Evaluating the VCSE Memorandum of Understanding in Derby/Derbyshire

The Memorandum of Understanding was launched at the "Moving Forward Together" Conference in June 2023. This set out cultures, behaviours, aspirations and actions necessary for the Integrated Care System, the Integrated Care Board and the VCSE sector to work effectively together as partners. The MoU was developed through extensive discussions within the system and the VCSE sector and was formally adopted by both the ICB and the Integrated Care Partnership. On adoption it was recognised that for the MoU to be effective, it would need to be evaluated and it was agreed that a report should annually to the ICP flowing discussion at the Integrated Place Executive. With this in mind, work has been taking place to develop evaluation criteria and a process that takes account the Derby/Derbyshire partnership structures that operate at both system and local level. It also draws on national criteria that is being developed although this isn't as detailed or bespoke to our partnership structures.

How to use this Tool

The following tool identifies seven key questions relating to VCSE engagement priorities outlined in the MoU. Partnership structures and partners are encouraged to discuss these seven question areas and generate a rating 1-5 capturing any thoughts and identifying next steps in the table below. These discussions will vary across the different partnership structures (particularly between local and system) as will capacity and time to consider this and the nature of the relationship that partners and individuals have with VCSE organisations. We're also keen to hear from individuals who would like to submit their own thoughts.

Consequently, you may want to start by looking at the seven summary questions in the next table. You can work through each of them or focus on ones that you feel are particularly appropriate to your experience. Each of these seven questions is dissected in more detail in a number of following tables. These may help you to understand the context to each question in more detail. If you have time, these individual tables also provide an opportunity to rate more detailed measurement questions. The intention is for the Tool to be circulated in advance of discussions, so individuals may wish to fill in the detailed tables in advance to inform the debate. A completed summary table, completed detailed tables or other submissions should be returned to wynnegarnett@googlemail.com by 18th May 2024.

We are also interested to hear your thoughts on the Tool itself. Does it work? Is there anything we should add/remove change for use in the future? Use this tool in whatever way you think best stimulates discussion and feedback.

Summary

Organisation/Partnership; Contact Person;		
Key Question	**Rating.** **1 Not really happening** **2 Limited and Patchy** **3 This is ok** **4 Good progress being made** **5.Excellent**	**Thoughts and Suggested Next Steps**
Is the VCSE sector widely involved in developing strategies, plans, pathways and initiatives at the earliest possible stage? Is this reflected in content, investment and delivery?		
Is data and intelligence being effectively shared in a way that enables the VCSE sector to contribute as a core partner?		
Is there effective VCSE representation on key existing and emerging system structures?		
Is Local VCSE infrastructure and the VCSE Alliance embedded as a core partner within Local Place Alliances and the wider system partners/partnerships? Is it clear how their functions can be focussed and delivered for the benefit of the Integrated Care System using existing investment?		
Have VCSE investment approaches changed including procurement and commissioning to promote more collaborative approaches, build on existing assets and generate sustainable relationships?		
Do we understand the nature of the VCSE workforce, the challenges it faces and have a cross sector system plan of action to address these?		
Are we generating and sustaining positive behaviours and establishing a culture of trust that supports VCSE sector engagement as an effective partner?		

1. Is the VCSE sector widely involved in developing strategies, plans, pathways and initiatives at the earliest possible stage? Is this reflected in content, investment and delivery?

This question reflects one of the most consistent pieces of feedback in the MoU development process, that VCSE organisations should be involved at the earliest opportunity in the whole planning cycle and that this involvement should be as broad as possible. This is important to avoid "designing out" the challenges and solutions that could be identified by VCSE organisations and which could lead to service transformation. It also means building in opportunities for both communities of place and interest to contribute. In evaluating progress, it isn't enough to see VCSE representation on partnership structures and pathways, we need to be able to identify how this involvement has led to changes in planning, delivery and investment.

