



Executive Decision Report

Citywide Support Services for the Voluntary and Community Sector

Decision to be taken by: Assistant City Mayor for
Strategic Partnerships and Change

Decision to be taken on: 29 June 2017

Lead director: Miranda Cannon

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report authors: Andrew Shilliam, Head of the City Mayor's Office; George M Ballentyne, VCS Engagement Manager
- Author contact details: 0116 454 0131 / andrew.shilliam@leicester.gov.uk
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<p>1. Purpose of report</p> <p>1.1 To provide an update on the review of arrangements for citywide support to the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS). This is required because the Council is in the final year of the current contractual arrangements.</p> <p>1.2 At the same time it is appropriate to reflect the financial pressure faced by the Council, include a summary of the results of our recent online survey which looked at the nature of the support currently available, and to share Officers' understanding of the needs of the Sector garnered over the last three years.</p>

<p>2. Summary</p> <p>2.1 The Council is in the final year of a three-year agreement where we receive the following services from Voluntary Action LeicesterShire (VAL): 1) Supporting collaboration and guaranteeing a collective voice for the city's Voluntary and Community Sector; 2) Providing infrastructure support to the city's Voluntary and Community Sector; and 3) Supporting volunteers and volunteering in the city.</p> <p>2.2 This agreement is coming to an end (September 2017) and we are currently in the process of considering what future support arrangements might be possible given the current financial challenges faced by the Council.</p> <p>2.3 This report explains more fully the current position of this review and considers what future funded support might be appropriate and affordable.</p>

<p>3. Recommendations</p> <p>3.1 That consideration be given to the need and nature of any future VCS support arrangements provided by the Council and in particular the options outlined within the report.</p>

<p>Voluntary Action Leicester: current agreement</p>

- 3.2 Our current three year arrangement with VAL concludes 30 Sep 2017. This combines three separate agreements, detail of which is covered in this report. The services to which these agreements relate were procured as three separate opportunities, partly to encourage a variety of providers to come forward.
- 3.3 These contracts are:
- Supporting collaboration and guaranteeing a collective voice for the city's Voluntary and Community Sector (£53,000pa);
 - Providing infrastructure support to the city's Voluntary and Community Sector (£140,000pa); and
 - Supporting volunteers and volunteering in the city (£83,000pa).
- 3.4 The current total cost of £266,000pa includes a contribution of £41,556pa from the local Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and a net annual cost to the Delivery, Communications and Political Governance division of £224,444pa.
- 3.5 The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner stopped its contribution at the end of Sep 2016, having agreed to join in the initial two-year funding arrangement with VAL but not the discretionary twelve-month extension (£10,000 was reduced from the annual spend on this support accordingly).
- 3.6 Each of the above agreements has a list of expected outcomes (Appendix 1), all of which were identified at the point of commissioning and against which VAL's performance is monitored on a quarterly basis.
- 3.7 In practical terms, the outcomes of these three funding arrangements can be condensed into the following points of support provided as part of the current agreements. These are the points to which participants in our recent online survey were asked to respond:
- Discussing matters of common concern and mutual interest, collaboration and working in partnership with other VCS groups or organisations;
 - Supporting a collective voice for the city's VCS groups, organisations and service users;
 - Maintaining regular dialogue with other VCS groups and organisations about issues important to the city's Voluntary and Community Sector;
 - Looking at ways to become more sustainable (e.g. maximising opportunities to leverage external funding);
 - Sharing and making sense of data and information (especially related to the city council's policy and service development affecting the Voluntary and Community Sector);
 - Information about setting up and running a VCS group or organisation;
 - Developing funding applications;
 - Sharing good practice in effective governance;
 - Sharing good practice in financial management;
 - Information about funding opportunities;
 - Marketing and communications;
 - News and information from the city council (especially related to policy and service development affecting the Voluntary and Community Sector);

- Raised issues of shared concern and received tailored support to address these concerns;
- Information about good practice of other VCS groups and organisations;
- Advice and support to change working / operational arrangements so that your group or organisations might be better equipped to meet current challenges;
- Advice, assistance and support to help your group or organisation become more self-sufficient and sustainable;
- Support for your group or organisation to reach potential clients or service users considered ‘underserved’, ‘difficult to reach’ or ‘hard to engage’;
- Information, advice and support about changes to national legislation and local policies and practices affecting the Voluntary and Community Sector;
- Recruiting and retaining volunteers;
- Marketing volunteering opportunities;
- Sharing good practice regarding volunteering;
- Training for volunteers and managers of volunteers;
- Support to develop volunteering opportunities; and
- Recruiting and assisting volunteers to serve as board members, directors and/or trustees.

Future proposals

- 3.8 The Council recognises the vital role that Leicester’s Voluntary and Community Sector has played historically in supporting positive work and providing a wide range of services. Such contributions are still clearly evident today, as the demographic profile of the city changes – and the challenges and opportunities of the Voluntary and Community Sector change with it. The Council remains committed to supporting a vibrant, wide-ranging and effective VCS in the city. This commitment is clearly stated in the 2015 ‘Labour in Leicester’ Local Government Manifesto.
- 3.9 It must be evident to all concerned, however, that supporting the Sector cannot mean business as usual: it is not possible to continue funding everything, everywhere, all the time. Under current circumstances, meaningful support for the VCS requires some degree of imagination and innovation.
- 3.10 The fact that all three contracts for delivery of these support services conclude at the same time offers a moment to consider how this provision has fared over the past three years and whether changes should be made going forward – an appropriate point for the Council to consider our position and refresh this part of our relationship with groups, organisations, communities and service users among the VCS in Leicester.
- 3.11 Since the time when these support arrangements were put in place, the culture of relations between the Council and the city’s VCS (and within the Sector itself) has changed. Support, information, advice and guidance is now provided in ways which did not occur prior to commissioning these services. This includes:
- The establishment of the Community Engagement Fund (and first tranche of projects which it has supported);
 - The operation of the VCS Urgent Support Fund;
 - Curtailment of long-running financial support for ‘representative’ community

bodies;

- The establishment of the Service Analysis Team, considering working relationships between the Council and a range of VCS organisations across divisions and departments;
- The ongoing involvement of the local VCS in Council programmes such as Community Asset Transfer and Transforming Neighbourhood Services; and
- Tentative discussions with our counterparts in Leicestershire County Council regarding increased collaboration on issues affecting VCS that straddle the border between city and county, as well as the potential for sharing resources in addressing issues of common interest.

