

These written comments were received from Commissioners

Commissioner Responses and Comments						City Council responses			
Q1	Are you broadly in agreement with the following outcomes for the VCS Infrastructure Support Service?								
		Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4	Outcome 5			
	YES	4	4	5	5	4	The sample is small but representative of a number of significant commissioners. Overall most agree with Outcomes. These have been re-drafted by the Specification Development Group and reflect some of the points set out below.		
	NO	0	1 (unsure)			1			
Q2	BCC H&SC	something here about identifying duplication in services (as well as gaps). Also about identifying poor/outdated practice.	So, these things "effective, efficient and sustainable" are fine, but how about adding 'outcomes focussed/driven', something about equalities too perhaps.	collaborations outside and across traditional service areas/roles (or similar). I mean so that 'social care'/health services for example don't just 'mix with their own' – as it were.		"at a range of levels and in the range of arenas covered by BCC including specific developments in service/policy areas...".	The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group.		
	NHS Bristol	The outcomes whilst admirable are very broad and it would be helpful to have clearer indications of what improved or successful services will look like, based on clear measures and also using the current model(s) or provision as the baseline. Clarity on how the above outcomes relate to the implementation of the Compact would also be helpful. It would also benefit from a more explicit link in the outcomes to formal commissioning processes				The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group.			

Commissioner Responses and Comments					City Council responses					
BCC Economic Regeneration	The strong conceptualisation of a 'client route' within this, rather than being supply side driven, is this models greatest strength. Weaknesses are likely to arise through:				The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group					
	there is no governance distinction between service provision and representation, this makes it difficult for any client or group or sector of clients to influence without conflict of interest				The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group					
	There needs to be a distinction between the needs assessment (and maybe ongoing 'coaching') provision and highly specialist services –which can be best obtained from a wider market, perhaps with a bursary support towards all or some of client costs				The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group					
BCC CYPS	The model is endorsed with the following comments:									
	The Service must have a wide, inclusive and representative reach with accurate knowledge of organisations by sector/locality/equalities groups and a good communications flow. Communication/ Collaboration must include business sector. The Service should be able to communicate emerging and changing needs and support the VCS in meeting these. Outcomes must be based on evidence, with clear definitions and performance indicators. Consultation needs to be structured, effective and proportionate.				The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group					
BCC Equalities										
Q3	Do you agree with the following statement: The proposed 'Bristol VCS Support Service' model (which outlines a co-ordinated set of VCS Infrastructure services) will meet our needs as a VCS group?									
		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	disagree	strongly disagree	Overall there is a balance of support for the proposed model			
		2	3	1						

Commissioner Responses and Comments		City Council responses
Q4	BCC H&SC From H&SC's perspective, there are aspects of what is currently provided that we'd want to continue – particularly the themed networks. Also there are so many developments in health/social care legislation/policy/guidance/practice and I tend to think that there is a function of keeping the VCS up to speed with these, as well of course, as the more general issues. Health/social care services have tended to be set apart from other VCS organisations/services – I think though, that there is a need for specific health/social care related information provision; also for service development in the field – I can think of orgs getting infrastructure support and grow whilst their outmoded and possibly discriminatory service provision is left unchallenged – it does need to be understood and known about	The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group
	Broadly though, I absolutely agree with the model of a single (main) provider with clarity of pathway/support/intervention/work.	The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group
	I think there is a great need, (possibly not fulfillable yet) for the "specialist services" listed offering the practical functions to organisations.	The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group
	NHS Bristol Meeting diverse needs will be a challenge and securing the optimal balance between critical mass and resilience through new organisational arrangements vs specialism in a specific sector eg health and social care needs careful thought. However, on balance, a clear transparent offer is likely to be most effective.	The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group