Key Question Area		Measurement considerations at Local Place Alliance (LPA) level	Rating	Measurement considerations at System Level	Rating	Thoughts and Next Steps
O1	Is the VCSE sector widely involved in developing strategies, plans, pathways and initiatives at the earliest possible stage? Is this reflected in content, investment and delivery?	Evidence that VCSE organisations have been involved in determining priorities and shaping policy		Evidence that VCSE organisations have been involved in determining priorities and shaping policy including ICB Forward Plan, Integrated Care Strategy, Community Transformation and Start/Stay/Age Well, Winter Plan		
		Every initiative sets out how VCSE will be engaged in development and this is checked at approval stage		Every initiative sets out how VCSE will be engaged in development and this is checked at approval stage		
		Involvement is reflected in new VCSE activity and investment		Involvement is reflected in new VCSE activity and investment		
		Approaches recognise and engage county based VCSE organisations and community of interest perspectives		Approaches take into account perspectives from VCSE organisations at local level		
		Pathway/initiative development groups have VCSE representation and enable VCSE engagement		Pathway/initiative development groups have VCSE representation and enable VCSE engagement		

		Timescales enable VCSE sector to consult and engage		Timescales enable VCSE sector to consult and engage		
		Partner staff receive training on working with the VCSE sector		Partner staff receive training on working with the VCSE sector through common programme		
		Initiatives reviewed quarterly to assess VCSE engagement and track what has happened differently as a result		Initiatives reviewed quarterly to assess VCSE engagement and track what has happened differently as a result		
		Understanding and database of VCSE organisations. Identification of where development and investment is needed to sustain and develop a thriving local sector		State of Sector study undertaken to understand VCSE sector across ICS footprint. Identification of where development and investment is needed to sustain and develop a thriving sector		
		Exploration of improved, joined up non-clinical pathways to VCSE provision		Exploration and work to establish a consistent approach to help people access non-clinical services		
		Adoption of social prescribing maturity framework		"Sprint" approaches to addressing ill health determinants continue to involve VCSE sector		
				VCSE sector sustainability is recognised in the ICB risk register		

2. <u>Is data and intelligence being effectively shared in. away that enables the VCSE sector to contribute as a core partner?</u>

Issues relating to data and information sharing were identified as a major barrier to partnership working between VCSE organisations and statutory partners during the development of the MoU. Since then, system level work has been taking place to try and resolve these. The ideal outcome would be a system wide data sharing protocol that organisations could sign up to. Work to achieve this is underway, looking at the model used in London but is likely to take some months. A Section 251 agreement is being explored as a short/medium term measure that would allow data sharing between partners. In

addition, there are challenges around how data and soft intelligence held by VCSE organisations can add value to the data gathered through Population Health Management and Joint Strategic Needs Assessment processes to help shape service planning and priorities. Finally, VCSE organisations would also find system data really helpful to aid their own planning.

Key Question Area	Measurement considerations at LPA level	Rating	Measurement considerations at System Level	Rating	Thoughts and Next Steps
O2 Is data and intelligence being effectively shared in. away that enables the VCSE sector to contribute as a core partner?	VCSE organisations are able to access PHM and other data to help them focus their own work Data sharing protocol agreed and tested. Organisations invited to sign up		• Section 251 adopted as means of data sharing in short-term • Data sharing protocol agreed and tested. Organisations invited to sign up • VCSE organisations able to access PHM and other data to help them focus their own work		
	VCSE organisations able to share data with statutory colleagues where there is patient benefit including through Derbyshire Shared Care Record		VCSE organisations able to share data with statutory colleagues where there is patient benefit including through Derbyshire Shared Care Record		
	Local intelligence from VCSE organisations is shaping priorities and delivery and is gathered through activity such as social prescribing		PHM and system data made available to VCSE organisations to use		
	There is shared intelligence on local VCSE organisations and their activities including a local database		Exploration for approach that enables an individual to access non-medical services		
	Good practice captured and shared system wide and learning adopted from experience elsewhere in the system		Local good practice shared and scaled up across the system		

	Platforms used for partnership working are accessible to VCSE partners		Consistent approach developed to help capture data and soft intelligence from VCSE organisations into system JSNA and business intelligence processes		
	The new system research strategy recognises and supports research initiatives and approaches in the VCSE sector		Platforms used for partnership working are accessible to VCSE partners		
			The new system research strategy recognises and supports research initiatives and approaches in the VCSE sector		

3. <u>Is there effective VCSE representation on key existing and emerging system structures?</u>

Although involvement in partnership structures isn't an end in itself, it is important that that VCSE sector has a voice in these. The Integrated Care System is complicated and it is important that VCSE representatives are supported and are able to connect with each other and with the wider VCSE sector constituency.