Financial Position

3.12 Behind all this of course, we cannot ignore budgetary pressures and the requirement to make savings in this area. The Community Capacity Building Spending Review has set against it a minimum savings target of £200,000 against current total spending commitment in this area of £450,000pa.

3.13 The detailed spending commitments are as follows:

- Voluntary and Community Sector support (to which this report relates): £225,000pa
- Community Engagement Fund: £100,000pa and
- Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) services: £114,500pa

3.14 The future of these particular IAG services are being considered as part of the wider social welfare advice services re-procurement process and the current agreements (subject to performance) will be extended to align with the timeline for that exercise. It is possible that a small proportion of the overall funding currently set aside for these services may be required as a contribution to the overall cost of any future IAG services.

3.15 At this stage it is not possible to give an accurate indication of the likely amount. We have been advised that the review of social welfare advice services has not yet reached the necessary stage to be able to do so with any certainty.

3.16 Overall it is clear that a sizeable reduction in expenditure is required and therefore it is anticipated that our current spending commitments will need to be significantly reduced.

Online survey

3.17 In considering possible future provision of support services to the city's VCS, we have sought a variety of views through a consultation on Citizen Space. An online survey, 'Voluntary and Community Sector Support Services' ran for 13 weeks (18 Nov 2016 to 10 Feb 2017). Results of that survey have informed options and recommendations in this report.

3.18 As part of this consultation exercise we have been particularly interested in finding out:

- **How many** VCS groups and organisations have accessed these services;
- **How often** VCS groups and organisations have accessed these services;

- **How useful** have VCS groups and organisations have found these services:
- **What outcomes**, if any, have been achieved as a result of the support;
- **What future support** do respondents believe the Council can give the city's VCS.

3.19 The intention was to develop a better understanding of the support services considered most valuable within the Sector and which the Council should consider retaining in some meaningful form within any future arrangements.

3.20 The Head of the City Mayor's Office and the VCS Engagement Manager presented (on behalf of the Director of Delivery, Communications and Political Governance) to Neighbourhood Services & Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission (25 Jan 2017). The Commission was understanding of the purpose of the consultation, recommending that:

3.21 The Director of Delivery, Communications and Political Governance be requested to:

- a. Ask Members and service directors to promote the consultation on arrangements for city-wide support for the voluntary and community sector with the groups they are aware of, the link to the on-line consultation to be included in this request; and
- b. Invite groups and organisations who may not be in contact with Voluntary Action LeicesterShire, but could usefully contribute, to participate in the consultation on arrangements for city-wide support for the voluntary and community sector;
- c. That [...] the Director of Delivery, Communications and Political Governance be asked to extend the deadline for the consultation on future support arrangements for the voluntary and community sector in the city by at least one week; and
- d. That a further report on support arrangements for the voluntary and community sector in the city be submitted to this Commission at a time to be agreed between the Chair, Vice-Chair and Director of Delivery, Communications and Political Governance.

3.22 In accordance with the Commission's recommendations, an email was sent the following day to all elected members and another to Divisional Directors and Heads of Service, bringing the online survey to their attention and asking that they consider sharing it with VCS groups and organisations with whom they are involved. The deadline of the online survey was extended by one week (to Fri 10 Feb) to accommodate this.

3.23 Regarding the Commission's recommendation that we invite 'groups and organisations who may not be in contact with Voluntary Action LeicesterShire, but could usefully contribute, to participate in the consultation': this was done from the start of the online survey and continued until the end of the survey, using contact details compiled from a variety of sources that are regularly used for mailout.

- 3.24 It has been tentatively agreed that there will be a follow-up presentation to the Commission later this year.
- 3.25 One city-based VCS organisation requested printed copies of the questionnaire, for their service users whom they feared might be uncomfortable or unfamiliar with online surveys. Printed copies were provided (as well as means for them to print their own) but no completed versions of the survey in that form were returned.
- 3.26 We know that there are a large number of VCS groups and organisations in the city, that between them they employ a large number of people, and that they provide services to a high number of users. It is therefore noteworthy that even though the consultation has been actively promoted in a number of ways the actual response levels are very low.

Results of the online survey

- 3.27 Respondents to the survey were asked to identify themselves as belonging to one of three broad categories, that they were completing the survey:
- On behalf of a local VCS group or organisation;
 - As someone who uses services provided by a VCS group or organisation; or
 - As a member of the public with an interest in how the city council supports the Voluntary and Community Sector in Leicester.
- 3.28 The total number of respondents to the online survey was 134. Of this number, respondents identified themselves as belonging to the following categories:
- 51 (38%) on behalf of a local VCS group or organisation;
 - 29 (22%) as someone who uses services provided by a VCS group or organisation;
 - 54 (40%) as a member of public with an interest in how the city council supports the VCS in Leicester
- 3.29 From 134 responses to the online survey, 44 different VCS groups or organisations were involved (Appendix 1). Some of these respondents completed the survey more than once (but are counted only once where the tally allows us to do so).
- 3.30 Those responding on behalf of local VCS groups or organisations were asked for their views in relation to the type of support that they consider important i.e. (1) collaboration and collective voice, (2) infrastructure support, or (3) volunteering.
- 3.31 Questions were also put to those same respondents about (1) whether the services in each of the areas have been accessed, (2) how frequently these services were accessed, and (3) whether they found the services useful or not.
- 3.32 Respondents to the survey who identified themselves as service users or members of the public were asked a different set of questions, which allowed us

to gauge the extent to which they were aware of these headline services and whether they saw them as useful and appropriate.