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BCC Economic Regeneration	The success of any 3rd sector org is driven by its performance – against whatever its public benefit and ‘business’ - or “organisational” – goals, not, for instance, its funding – which may be necessary but is certainly not sufficient. Any transparent, purposive, rigorous approach to ensuring individual client’s performance is likely to throw up needs beyond the comfortable remit of any one body: e.g. relevant networks, marketing and commissioning support, etc. (for differing markets and funders etc.). A broader, deeper assessment, coaching and basic training etc. service can be help develop the confidence and some of the competences of clients but needs to be supplemented by the best specialists to motivate development in the way we have found was needed to get them closer to their goals				The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group				
BCC CYPS	There needs to be clarity about the different service levels and skills to support the VCS through the appropriate pathways for service access. · Specialist support needs specialist skills, knowledge and experience. The VCS delivering services to children and young people will also need tailored services which are sector specific, and CYPT commissioners may have an interest in promoting capacity building for certain VCS groups. · The CYPT commissioners would recommend that the model accommodates a sector specific offer which commissioners could invest in. This could be structured around the 5 Bristol Partnership Thematic Boards, with commissioners having an input into the specification for specialist services. The VCS needs to be informed about changes and emerging issues in both national and local policy and legislation and the implications and opportunities this might present.				The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group				
Q5	Do you agree with the following statement: Having centralised access to all VCS support services (eg. a single website and one phone number to access all services) will be a useful development:								
		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	disagree	strongly disagree	Overall there is a balance of support for the proposed co-ordinated access to services.		
		3	3						
Q6	BCC H&SC								
	NHS Bristol	A centralised VCS support service would be useful. This is likely to facilitate good relationships /engagement between the third sector and the public sector.							

Commissioner Responses and Comments					City Council responses				
BCC Economic Regeneration	This will be very helpful, but maybe for this market should be able to do ongoing coaching as well as assessment and referral. Thus as a clients' needs change through the improvement process, or in response to any specific challenges, the coach can support them and help them best utilise the best free or paid for specialist and independent advice.								
BCC CYPS	Centralised access needs to be highly accessible. Commissioners would welcome a single point of entry to access information and signpost providers								
BCC Equalities	I think a text SMS initial contact as well would be good for Deaf organisations								
Q7	The Bristol VCS Support Service model proposes that VCS support services be arranged into levels to match the different needs of VCS groups as they develop."- Are you broadly in agreement with this proposal?								
	Yes	No	Not sure		Overall there is a balance of support for the proposed levels of service provision				
	5								
Q8	BCC H&SC	Only concern here is about the notion of 'level' in terms of the extent to which it might be self-defined, how an organisation might be well established with well developed structures, but providing less than great services, not paying enough attention to equalities...			The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group				
	NHS Bristol	Yes – this recognises the diversity within the sector			The City Council notes the comment and will refer them to the Specification Development Group				
	BCC Economic Regeneration	These are all important functions or services in this kind of sector support. To ensure quality it would be good to separate representation (which can be part of the monitoring of services such as these) from service delivery. Representation is not just to the policy world/funder, but in order to be effective at that level it would be most transparent if this was funded from a different budget (maybe by transfer of resources) to ensure separation. When we set up VOSCUR as a representational body we got its core support from a different place to the then CVS and were answerable to the whole Bristol Partnership of which we were part, rather than one core player. This was a very credible model and got the 'grudging' respect of other infrastructure bodies.			The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group				