O3 Key Question Area	Measurement considerations at LPA level	Rating	Measurement considerations at System Level	Rating	Thoughts and Next Steps
Is there effective VCSE representation on key existing and emerging system structures?	VCSE representation on LPA and any subgroups.		VCSE representation on all system structures, with clear nomination processes in place		
	Recognition of the need to engage with county wide VCSE groups		Mechanisms in place to connect representatives to the wider VCSE sector constituency		
	Mechanisms to engage and disseminate information out to the wider VCSE constituency are supported, with allowance made for time.		Meetings to connect VCSE representatives across the system		
	VCSE leadership in appropriate situations				

4. Is Local VCSE infrastructure and the VCSE Alliance embedded as a core partner within Local Place Alliances and the wider system partners/partnerships? Is it clear how their functions can be focussed and delivered for the benefit of the Integrated Care System using existing investment?

In the MoU, Local VCSE infrastructure is seen as critical to the involvement and development of local VCSE organisations with Local Place Alliances. It should support the sector to have a voice, to work together, to attract funding/volunteers and develop the skills to engage. It is an advocate for the VCSE sector. The current infrastructure review provides an opportunity to focus infrastructure support and make it sustainable. At system level, the VCSE Alliance has provided an effective vehicle to enable the VCSE sector to engage with partners. The MoU sets out the need for this to continue, with the resources necessary to tackle key challenges.

O4	Key Question Area	Measurement considerations at LPA level	Rating	Measurement considerations at system level	Rating	Thoughts and Next Steps
	Is Local VCSE infrastructure and the VCSE Alliance embedded as a core partner within Local Place Alliances and the wider system partners/partnerships? Is it clear how their functions can be focussed and delivered for the benefit of the Integrated Care System using existing investment?	Local Infrastructure organisations are engaged in the LPAs and their role in linking to a wider VCSE constituency is recognised and supported.		• Local VCSE infrastructure is part of the VCSE Alliance to ensure links between local and system • VCSE infrastructure review establishes clear role		
		Infrastructure review clarifies where local infrastructure is important to LPAs		• Intelligence gained from VCSE organisations, infrastructure providers and system partners on VCSE infrastructure provision • VCSE infrastructure review generates a co-produced model to meet these needs and provide sustainability		
		New initiatives shared with VCSE Alliance as well as local infrastructure to increase reach to VCSE groups		• VCSE Alliance evolves structure as membership grows • VCSE Alliance retains capacity to undertake work • VCSE Alliance has strong links with partners and partnership structures at system level • DDIA and VCSE Alliance continue to work closely together		

5. Have VCSE investment approaches changed including procurement and commissioning to promote more collaborative approaches, build on existing assets and generate sustainable relationships?

The VCSE sector contributes to health and well-being in a diverse number of ways. Ranging from small volunteer, user led organisations to those with significant numbers of paid staff they engage communities, innovate and provide huge value. They not only have considerable potential to support preventative work and address determinants of ill health but they are already underpinning current provision, supporting those who cannot access statutory services or choose not to. The MoU raised concerns that current approaches to investment, particularly around procurement and commissioning are not generating the diverse VCSE sector embedded in communities that delivers these strengths. Larger contracts make it almost impossible for smaller organisations to engage and contract values often mean that groups have to draw on reserves, generating little sustainability. A cross sector ICP sponsored workshop has identified actions building on new legislation to address this which would support a need to think differently and creatively around future investment approaches.