- 3.33 Both these types of respondent were asked smaller selections of more general questions, which neither assumed (on our part) nor (required on their part), specialist insider knowledge.
- 3.34 Some members of the public speaking in favour of one, two or all three forms of support appeared to be doing so hypothetically, favouring them in principle, without necessarily knowing that these services are currently being provided in Leicester. Other respondents appeared aware of VAL's delivery of commissioned services and were either critical or supportive of how VAL has done this. Both these sections required qualitative responses.
- 3.35 People identifying as service users were asked to state which services they have received and to give their comments on them. From the 28 responses, 13 appeared to be from people responding as individuals (with nine of these related to volunteering opportunities) and 15 from people responding for a group or organisation (with no way of telling whether they had also completed the section intended for those responding on behalf of a VCS group or organisation).
- 3.36 In another question for service users, 21 out of 28 respondents identified VAL as the provider of the services they had received.
- 3.37 In the third and final question for service users, they were asked, "In your view, was the person / people who helped you well-informed, knowledgeable and suitably trained to deal with your needs?" This received a 100 per cent positive response, with several respondents singling out individuals who had helped them with their enquiries.

Collaboration and Collective Voice

- 3.38 Regarding the Collaboration and Collective Voice elements of the consultation specifically, the following responses were recorded from those responding on behalf of VCS groups or organisations:
- 70% of respondents considered this to be of overall importance in future;
 - 71% of respondents have accessed the service;
 - 54% of respondents accessed the service more than once;
 - 70% of respondents found the service useful;
 - Of those services provided, discussing matters of common interest, partnership working, and maintaining dialogue amongst VCS organisations were accessed most frequently.
- 3.39 The following summarises the main sentiments of qualitative responses provided by these respondents in this section:
- Collective voice should be strengthened;
 - Still not enough contact between groups;
 - Concerns about a single, large organisation claiming to be representative of the VCS;

- Forums to share information and ideas were considered to be positive;
- Hard to reach communities may not be properly engaged under the current arrangements (in part, due to language issues); and
- Encouraging organisations to come together enables groups to be more effective and strengthen their skills.

Infrastructure Support

3.40 Regarding the Infrastructure Support elements of the consultation specifically, the following responses were recorded from those responding on behalf of VCS groups or organisations:

- 78% of respondents considered this to be of overall importance in future;
- 56% of respondents have accessed the service;
- 43% of respondents accessed the service more than once;
- 52% of respondents found the service useful;
- Of those services provided, assistance with identifying funding opportunities, assistance with funding applications, receiving news from LCC, and receiving advice about becoming more sustainable were accessed most frequently.

3.41 The following summarises the main sentiments of qualitative responses provided by these respondents in this section:

- Support provided is very basic;
- Financial support has been provided for a number of years and there are some questions about the outcomes;
- Support to help organisations become self-sufficient is required;
- Support and small grants should be provided;
- Finding ways to enable VCS groups to operate without LCC funding is needed;
- Training courses on things such as commissioning are required; and
- Getting groups to work together to access funding would be useful.

Volunteering Support

3.42 Regarding the Support for Volunteers and Volunteering elements of the consultation specifically, the following responses were recorded from those responding on behalf of VCS groups or organisations:

- 58% of respondents considered this to be of overall importance in future;
- 72% of respondents have accessed the service;
- 32% of respondents accessed the service more than once;
- 48% of respondents found the service useful;
- Of those services provided, developing volunteering opportunities, recruiting volunteer board members, and recruiting and retaining volunteers were accessed most frequently.

3.43 The following summarises the main sentiments of qualitative responses provided by these respondents in this section:

- Support to set up, advertise and maintain volunteering opportunities is required
- The benefits of volunteering need to be championed
- Organisations need to be supported to become experts in using volunteers to deliver services
- Volunteering training programmes are required
- Volunteering helps people to develop skills and confidence
- Support is required for organisations and staff who manage and coordinate volunteer workers

3.44 Whilst the consultation presents some interesting findings about both the uptake of the support provided over the past three years and the nature of any future support required and the, we cannot draw any definitive conclusions from this information alone.

Changing VCS landscape

3.45 In the three years since these services to support the city's VCS were procured and the contracts obtained by Voluntary Action LeicesterShire, the interests, needs and requirements of the city's Voluntary and Community Sector (not only as providers but also as recipients of services and support) have changed considerably.

3.46 The fact that the three funding arrangements are largely based on what had previously existed for many years as one single contract, split in three, strengthens the case for reconsidering what the Council wants to support and how it might be able to do so.

3.47 Unsurprisingly, budgetary pressures faced by the VCS appear to be increasing year-on-year. There is no doubt that the Voluntary and Community Sector in Leicester (as is the case with just about any other locality in the country) is the recipient of increasing demands for engagement and involvement in the life of the city and to do things which it has never been expected to do before.

3.48 From the Council's side, it is increasingly difficult to claim that we need to do more with less. Our reality now – and for the foreseeable future – is that we have to do less with less. Supporting a sustainable VCS in the city may mean supporting a smaller one. We have long considered the particular needs of certain segments of the local population – communities of identity and/or of interest – and put the best measures we can in place to meet them.