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BCC CYPS	There needs to be clarity about the different service levels and skills to support the VCS through the appropriate pathways for service access. · Specialist support needs specialist skills, knowledge and experience. The VCS delivering services to children and young people will also need tailored services which are sector specific, and CYPT commissioners may have an interest in promoting capacity building for certain VCS groups. · The CYPT commissioners would recommend that the model accommodates a sector specific offer which commissioners could invest in. This could be structured around the 5 Bristol Partnership Thematic Boards, with commissioners having an input into the specification for specialist services. The VCS needs to be informed about changes and emerging issues in both national and local policy and legislation and the implications and opportunities this might present.				The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group				
Q9	Do you agree with the following statement: A single main provider organisation is an effective way to create a co-ordinated VCS support service?								
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	disagree	Strongly disagree	Overall there is a balance of support for the proposed Single Main Provider proposal. The City Council is not now preferring a Single Main Provider delivery model, however			
	2	3		1					
Q10	BCC H&SC								
NHS Bristol	This model would appear to have advantages in terms of accountability – and be better able to achieve innovative change. However we acknowledge that any transition may prove a challenge for existing providers. It will be essential that the process is carefully, and fairly managed, taking into account the commitment and dedication of individuals working in the various organisations. The development of any new offering should be clearly specified to ensure that it is able to meet current and projected challenges for the sector, particularly those related to supporting VCS organisations to secure contracts via procurement processes, maintain the performance of existing contracts and provide an ‘authentic’ and consistent stakeholder voice in planning processes. The equality impacts also need to be clearly identified and explicitly addressed in any new arrangements.				The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group				
BCC Economic Regeneration	I do value the simplification proposed, but feel that a slightly disaggregated approach might over come some real problems and limitations, as well as attracting other public sector and charitable support				The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group				

Commissioner Responses and Comments						City Council responses				
BCC CYPS	Services should feel seamless, co-ordinated and clearly branded. Quality/ choice and access should not be compromised. Sub contracting thought desirable where other providers could provide a better or specialised service					The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group				
Q 11	Please rank the following priority options 1 to 5, where 1 is your preferred way of prioritising how funding should be used, and 5 your least preferred:									
Ranking	1	2	3	4	5	Average Score		Preferred ranking		
Score	5	4	3	2	1					
Direct available resources at the Community Development and Established VCS Groups Development levels of the service. Limit the free support that is available to well established VCS groups	x		xx			2.7		3	This preference will be referred to the Specification Development Group. The small sample means on its own this must be treated with caution.	

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<p>Prioritise support to new, unfunded groups to help them establish themselves and to those VCS groups which receive public funding to make sure public funding is used to the best effect</p>	<p>xxx</p>					<p>5</p>	<p>1 This preference will be referred to the Specification Development Group. The small sample means on its own this must be treated with caution.</p>
<p>Prioritise the practical, 'hands-on' services which provide direct help to VCS groups over the 'influencing' services</p>		<p>xx</p>	<p>x</p>			<p>3.7</p>	<p>2 This preference will be referred to the Specification Development Group. The small sample means on its own this must be treated with caution.</p>

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Prioritise 'influencing' services over the practical, 'hands-on' direct support services to VCS groups			x	x	x		2	4	This preference will be referred to the Specification Development Group. The small sample means on its own this must be treated with caution.
Charge for training and other support services for all groups over a certain income level			x		xx		1.7	5	This preference will be referred to the Specification Development Group. The small sample means on its own this must be treated with caution.
Please outline any other ideas you have for prioritising ...									
Q12 BCC H&SC									
NHS Bristol	It would be advisable to consider areas of work that are likely to attract external funding and to fund those which are least likely to attract any external funding					The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group			

Commissioner Responses and Comments					City Council responses	
BCC H&SC	Potentially much more clearly than at present.	Potentially new system could be stronger		Potentially in relation to 'voice' and race equality issues – however these functions could be subcontracted or carried out by new service with greater clarity.		The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group
NHS Bristol	Will need to have proactive culturally competent outreach to be effective. Also diverse staff within the organisation	A clear Bristol offer which addresses particular issues – develop an Equality Scheme. Needs to ensure minority groups brought to the table.	It is important that the new organisation puts race equality at the centre of its business – and has a strong understanding of institutional racism. Race Equality Scheme for the Sector is suggested way forward	Cultural competence and an understanding of race equality		The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group

