weekends/evenings -have to be represented.	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
		c	Swift responses needed particularly for young peoples led groups.	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
		d	Email bulletins have just one – with charitable links.	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
		e	Making sure SMP can demonstrate, then can recruit/involve young people – apprentice roles.	The Cabinet Report will not now propose the Single Main Provider as a preferred Delivery Model. But The City Council notes this point
		f	Share advertising about what groups doing and in area.	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development

Consultation Comments on Draft Commissioning Strategy			City Council responses	
9.3	representation	a	Does VCS Infrastructure support service have a campaigning role? Information raising.	The representation role includes raising issues and advocating change and development and also information sharing
		b	Being an equal partner with statutory sector.	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
9.4	Selection of provider	a	Young people involved in recruitment.	The City Council notes this point and will refer it to the Specification Development Group for development
I	Commissioning Process			
1	Timetable	a	concerns there won't be enough time for VCS groups to consider proposal	The Consultation period on the draft Commissioning Strategy adhered to the three months required by the Bristol Compact
		b	We suggest that the commissioning timetable is unrealistic when the implications for those services that may be decommissioned or where organisations may be merged in terms of TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings of Protection of Employment Regulations 2006) and redundancy funding are taken into account	The commissioning timetable will be reviewed in the Final Commissioning Strategy
		c	the reworked strategy should provide both for support to be offered to VSOs, and to allow sufficient time for consortia and other bids to come forward	The City Council accepts this point and this will be reflected in the timetable in the Final Commissioning Strategy
2	Needs Assessment	a	Should there be a comparison between 'general' view of 'most important qualities' and a specific BME interpretation?	This level of analysis was not conducted on the Needs Assessment survey; however feedback from the Consultation from BME groups has provided clear information on the qualities sought by BME VCS groups from providers. See Equalities section.
		b	The figure of 57% respondents being a registered charity is not representative of the VCS as a whole. The needs of groups who are not registered charities are less profiled but have a greater need for legal advice.	The City Council accepts this point

	Consultation Comments on Draft Commissioning Strategy		City Council responses	
3	Consultation	a	- will there need to be further consultation around priorities?	No, the Consultation on the Draft Strategy is the final consultation. All points from the consultation have been recorded and their influence on the Final Strategy is noted in this document
		b	Has it been adequately consulted?	A series of 15 events and an online response have taken place in the three month consultation period, including events for all Equalities VCS groups. While there is always the possibility of doing more the City Council feels it has heard a sufficiently broad range of views to conclude the Commissioning Strategy
		c	Young peoples-led VCS groups: GAP in current consultation	An event was held for Young People's VCS which made points about young people and VCS Infrastructure (see Equalities section).
		d	Should have been consultation / debate with BME communities when the model was created – more efficient	The proposed service model and proposed delivery models in the Draft Commissioning Strategy reflect the conversations which came out of the Needs Assessment process. The Draft Strategy Consultation process was the opportunity for everyone to comment on them. The City Council has been influenced by comments to change the Final Commissioning Strategy, as reflected in this consultation record.
		e		
		f	Have any elected members been to any of the consultation meetings?	No elected members have attended consultation meetings. But the Executive member has been kept up-dated on the emerging Strategy and members have been consulted through both the Select Committee on Third Sector Commissioning and the Quality of Life Scrutiny Commission

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		g	<p>Consultation sessions at the needs analysis stage and now at the commissioning strategy stage have not been advertised with adequate notice.</p> <p>The notice given for the consultation sessions on the commissioning strategy went out the week before a school holiday, less than two weeks in advance of the first event. We are concerned that not everyone who wished to take part was able to do so. This process was non compliant with the COMPACT and as such is damaging to the development of trust and transparency in the relationship between the council and the VCSE.</p>	<p>The City Council accepts that notice for initial events was shorter than intended, but not for the majority of them. In mitigation the City Council set up and advertised an additional Consultation event in January 2010 and extended the Consultation deadline by a week in response to feedback on this point. The total timescale of the consultation was over 14 weeks, taking account of the Christmas and New Year holidays, as recommended in the Compact Consultation Guidance.</p>
4	Influence of the Consultation	a	<p>Has the model already been tacitly accepted by the Council Cabinet?</p>	<p>The City Council is genuinely seeking opinions on the Draft Commissioning Strategy and is very much open to being influenced. The evidence of this influence is in the changes to the Final Strategy and responses recorded in this consultation record.</p>
		b	<p>BCC tends to make decisions without taking lead from BME communities. Is the Council paying 'lip service' in this consultation?</p>	<p>The City Council is genuinely seeking opinions on the Draft Commissioning Strategy and is very much open to being influenced. A number of consultation events were set up with BME VCS groups to achieve this. The evidence of this influence is in the changes to the Final Strategy and responses recorded in this consultation record.</p>
		c	<p>How does this fit under NI4? (Have not been asked or been able to influence)</p>	<p>The Consultation on the Draft Commissioning Strategy is the opportunity to influence. Information on the Consultation and the on-line response system was sent to 1,500 VCS groups in the city. The consultation event at which this remark was made has influenced the Final Commissioning Strategy, as recorded in this consultation record.</p>
		d	<p>Will responses to the consultation influence the delivery model? What elements of the strategy will the consultation responses influence?</p>	<p>The City Council is genuinely seeking opinions on the Draft Commissioning Strategy and is very much open to being influenced. The evidence of this influence is in the changes to the Final Strategy and responses recorded in this consultation record</p>