3.49 It is incumbent on the Council now to consider committing to providing support that would be of greatest benefit to our city as a whole, while doing our best not to allow individuals, families, communities or groups to feel that they are falling behind or being left out.

3.50 Both CCG and OPCC, in considering their future contributions, have expressed no interest at all in a service Supporting Collaboration and Guaranteeing Collective Voice for the City's VCS. Both these bodies make their own arrangements to obtain volunteers on activities and projects in their respective

spheres of influence and interest. Consequently they have next to no interest in contributing to the costs of a service Supporting Volunteers and Volunteering in the City

3.51 The CCG has agreed to continue the same level of funding for the foreseeable future, which we believe to mean two to three years. CCG's contribution of £41,556 is guaranteed, as long as LCC matches it (at least). CCG has stated that this would be dedicated entirely to Providing Infrastructure Support for the City's VCS.

3.52 The OPCC has not yet decided its level of financial commitment, largely because the Commissioner has not finalised his Commissioning Framework 2017-18, which includes an amount set aside for 'capacity building for the Voluntary and Community Sector'. Our conversations lead us to believe that OPCC would look favourably on our request to restore its £10,000pa although this has not formally been confirmed.

Options

3.53 We have set about considering how some of the activities described in the three current, separate arrangements may be met (in whole or in part) internally, by external provider(s) or by a combination of the two.

Option 1

3.54 Focus the Council's strategic support for the city's Voluntary and Community Sector as follows:

- a. Decommission the three existing services, namely "Supporting collaboration and guaranteeing a collective voice for the city's Voluntary and Community Sector"; "Providing infrastructure support to the city's Voluntary and Community Sector"; and "Supporting volunteers and volunteering in the city".
- b. Commission a new, streamlined, single service aligned with the Council's strategic commitment to supporting a vibrant, wide-ranging and effective Voluntary and Community Sector in the city. This service will focus predominantly on infrastructure support-related activities, though not necessarily in the same manner as the current arrangement. This service can be procured through an "open procedure", specifying broad outcomes and outputs in line with the Council's manifesto commitment to the VCS. The commissioned provider should deliver appropriate support to improve the sector's efficacy, sustainability and viability.
- c. Continue to use existing and historical working arrangements within the Council to promote our own volunteering opportunities.

3.55 Strengths

- + Enables the Council to continue honouring our long-standing commitment to support the city's VCS in changing demographic and financial context;
- + Delivers useful support to local VCS without the Council taking any part of the current services in-house, adding any responsibilities or tasks to the job

- description or workload of any staff member of the Council, or needing to take on any staff to deliver any aspect of the current services;
- + Provides opportunities for capable providers in local VCS to be involved, with commissioned service on offer, in the region of £100,000pa;
 - + Realises sizeable contribution to divisional savings target, considering that CCG would still be contributing £41,000pa on an ongoing basis;
 - + Retains commitment and interest from an influential stakeholder (CCG) which should make it easier to encourage buy-in and ownership from other sources of support;
 - + Uses existing LCC resources more effectively, which are currently devoted to managing delivery of support in current form;
 - + Consolidates links between services that have dealings with local VCS (e.g. Service Analysis Team);
 - + Promotes a desired increase in cross-division and inter-service planning and action, helping reduce remnants of “silo thinking” that may persist within the Council;
 - + Applies resources to activities more directly beneficial to the sector; and
 - + Accords with manifesto commitment to support the VCS.

3.56 Weaknesses

- Commissioned services are not always as responsive to changing sector demands, especially if they are commissioned on a 2+1 contract basis as before. New commissioned arrangements need to permit flexible responses to changing economic and social situation; this flexibility will be required of the commissioned provider and of the Council; and
- Likely TUPE implications for potential applicants.

Option 2

3.57 Focus the Council’s strategic support for the city’s Voluntary and Community Sector as follows:

- a. Decommission the three existing services, namely “Supporting collaboration and guaranteeing a collective voice for the city’s Voluntary and Community Sector”; “Providing infrastructure support to the city’s Voluntary and Community Sector”; and “Supporting volunteers and volunteering in the city”.
- b. Provide support to city VCS groups and organisations of the kind available in the three current forms, obtained from an external provider but on a considerably diminished scale. The funding scope would, consequently, be reduced by a percentage in each area. This reduction (and the total spend) is yet to be agreed but will take into account contributions by our partner organisations (i.e. at present CCG and PCC).

3.58 Strengths

- + Simpler and more straightforward approach to implement, which would be relatively easy to explain;
- + Being in line with current arrangements, any future providers would be less likely to raise concerns; and

- + It accords with manifesto commitment to support the VCS.

3.59 Weaknesses

- Would not necessarily address or reflect changing needs of the sector, or respond in a meaningful way to the new context and environment both for the VCS and for the Council;
- We would be continuing to provide services that can easily and often freely be provided or obtained directly through other mechanisms; and
- Because of financial savings required, any commissioned services would be limited if split across all three areas.

Option 3

3.60 Focus the Council's strategic support for the city's Voluntary and Community Sector as follows:

- a. Decommission the three existing services, namely "Supporting collaboration and guaranteeing a collective voice for the city's Voluntary and Community Sector"; "Providing infrastructure support to the city's Voluntary and Community Sector"; and "Supporting volunteers and volunteering in the city".
- b. Provide support to city VCS groups and organisations through a combination of in-house infrastructure support and services related to collaboration and collective voice.