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	BCC Economic Regeneration	By providing a great service	By demonstrating their effectiveness in dealing with the issues their clients/Bristol face	By embedding strategic targeting, actions and evaluative practices that foreground this work in own and partners practices	These need to be rigorously researched, there may be other methods of differentiating needs that more clearly meet BME VCS groups needs	The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group				
	BCC CYPS									
b	Impact on Women's VCS groups:									
	BCC H&SC	Potentially clearer way through	With a greater equalities agenda, the single service should promote greater voice/influence		Not sure, but there is potentially more chance of them being discovered and met if there are	The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group				
	NHS Bristol	A clear Bristol offer which addresses particular access needs – see idea re Equality Scheme. Needs to ensure minority groups brought to the	This needs to be clearly set out	Conduct gender equality impact assessment and develop action plan	Yes – and will cross cut other equality areas.					

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BCC H&SC	The current 'split' between CF and VOSCUR can mean that groups think they get all their infrastructure needs met by the CF. A single service potentially offers the whole package of options and gives orgs/groups more choices.	I think that disability groups far more sit under the community development/equalities banner than the 'social care'/health one. Therefore a new service should make better connections and channel more appropriately.		As per answer on practical support and 'voice' above.		The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group
NHS Bristol	A clear Bristol offer which addresses particular needs – see idea re Equality Scheme. Needs to ensure minority groups brought to the table.	This needs to be clearly set out	Conduct equality impact assessment and develop action plan	Yes an awareness of disability equality, an understanding of the social model of disability and attention paid to access needs.		The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group
BCC Economic Regeneration						
BCC CYPS						

Commissioner Responses and Comments						City Council responses			
d	Impact on Older People's VCS groups:								
	BCC H&SC	Potentially clearer way through	With a greater equalities agenda, the single service should promote greater voice/influence		Not sure, but there is potentially more chance of them being discovered and met if there are				
	BCC NHS Bristol	An understanding and analysis of age discrimination – and of age in relation to other equalities	Would be most effective if linked to Older People Forum - and Links	Need to actively involve older people	Age and diversity need to be positively addressed.				
	BCC Economic Regeneration								
	BCC CYPS								
e	Impact on Young People's VCS groups:								
	BCC H&SC	Potentially clearer way through	With a greater equalities agenda, the single service should promote greater voice/influence		Not sure, but there is potentially more chance of them being discovered and met if there are		The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group		

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NHS Bristol		Currently this is not strong within VCS infrastructure – the proposed model has potential to improve this	Could make improvements	Yes – service needs to be appropriate – creative and accessible		The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group				
BCC Economic Regeneration										
BCC CYPS										
f	Impact on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender VCS groups:									
BCC H&SC	Potentially clearer way through	With a greater equalities agenda, the single service should promote greater voice/influence		Not sure, but there is potentially more chance of them being discovered and met if there are		The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group				
NHS Bristol	This area is currently underserved	Can be improved	Should be positive and informed	Issues of identity and confidentiality need to be acknowledged		The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group				
BCC Economic Regeneration										
BCC CYPS										

Commissioner Responses and Comments						City Council responses				
g	Impact on Faith-based VCS groups:									
	BCC H&SC	Potentially clearer way through	With a greater equalities agenda, the single service should promote greater voice/influence		Not sure, but there is potentially more chance of them being discovered and met if there are		The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group			
	NHS Bristol	yes	Single organisation would be well placed to support and to link faith based groups.	Yes	It is possible		The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group			
	BCC Economic Regeneration									
	BCC CYPS									
Q14	Please use the space below for any other general comments, concerns and ideas for improving the proposal for the <i>Bristol VCS Support Service</i> :									
	BCC H&SC	As above, some equalities groups currently stick with a single provider under the misapprehension that their needs will be met. The single service offers the whole range of choices to all orgs.					The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group			