Consultation Comments on Draft Commissioning Strategy			City Council responses	
		e	<p>What elements of the strategy will the consultation responses influence?</p>	<p>The Consultation has influenced the decision on the Delivery Model and the balance of where investment into the new services will be directed via the Specification. The Consultation has also filled out a number of issues around Equalities VCS groups and their needs.</p>
5	Market Assessment	a	<p>Why has the proposed model been advertised nationally? This has happened before consultation. Why has it been marketed already?</p>	<p>The proposed model has not been advertised nationally. As part of the Market Assessment organisations which provide services relevant to VCS Infrastructure were contacted through the Bristol e-Procurement System to gauge the level of interest from potential providers. This information has been used in making a decision about the purchasing method.</p>

Consultation Comments on Draft Commissioning Strategy			City Council responses	
		b	<p>As part of a 'market analysis' the deadline for expressions of interest in being the one main provider and/or a subcontracted provider lies in the middle of a consultation programme purportedly on three service delivery options. This may have the effect of pre-empting the results of the consultation programme. Similarly, potential providers are invited to a meeting also in the middle of the consultation programme to share their offer and 'build a provider coalition'. But this request for 'cards on the table' is in a context of direct competition induced by the preferred one provider delivery option. We consider that it is not possible to make a fully informed judgment about the best method of purchasing in order to deliver the outcomes before either Bristol's third sector strategy or the voluntary sector infrastructure strategy is finalised. We would like assurances that VSOs would have an equal opportunity to state their interest in bidding as a coalition, joint provider or consortium.</p>	<p>The Cabinet Report will not now propose a preferred Delivery Model. The point about providers bidding as a consortium is accepted. The recommendation on what funding mechanism to use to purchase the VCS Infrastructure Support Services was made by the Project Board based on advice from BCC Legal services. The purchasing method itself was never part of the Consultation. The Market Assessment Register of Interest was intended to gauge the level of interest from potential provider organisations to inform the Purchasing mechanism recommendation. The City Council accepts that it was not helpful to hold meetings with potential providers during the Consultation process and cancelled them accordingly.</p>
6	Outcomes	a	<p>Need to be more specific about outcomes we want to deliver.</p>	<p>The City Council accepts this point and this work is being undertaken in the Specification Development Group</p>
		b	<p>the reworked strategy should make a systematic link between the results of the needs analysis and the formulation of the outcomes so as to ensure that the outcomes will deliver what both the council and the sector needs</p>	<p>The City Council accepts this point</p>

Consultation Comments on Draft Commissioning Strategy			City Council responses
7	Commissioning rationale	a	<p>Would resources have been better spent on helping existing structures /consortium to deliver the needs identified in the needs assessment?</p> <p>The City Council is seeking the opportunity in commissioning the VCS Infrastructure support services of assessing a range of proposals and choosing the one that can best meet the Specification outcomes. The Council's legal advice makes it clear that we may not infringe European Union rules on State Aid in using public funding, however, and must make an opportunity available to a range of providers.</p>
8	Other LAs	a	<p>Commissioning – other local authorities at different points – has the BME sector lost out in other models adopted elsewhere?</p> <p>We do not have evidence of this.</p>
		b	<p>BDA would request that the council research and investigate other examples of 'Single Main Provider Models', across the country. Check on precedents for negative impact on BME groups and equalities communities.</p> <p>In response to the Consultation the Cabinet Report will not propose a preferred Delivery Model.</p>
9	Outcomes Led Commissioning	a	<p>The approach taken and formulation of a preferred delivery model contradicts good commissioning practice in that the delivery mechanism and/or structure should not be the first consideration but 'outcomes based', as the council should be investing in outcomes for communities</p> <p>In response to the Consultation the Cabinet Report will not propose a preferred Delivery Model. The Services Model outlined in the Draft Commissioning Strategy illustrates suggestions and ideas coming up from the Needs Assessment. The City Council accepts that Outcomes for VCS are the most important focus of the services and the Service Specification will reflect that. The City Council also takes the view that a co-ordinated, coherent, customer-focused set of</p>

Consultation Comments on Draft Commissioning Strategy			City Council responses
	b	<p>The central tenet of outcomes-led commissioning is specifying the desired outcomes and leaving potential providers to specify the service delivery options, appropriate outputs and the pricing within a given amount of funding. Outcomes-led commissioning is advocated nationally by the Audit Commission and the Department of Health's 'world class commissioning'. This method of commissioning was successfully modelled by Children and Young People's Services to commission the CAMHS and Community Children's Services; there is no evidence that the learning points have been acted upon in drafting this commissioning strategy</p>	<p>services with common referral, recording and impact measurement processes and shared quality standards is a Strategic Goal of this commissioning. This will enable the effective demonstration of the accumulated impact of VCS Infrastructure Support Services in supporting a thriving Voluntary and Community Sector in Bristol.</p>
	c	<p>Most importantly, voluntary sector infrastructure organisations in the city need to model best practice in commissioning if we are to expect other voluntary sector organisations to come to the mark. If voluntary sector organisations are not supported by their commissioning agencies to model national guidance and best practice, then who will hold the commissioners to account?</p>	
	d	<p>That the council recognizes and acknowledges the expertise, skills and importance of an 'independent thriving 3rd sector' by defining the outcomes required and allow the sector to put forward their recommended model and mechanism(s) for delivery of support services to VCSES.</p>	