3.61 Strengths

- + Focus resource on direct delivery instead of contract monitoring of commissioned services;
- + Allows the Council to develop closer working relations and first-hand knowledge of the VCS;
- + Opportunity to develop links with other services that have dealings with the VCS, for example the Service Analysis Team;
- + Can be made to further a desirable increase in cross-division and inter-service planning and action, and help reduce remnants of "silo thinking" that may persist within LCC;
- + Direct control over the type and extent of support provided;
- + Instead of referring on we would be better able identify VCS support needs and provide well-informed and targeted interventions e.g. masterclass sessions on specific topics of support, pay for specific events/training etc. delivered occasionally by external providers.
- + Such an approach could have the benefit of being flexible and responsive to actual need as it arises or is anticipated;
- + Accords with manifesto commitment to support the VCS.

3.62 Weaknesses

- Additional staff resources would be required;
- Likely TUPE implications for the Council, which would compromise any intended saving from divisional budget;
- We could not be sure of recruiting a suitably experienced or skilled person, ready to go immediately;
- Since we'd anticipate such an arrangement would only be time limited, (fixed term in line with CCG funding commitment) this would impact on the effectiveness of the in-house provision, though it is also likely that any commissioned services would not necessarily be able to start delivering immediately. It's possible that, by the time we'd get up to speed to deliver these services in-house, it might then be time for another review and further reduction in financial support; and
- The removal of all externally-directed funding and of external commissioning of a provider of these services may give rise to suggestions that the Council is renegeing to some extent on its promises to support the city's VCS.

3.63 The above three options have been developed on the basis that the Council will continue to provide support, certainly over the course of the next three years and on a consistent basis, i.e. the funding and other commitments to support would be maintained at the same level during this period.

3.64 Consideration could be given to the possibility of gradually scaling back this support in the coming years, including any directly commissioned and funded services, perhaps with a view to ceasing this altogether.

3.65 Noting that the Sector is likely to come under increasing pressure in the coming years as the Council and other funders change and/or reduce funding it is perhaps more likely that the demand for support of this nature will increase and therefore changes of this nature may not be palatable.

5. Financial, legal and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

The Council currently spends £438,000 with a number of organisations from the Community Capacity Building budget. The following table shows this spending in more detail.

Contract	Budget p.a.	Contract Type
<i>LCC VCS support services contribution</i>	<i>£225,000</i>	<i>Funding Agreement</i>
<i>Somali Development Services (IAG)</i>	<i>£31,000</i>	<i>Funding Agreement</i>
<i>The Race Equality Centre (IAG)</i>	<i>£82,000</i>	<i>Funding Agreement</i>
<i>Community Engagement Fund</i>	<i>£100,000</i>	<i>Funding Agreements</i>
	<i>Total</i>	<i>£438,000</i>

The Community Capacity Building spending review, to which this report relates, is included in the City Council savings review programme. As part of this spending review it is anticipated that savings of £240,000 will need to be delivered from a review of these existing arrangements.

Colin Sharpe, Head of Finance.

5.2 Legal implications

“There are no employment legal implications arising out of the decommissioning of externally provided services. Should the Council decide to go out to procurement with any of the contracts or bring them in house there is potential for TUPE to apply if the services being delivered are fundamentally the same. It is recommended that Legal Services are involved throughout the process to ensure that the Council meets its legal obligations and minimise any risk to the Council.”

Hayley McDade, Solicitor

5.3 Climate change and carbon reduction implications

There are no significant climate change implications arising from this report.

Duncan Bell, Senior Environmental Consultant, Environment Team.

Appendix 1

Supporting collaboration and guaranteeing a collective voice for the city's Voluntary and Community Sector

The following outcomes are expected from this agreement:

- Bring together the city's VCS groups and organisations on matters of common concern and mutual interest, promoting collaboration and partnership working.
- Guarantee a collective voice for the city's VCS groups, organisations and service users.
- Establish and maintain effective communication and regular dialogue within the city's Voluntary and Community Sector.
- Establish and maintain effective communication and regular dialogue among the city's VCS groups and organisations collectively and Leicester City Council (and its partners and stakeholders).
- Establish and maintain effective communication and regular dialogue between the city's VCS groups and organisations collectively and relevant contacts in the Private Sector.
- Support the city's VCS groups and organisations in seeking out, evaluating and implementing ways to become sustainable (by, for example, maximising opportunities to leverage external funding).
- Share and help make sense of data and information, especially related to the City Council's policy and service development affecting the Voluntary and Community Sector.
- Disseminate news and information from the City Council, especially related to policy and service development affecting the Voluntary and Community Sector.
- Ensure that issues related to the city's VCS groups, organisations and service users receive appropriate consideration within the policies and operations of the City Council (and its partners and stakeholders) leading to improved design, delivery, monitoring and review of services.
- Cooperate with relevant partners and stakeholders to support engagement of the city's VCS groups and organisations across the range of protected characteristics (as defined in the Equality Act 2010).

Providing infrastructure support to the city's Voluntary and Community Sector

The following outcomes are expected from this agreement:

- Offer a programme of information, advice, guidance and training aimed at establishing a baseline of knowledge and skills for groups and organisations in the city's Voluntary and Community Sector.
- Reflect the diverse and varied nature of the city's Voluntary and Community Sector by providing different kinds of support to different kinds of groups and organisations.
- Provide differentiated support, not only for frontline personnel, but also for board members, directors and trustees of groups and organisations in the city's Voluntary and Community Sector.
- Identify issues of shared concern to groups and organisations in the city's Voluntary and Community Sector and tailor support to those concerns.

- Strengthen a sense of common purpose and mutual support among groups and organisations in the city's Voluntary and Community Sector by sharing good practice and learning from experience.
- Encourage adaptability, flexibility and innovation among groups and organisations in the city's Voluntary and Community Sector, so that they might be better equipped to meet current challenges.
- Increase capacity and capability of groups and organisations in the city's Voluntary and Community Sector to deliver appropriate services more effectively.
- Help groups and organisations in the city's Voluntary and Community Sector become more self-sufficient and sustainable.
- Offer mainstream support to groups and organisations representing communities in the city which are normally considered 'hard to reach' or 'difficult to engage'.
- Update the city's Voluntary and Community Sector on national legislation and local policy related to the Sector.