Commissioner Responses and Comments			City Council responses		
NHS Bristol	<p>NHS Bristol recognises that the VCS is a vital part of the social fabric of Bristol and is pleased to support the City Council in ensuring that the sector is supported in the most effective and sustainable manner.</p> <p>The City of Bristol has a responsibility to foster the sectors diversity, autonomy and vibrancy; and also to recognise the how much the sector sustains civic life, contributes to cohesion and promotes wellbeing. A flexible, creative single provider has the potential to be a powerful and dynamic agent in achieving this.</p> <p>However, we recognise that moving to a single provider model from the current structure will be difficult – and it is therefore extremely important that the process is managed in an open, transparent, fair and timely manner.</p>				<p>The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group. The City Council is not now preferring a Single Main Provider delivery model, however, but is focused on delivery which provides co-ordinated, coherent, consistent service provision</p>
BCC Economic Regeneration	<p>This is, among other matters a matter of client acquisition, and quality management within the service. This is one reason why representation can be usefully kept separate from service provision...so it can oversee this vital service provision, and challenge all suppliers including those paid for out of bursary</p>				<p>The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group</p>
BCC CYPS	<p>Sub contracting to secure appropriate support is particularly significant for this. · There is a disparity between representation of different equalities groups which needs to be addressed. · Issues relating to access and communications will need to be addressed. · Core training package covering all aspects of equalities to be provided to improve equalities practice</p>				<p>The City Council notes the comments and will refer them to the Specification Development Group</p>
Q15 Balance of VCS Support Services					
a greater proportion of the available resources for VCS Infrastructure Support going into practical support services and a smaller proportion into influencing, networking and representation					<p>The City Council notes this preference and will refer it to the Specification Development Group.</p>
		3			

Commissioner Responses and Comments				City Council responses			
a greater proportion of the available resources for VCS Infrastructure Support going into influencing, networking and representation and a smaller proportion into practical support services							
an equal allocation of resources to both elements			3	The City Council notes this preference and will refer it to the Specification Development Group.			
Q 16 How much does the proposed Bristol VCS Support Service model meet your strategic needs as a commissioner of services in improving support to VCS organisations?							
BCC H&SC	Very well – H&SC have focussed on one provider providing representation/consultation/information services and this model opens up the rest of infrastructure support to access services.			The City Council notes the comments			
NHS Bristol	A single organisation model would be very helpful. This would facilitate information sharing, and relationship building.			The City Council notes the comments			
BCC Economic Regeneration	Only at basic level			The City Council notes the comments			
BCC CYPS	There needs to be more emphasis on service specific/thematic sector support services (eg CYPT services) and a thematic context for this support. · Participation from a wide section of the VCS in all aspects of commissioning activity (particularly smaller organisations) would be welcome. This includes collaborative/partnership bidding. · Evidence of emerging needs will have to be reported in time to influence commissioning. · Training opportunities need to be flexible to support specific commissioning projects. · There needs to be a greater emphasis on community development to meet the service needs of children and young people.			The City Council notes the comments			
Health Partnership CYPS/Children's Health NHS Bristol	It will be better as less likely to miss appropriate providers.			The City Council notes the comments			

Commissioner Responses and Comments			City Council responses			
Q17	Does this model support your contract management /grant management relationships with VCS providers?					
BCC H&SC	Yes.	The City Council notes the comments				
NHS Bristol	Yes - there is considerable potential in this respect – and in terms of developing capacity to bid for contracts	The City Council notes the comments				
BCC Economic Regeneration	No we must conform to the governments simplification agenda which separates information and diagnosis from brokerage	The City Council notes the comments				
BCC CYPS	This model should aim to develop equitable partnerships and promote mutual understanding and work to COMPACT principles. · Quality standards need to be highly profiled particularly where these support Bristol City Council Baseline Standards and are required terms and conditions of funding	The City Council notes the comments				
Health Partnership CYPS/Children's Health NHS Bristol	Yes	The City Council notes the comments				
Q18	Will you as a commissioner want to negotiate referral rights as part of service improvement plans with your providers?					
BCC H&SC	We (H&SC) will want rights to the 'representation', networking & briefings (Social care specific).	The City Council notes the comments				
NHS Bristol	That could be useful – in particular for small organisations in relation to capacity building	The City Council notes the comments				
BCC Economic Regeneration	It this service is to gain credibility for such referrals it needs to demonstrate that it can substantially affect the performance of providers to the public sector in a competitive environment with the private sector or public 'in house' proposals	The City Council notes the comments				