	Key Question Area	Measurement considerations at LPA level	Rating	Measurement considerations at system level	Rating	Thoughts and Next Steps
O5	Have VCSE investment approaches changed including procurement and commissioning to promote more collaborative approaches, build on existing assets and generate sustainable relationships?	Micro commissioning and/or small grants available that support local organisations contributing to identified priorities and initiatives such as social prescribing		Strategic investment approach that will support diverse local VCSE assets. Is there a sustainable local diverse VCSE sector?		
		Evidence of coproduction with VCSE organisations to identify and invest in solutions		Assessment of impact funding decisions have on the VCSE sector?		
		A healthy, diverse, local VCSE sector that supports health outcomes		Increased investment in VCSE sector (either through new funds or repurposing of existing)		
		VCSE engagement in shaping what is procured locally and how		Priorities for investment show evidence of reflecting input from VCSE sector		

		Local procurement approaches acknowledge the need to support local assets		New collaborative approaches to procurement and commissioning build on existing assets and are appropriate to the size of contract	
		Support for local collaborative activity		Cross system commissioners and VCSE sector meet regularly to discuss how well processes are working	
				Commissioning criteria recognise local capital and support collaboration	
				Commissioning recognises and tracks full costs of undertaking activity and provides opportunities for submissions to set out what could be delivered for the funding envelope	
				Increase in micro commissioning and or small grants approach	
				Attraction of new funds into the system	
				New legislation and national guidelines for commissioning provide opportunities for more proportionate approaches	
				Consistent approach explored to capture impact of VCSE sector services	

6. <u>Do we understand the nature of the VCSE workforce, the challenges it faces and have a cross sector system plan of action to address these?</u>

With 10,000 FTE staff and 6000 volunteers, the VCSE sector has a significant workforce. It is a workforce that faces significant challenges around recruitment, succession planning, development and progression but also provides great opportunities to release potential within communities. A detailed baseline VCSE workforce analysis would help with the development of strategy and links with existing programmes and attempts to attract external funding will help with meeting needs.

O6	Key Question Area	Measurement Considerations at LPA level	Rating	Measurement Considerations at System level	Rating	Thoughts and Next Steps
	Do we understand the nature of the VCSE workforce, the challenges it faces and have a cross sector system plan of action to address these?	Input into VCSE sector workforce analysis		Open up system workforce development programmes to VCSE sector		
		Support to encourage volunteering		Funding for and delivery of VCSE workforce needs analysis		
		Opening up of appropriate statutory development initiatives to VCSE organisations		Open up volunteering opportunities to NHS and partner workforces		
				Support for volunteering amongst underrepresented communities		

7. <u>Are we generating and sustaining positive behaviours and establishing a culture of trust that supports VCSE sector engagement as an effective partner?</u>

The MoU sets out a range of behaviours that are needed to underpin a culture of trust between partners. This is critical if VCSE organisations are to be involved as genuine partners.

O7	Key Question Area	Measurement considerations	LPA RAG	System RAG	Thoughts and Next Steps
	Are we generating and sustaining positive behaviours and establishing a culture of trust that supports VCSE sector engagement as an effective partner?	• We will value everyone's experience and expertise equally, • We will acknowledge and work to our respective strengths, • We recognise the power dynamics that sometimes exist between partners and recognise that It is ok as partners to constructively challenge and disagree, • We commit to collaborative working as equals, will follow commitments through and walk the talk, • We will work to the values of co-production including co-design and co-learning, • We will learn from each other, from what we do and from what happens elsewhere, • We will work together to build sustainable VCSE sector services and organisations,			

• We will be outcome focussed and willing to cede leadership to where it works best, • We will take time to understand and take account of the ways different organisations and sectors work, • We will work together to identify and remove barriers to joint working. • We will be creative and work differently to best engage VCSE organisations of all sizes, being careful not to undermine diversity through structure. • We will promote more integrated and joined up ways of working, • We will ensure that the breadth of the VCSE sector has the opportunity to be involved in all stages of the planning cycle at the earliest point. We recognise that VCSE organisations don't always fit neatly into structures and systems! • We will take a strengths-based approach building on existing assets, • We will seek to put communities of place, shared interest and condition at the centre of our work. • We recognise the independence of VCSE organisations including the right to campaign, • We will commit the time and resources that are necessary to develop effective relationships, • We will look to build sustainable relationships with approaches that are proportionate to the sizes of organisation involved, • We will take the risks necessary to innovate and do things differently, • We will recognise and work with VCSE Alliance and infrastructure systems, processes and structures, recognising that there are many different perspectives.		