Supporting volunteers and volunteering in the city

The following outcomes are expected from this agreement (the first six are the 'core functions' identified by Volunteering England):

- Brokerage: 'match both individuals and groups interested in volunteering with appropriate opportunities in the local community [holding] information on a comprehensive range of opportunities. [...] offer potential volunteers support and advice matching their motivation to volunteer with appropriate volunteering opportunities.'
- Marketing Volunteering: 'stimulate and encourage local interest in volunteering and community activity. This may include promoting and marketing volunteering through [...] events and campaigns.'
- Good practice development: 'promote good practice in working with volunteers to all volunteer-involving organisations, [...] deliver training and accreditation for potential volunteers, volunteers, volunteer managers and the volunteering infrastructure.'
- Develop volunteering opportunities: 'work in close partnership with statutory, voluntary and private sector agencies as well as community groups and faith groups to develop local volunteering opportunities. [...] understand the potential offered by the local communities and work with them to realise this potential. [...] target specific groups which face barriers to volunteering. [...] work creatively to develop imaginative, non-formal opportunities for potential volunteers.'
- Policy response and campaigning: 'identify proposal or legislation that may impact on volunteering. [...] lead and/or participate in campaigns on issues that affect volunteers or volunteering. [...] campaign proactively for a more volunteer-literate and volunteer-friendly climate.'
- Strategic development of volunteering: 'As the local experts on volunteering [...] inform strategic thinking and planning at a regional and national level.'
- Recognise the value of volunteering as meeting a range of objectives (e.g. as a route into employment; supporting health and well-being; helping those who are more vulnerable as a result of mental health conditions).
- Acknowledge the different types of volunteers and more explicitly support the recruitment of those with appropriate skills to serve as Board members and trustees.

- Share and help make sense of data and information, especially related to City Council's policy and service development affecting volunteers and volunteering.
- Give something back to volunteers.

Appendix 2

City-based VCS groups and organisations which responded to the online survey

Action Homeless;

ADHD Solutions;

African Heritage Foundation Leicester;

Age UK Leicester Shire & Rutland;

Alzheimer's Society;

Angels and Monsters;

Aspiro Opportunities;

Beaumont Lodge Neighbourhood Association;

Bradgate Park Trust;

The Bridge East Midlands;

The Bridge – Homelessness to Hope;

Centre for Fun & Families;

The Centre Project;

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints;

First Step Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland (responded three times);

Hobaan Foundation;

House of Verse;

The Laura Centre;

Leicester Art Zone;

Leicester Butterflies;

Leicester Drama Society;

Leicester Mamas (responded three times);

Little Bird SOS (responded twice);

Menphys;

Ministry of Nordic Walks;
Network for Change;
New Dawn New Day;
Norton House;
Pink Lizard Developing Youth & Community;
Pukaar Group;
The Quetzal Project (responded twice);
Recovery Assistance Dogs;
Royal Voluntary Service;
Soft Touch Arts;
Somali Community Parents Association;
Somali Development Services;
The Spark Arts for Children;
St Matthews Big Local;
Takeover Radio Children's Media Trust;
Trade Sexual Health;
Vista Social Inclusion Groups;
Women's Aid Leicestershire;
Young Leicestershire;
Zimbabwe Action in Solidarity.

Appendix 3

A selection of qualitative responses from service users and members of the public:

Some responses by members of the public regarding “supporting collaboration and guaranteeing collective voice”:

“I strongly agree that the collective voice of the VCS should be encouraged more to strengthen the cities [sic] VCS to be able to support the delivery of services that help people. Making the core offer stronger enables a stronger workforce.”

“This is a good idea and there is [sic] some attempts at this (e.g.; through VAL) but not sure how much this actually happens. There is still not enough contact between groups.”

“Personal experience has shown that one large voluntary organisation (VAL) does not represent the interests of local people. In my opinion the organisation now operates like a 3rd public sector body, after the council and NHS.” (This comment appeared in responses to the same question about all three support services.)

“VAL provides forums for [sic] [not?] available elsewhere for VCS representatives to share information and ideas around crucial issues affecting the city such as children and young people's policy, adult social care. This feeds into being able to put a collective voice forward as a sector when needed”

“Not sure that they are able to represent the voice of the unheard communities e.g. those whose first language is not English.”

“I think it is important that VCS groups are supported to come together and have a stronger voice. Partnership and collaboration enables groups to be more effective, strengthen skills.”

“All organisations have their own agenda and will be competing with each other. In order for this to work is to find an organization that will remain neutral and not be competing with other VCS organisations at all.”

Some responses by members of the public regarding “infrastructure support”:

“only help I've ever heard of is from VAL which is very VERY basic”

“Leicester city council does not need to provide non-statutory grants to any organisation. It should be funded either as a statutory requirement, or by central government”

“The support is there. This has been funded over a number of years. The council would have to evidence that there is a connection between continuing this support and sustainability. There has been a huge amount of money invested historically. [sic] I can't identify how this has resulted in sector sustainability. If anything it appears to have fostered reliance.”

“their [sic] is not much support for small organisations to be able to become self-sufficient and not able to sustain themselves due to issues of capacity and recourse's, lack of paid staff. Council ought to provide support and small grants to the voluntary sector.”

“VCS organisations (especially small and/or relatively new ones) need infrastructure support to help them function effectively and to become more self-sufficient and sustainable”

“All I'd add is that given the cuts to LCC's funding, finding ways to enable this with fewer resources is worth doing if needed (e.g. supporting peer to peer networks)”

“VAL provides invaluable training courses on things like commissioning and mechanisms for groups to work together to access funding.”