Commissioner Responses and Comments		City Council responses
BCC CYPS	Yes, there would be an interest if the service could deliver any identified specialist expertise CYPT VCS need.	The City Council notes the comments
Q19	What in your opinion are the core service priorities this model should be delivering to support your strategic goals? (priorities and balance for investment)	
BCC H&SC	Priorities are to have a stronger, more capable, developing VCS that is able to inovate, bid for services, collaborate, and work in partnership. The specialist services, training outcomes mentoring, performance improvement, equalities mentoring, outcomes focussed support packages are all going to support our strategic priorities.	The City Council notes the comments
NHS Bristol	Support and develop a diverse VCS – at all levels. Support the VCS to engage more effectively in the commissioning cycle and subsequent procurement processes. Act as ‘guide’ to the sector. Advice training for public sector staff.	The City Council notes the comments
BCC Economic Regeneration	I have outlined above and in the diagram associated with this paper	The City Council notes the comments
BCC CYPS	Improving relationships with the VCS and commissioners. · Developing a thriving third sector. · Supporting capacity building and collaboration and ensuring value for money in commissioning. · Ensuring Bristol has quality services to ensure the best outcomes for our children and young people and deliver to the CYP Plan priorities	The City Council notes the comments
Q20	Would your service area want to contribute investment into this Bristol VCS Support Service generic model to enhance its success? If so, what services would you consider a priority for your support?	
BCC H&SC	We do.	The City Council notes the comments
NHS Bristol	NHS Bristol will discuss directly with BCC commissioners	The City Council notes the comments
BCC Economic Regeneration	We support services that may be good assessment and coaching providers as outlined in suggestion, or maybe as outlined in main proposal	The City Council notes the comments

Commissioner Responses and Comments		City Council responses
BCC CYPS	There would be an interest in purchasing specific services within the outcomes framework for the service model, rather than investing in additional services. This would be more effective if there was a thematic context eg if the other Boards within the Bristol Partnership were invited to invest in the service to support VCS participation in the delivery of the Sustainable City Strategy (the 20:20 Plan)	The City Council notes the comments
Q21	Would you as a commissioner want to invest in additional or Service (Departmental) specific support services through the proposed Bristol VCS Support Service model? If so what might you want to invest in?	
BCC H&SC	It is hard to know at present the extent to which the services we do buy are needed to the extent they are provided and the extent to which social care organisations use other support – our investment balance may need to shift with experience of the new service.	The City Council notes the comments
NHS Bristol	Training; Research; Consultation / involvement; Health improvement; Business Development / Capacity building for contracts	The City Council notes the comments
BCC Economic Regeneration	We support services that may be good assessment and coaching providers as outlined in suggestion, or maybe as outlined in main proposal	The City Council notes the comments
BCC CYPS	There would be an interest in purchasing specific services within the outcomes framework for the service model, rather than investing in additional services. This would be more effective if there was a thematic context eg if the other Boards within the Bristol Partnership were invited to invest in the service to support VCS participation in the delivery of the Sustainable City Strategy (the 20:20 Plan)	The City Council notes the comments
Q22	How would you see the Bristol VCS Support Service helping engage the wider VCS in your commissioning cycles? This includes engagement in needs analysis, market development and mapping, contributing to commissioning plans and specifications, engaging in procurement activities, delivering effective outcomes based services, contributing to service reviews and facilitating consultation and participation	
BCC H&SC	In a more clear and flexible way, our relationship would be with the whole Bristol VCS rather than with just a portion.	The City Council notes the comments