“It is the small community groups that fill in the gaps left by statutory provision, which are getting increasingly bigger. These groups need support to access funding, training and develop.”

“[...] since they are all competing, how much effort would one organization put into assisting a potential competitor?”

Some responses by members of the public regarding “support for volunteers and volunteering”:

“I run a voluntary team that help to clean up the River Soar. Voluntary Action Leicester has helped to direct volunteers to the team so that they can help clean the river. They have also allowed me to set up a stall to advertise the Litter Pick Team to members of the public. I have also benefited myself from Voluntary Action Leicester by attending one of their courses and gaining a new and useful qualification, Award in Education and Training.”

“It is in the sectors interest to do this. This is their purpose. They should also be independent of the public sector. Otherwise what's the point. They just become unpaid or cheap local government officers.”

“there needs to be more awareness raising around the benefits of volunteering. a campaign to address the larger impact that helps people either by volunteering or being supported by volunteers. Supporting organizations to become experts is supporting volunteers to be part of service delivery, addressing the needs of volunteers and ensure there is a citywide offer for all volunteer involving organizations. A training programme that reflects the needs of organizations, an annual training needs analysis based on volunteering would help organizations be more able to address the needs of volunteers themselves.”

“There is not enough funding for this. It rarely happens except 'in-house'.”

“I'm not sure that VAL has much input into supporting volunteers themselves, most are supported directly by the organisation for which they volunteer and receive no support from VAL”

“Volunteering has great value in developing people's skills and confidence and social networks, so please keep trying to support it!”

“I think LCC first need to recognise the vast level of volunteering taking place in house and look to support internal services to implement better procedures for working with volunteers, better train and support those staff who now manage and coordinate

thousands of volunteer hours per year. Provide training to those who sign up to volunteer and give something back to city development via LCC directly. LCC employs 15k ish staff a year and works with thousands of volunteers annually directly through their own services, parks, library, children and young people etc and yet still hasn't got a centralised volunteer policy or safe system of work to support internal sections to set up volunteering within their sections.”

“Adverts for volunteers placed years ago have never had a response, have never been reviewed or checked. The organisation I'm involved with now recruits volunteers directly.”

“We have had several volunteers through the scheme run by VAL.”

Title of spending review/service change/proposal	Citywide VCS Support Services Review
Name of division/service	Communications, Delivery & Political Governance
Name of lead officer completing this assessment	George Ballentyne, VCS Engagement Manager, 0116 454 4146, george.ballentyne@leicester.gov.uk
Date EIA assessment completed	Amended EIA: 19/05/2017
Our Public Sector Equality Duty is a continuing duty, before and after decisions are made. Therefore, amendments to the original EIA may be appropriate should equality implications change over time.	
Decision maker	City Mayor
Date decision taken	20/06/2017

Amended EIA sign off on completion:	Signature	Date
Lead officer	George Ballentyne	19/05/2017
Equalities officer	Irene Kszyk	19/05/2017
Divisional director	Miranda Canon	19/05/2017

Please ensure the following:

- (a) That the document is understandable to a reader who has not read any other documents, and explains (on its own) how the Public Sector Equality Duty is met. This does not need to be lengthy, but must be complete.
- (b) That available support information and data is identified and where it can be found. Also be clear about highlighting gaps in existing data or evidence that you hold, and how you have sought to address these knowledge gaps.
- (c) That the equality impacts are capable of aggregation with those of other EIAs to identify the cumulative impact of all service changes made by the council on different groups of people.

1. Setting the context

Describe the proposal, the reasons it is being made, and intended change or outcome. Will current service users' needs continue to be met?

Leicester City Council ('the Council') is in the final year of a three-year funding agreement where we receive the following services from Voluntary Action LeicesterShire (VAL): Supporting collaboration and guaranteeing a collective voice for the city's Voluntary and Community Sector; Providing infrastructure support to the city's Voluntary and Community Sector; and Supporting volunteers and volunteering in the city. In light of the fact that this funding agreement is coming to an end (Sep 2017) we have been involved in a process of review and public consultation regarding future support arrangements that might be possible given the perceived needs of the VCS and the current financial challenges faced by the Council.

In considering possible future provision of support services to the city's VCS, we have sought a range of views on our proposals for supporting the VCS and how we can work with communities through the VCS to support a cohesive Leicester. An online survey, 'Voluntary and Community Sector Support Services' ran on Citizen Space for 13 weeks (18 Nov 2016 to 10 Feb 2017). The total number of respondents to the online survey was 134. Of this number, respondents identified themselves as belonging to the following categories: 51 (38%) on behalf of a local VCS group or organisation (these were from 44 different groups or organisations, since some responded more than once); 29 (22%) as someone who uses services provided by a VCS group or organisation; 54 (40%) as a member of public with an interest in how the Council supports the VCS in Leicester. Given that the city has at least 810 VCS groups registered with VAL, the response rate was extremely low from the sector itself.

Whilst the consultation presented information about both the uptake of the support provided over the past three years and the nature of any future support required we cannot draw any definitive conclusions from the findings in terms of what respondents want to see in place for supporting the VCS or VCS engagement with communities. The Council will take these into account in determining a way forward in alignment with our strategic priorities as stated in the last manifesto, that the Council "remains committed supporting a vibrant, wide-ranging and effective voluntary sector in the city" and that we "will bring forward plans with the voluntary and community sector to strengthen the sector's voice with the city council and decision-makers."