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NHS Bristol	All of above possible. To be effective the infrastructure org would need to have the capacity and professional expertise to deliver the above on a systematic basis. They would also need to work closely with statutory commissioners in order to facilitate this.	The City Council notes the comments
BCC Economic Regeneration	The right part of the service, and the suppliers themselves can play a key part in any intelligent procurement approach	The City Council notes the comments
BCC CYPS	Targeted support to organisations which need it the most; · Support for participation in localities commissioning and engagement; · Informed but independent VCS representative on commissioning panels to avoid conflict of interest; · Market intelligence and participation in needs analysis; · Support to smaller organisations in making collaborative bids.; · Improved signposting to external funding; · Accurate and up to date database of current provision.; · Facilitating the availability of local data to support the identification of emerging issues; · Ensuring input and subsequent outcomes are clearly evidenced so as to ensure the VCS are aware of their influence; · Encourage VCS organisations to feedback to service users on their involvement in this activity and to ensure organisations are clear in consultations what the views of the service users are (what the evidence of this is) and what are the organisational views.; · Encourage VCS to engage in national processes for identifying / promoting best practice	The City Council notes the comments
BCC Equalities	Engagement in needs analysis; consulted on commissioning plans and specifications; delivering contracts; contributing to reviews of contracts	The City Council notes the comments
Q23	How would you want to see the proposed Bristol VCS Support Service supporting VCS representation in strategic planning within the city?	
BCC H&SC	There are many specific and important health and social care-related formal bodies that currently have VCS representation – we wouldn't want to lose this. I'd also hope that the understanding of our issues might become more 'mainstreamed' and more widely shared such that social care/health issues can be represented on the widest range of forums – moving towards being viewed as equalities rather than 'social care' issues.	The City Council notes the comments

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NHS Bristol	By being a diverse, representative, value based and respected organisation able to facilitate participation. By taking an active and well structured approach to their involvement in the commissioning and planning process.	The City Council notes the comments
BCC Economic Regeneration	See my comments on representation earlier. This needs sufficient of the right funding and real credibility in terms of and to its membership, but also in terms of the sectors real ability to make an impact on the issues, their capacity to perform effectively	The City Council notes the comments
BCC CYPS	Advice and information to make consultation more effective; · Support smaller organisations to have a voice; · Election and support for representatives to collate views and feedback to constituent groups.	The City Council notes the comments
BCC Equalities	Working with Equalities Forums to most effectively present a voice for the Council - not just send people who are available during the day.	The City Council notes the comments

Comments from Government Office of the South West

1. We welcome the move to a commissioning model for Third Sector infrastructure (TSI) services and believe this will offer significant benefits to the Third Sector in Bristol, and to Bristol city council and the Bristol Partnership, with better outcomes through improved service delivery and a more integrated set of TSI organisations – indeed, it holds out the opportunity of leading to a fully integrated VCS operation in the city.	The City Council notes the comments
2. As well as opportunities for both gains to effectiveness from the proposals as set out, the scope is there for efficiency gains as the TSI organisations in due course think through how to respond to the commissioning process. This seems likely to lead to improved financial, performance and risk management.	The City Council notes the comments
3. Whatever shape the final specification takes for the services to be provided we hope that the council will take a flexible approach and, through the tendering process, consider a range of possible business models against the selection criteria. One possible business model, for instance, would be a partnership of TSI organisations under a single Board, with a 'federal' structure and specialisation of function. This might offer the same effectiveness as the single lead provider model, provided the tender gives you the assurances you need on finance, performance management and risk.	The City Council notes the comments
4. It may be possible, too, for instance, in due course, to consider whether some form of asset transfer to a TSI partnership business model will help to lower running costs, invest in the future	The City Council notes the comments

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VCS and act as an incentive to further VCS integration.

5. We would also welcome the widening, in future, of the commissioning approach to other organisations under the banner of the Bristol Partnership, as this might also, in a 'Total Place' type exercise, lead to increased effectiveness and efficiency of VCS support, and to an even greater degree of integration and security for the VCS in Bristol, as well as gains for the local strategic partnership.

The City Council notes the comments