The Council grasps the diversity and range of the local Voluntary and Community Sector, being familiar with groups and organisations active or based in the city (810 registered with Voluntary Action LeicesterShire at the last count) and through the latest accessible example of "sector trend analysis", VAL's "State of the Sector".

The proposal focuses the Council's strategic support for the VCS as follows: Decommission the three existing services described above. Commission a new streamlined single service, aligned with our strategic commitment to supporting a vibrant, wide-ranging and effective Voluntary and Community Sector in the city. This service will be procured through an "open procedure", specifying broad outcomes and outputs that are in line with the Council's manifesto commitment to the VCS. The procured service will deliver appropriate information,

advice and guidance which will improve the sector's efficacy, sustainability and viability.

Separately, the Council will continue to maintain its own existing and well-established working arrangements with local VCS groups and organisations: to support their development into potential Council service suppliers (e.g. through service commissioning and economic development initiatives aimed at capacity building and skills development); and to support local volunteering efforts – within Council services (e.g. Arts and Museums; Parks and Open Spaces) and for Council staff to use an allocated paid day's leave to volunteer in the local community.

The proposed changes regarding Council support for the VCS are described in the chart below:

VCS outcomes	Under existing provision	Under proposed provision	Main differences are
Vibrant, wide-ranging and effective VCS in the city	Promoting a collective voice for the city's VCS Sector	No service to specifically promote collaboration between VCS groups and organisations in the city and a collective voice for the VCS as a whole in the city.	VCS groups will establish collaborative partnerships on their own. There will be no single collective voice for the VCS sector. Individual VCS groups will need to take part in consultative and collaborative events that seek a collective view.
	Council promotion of cohesive/inclusive city through provision of Community Engagement Fund.	Community Engagement Fund will continue to be promoted across the sector and provided to VCS groups on successful application.	No change to Council promotion of cohesive/inclusive city to local VCS groups.
Meeting basic business needs of VCS groups and organisations	Generic VCS business support training: e.g. governance, finance, recruitment, premises management.	Generic VCS business support training.	Need will continue to be met when required by VCS groups.
Emergency and venue support to VCS groups	Council provides emergency support for VCS groups facing financial difficulties (as long as they meet VCS Urgent Support Fund criteria. Council provides paid and free space for use by VCS groups within the Council's	Current Council support for VCS groups will continue to be provided when criteria for provision are met by the VCS group.	No change to Council provision of emergency and venue support to local VCS groups.

	community venues across the city. Council provides community asset transfer of designated council venues to VCS groups for their and other local use.		
Access to VCS volunteering opportunities	Matching volunteers to volunteering activities available across the city	No service to match volunteers to activities – individual VCS groups to target volunteers for their activities	Variety of groups, organisations and agencies operate across city, promoting opportunities, recruiting and placing volunteers in a range of settings. This has gone on independently of Council-commissioned services and won't be affected by change in provision.
Promotion of VCS volunteering opportunities	Matching volunteers to volunteering activities available across the city	No service to match volunteers to activities – individual VCS groups to target volunteers for their activities	Variety of groups, organisations and agencies operate across city, promoting opportunities, recruiting and placing volunteers in a range of settings. This has gone on independently of Council-commissioned services and won't be affected by change in provision.
	Council services promoting volunteering efforts available with them (Arts & Museums; Parks & Open Spaces). Council encourage volunteering within local community: one paid day per year for all staff.	Continue to provide and promote volunteering opportunities.	No change to Council promoting volunteering opportunities within Council services. Staff will continue to have opportunity for paid volunteering leave from the Council to support local VCS groups, organisations, activities and events.

2. Equality implications/obligations

Which aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) are likely be relevant to the proposal? In this question, consider both the current service and the proposed changes.

	Is this a relevant consideration? What issues could arise?
<p>Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation How does the proposal/service ensure that there is no barrier or disproportionate impact for anyone with a particular protected characteristic</p>	<p>As set out in section 1 below, the proposal will not change how support for ensuring the basic business operating needs of the city's VCS will be met, thereby continuing the Council's commitment to supporting a vibrant, wide-ranging and effective voluntary sector in the city. However, the proposal to end the matching service between VCS groups and interested volunteers may have a negative impact on the group's operation. The proposals will apply to all VCS groups across the city, and to all the communities they serve. VCS groups do represent distinctly different protected characteristics as indicated in VAL's survey of the sector. Therefore given that the changes are applied to all groups, there is no discrimination based on protected characteristic arising from the proposals for change to VCS support.</p>
<p>Advance equality of opportunity between different groups How does the proposal/service ensure that its intended outcomes promote equality of opportunity for users? Identify inequalities faced by those with specific protected characteristic(s).</p>	<p>Section 3 illustrates the range of activity covered by the city's VCS sector and the range of protected characteristics it represents and supports. These activities through directly engaging with the communities they serve, promote equality of opportunity for their service users. The Council's range of provision of support to VCS groups as illustrated in section 1, highlights how it aims to keep the local VCS sector resilient and sustainable, providing services to the city's communities in their own right, and also in being commissioned suppliers for Council services. The Council actively promotes equality of opportunity through its own service provision and other local service providers with whom it works.</p>
<p>Foster good relations between different groups Does the service contribute to good relations or to broader community cohesion objectives? How does it achieve this aim?</p>	<p>The Council's support is for the VCS sector as a whole, which the EIA shows is diverse and covers all protected characteristics (bar marriage and civil partnership which is not relevant to the support considered in the proposal). The Council promotes an inclusive approach to service provision that promotes good relations between different groups. It is able to promote this inclusive approach through its support to the VCS sector.</p>

3. Who is affected?

Outline who could be affected, and how they could be affected by the proposal/service change. Include current service users and those who could benefit from but do not currently access the service.

Those affected are: VCS groups in Leicester; volunteers supporting VCS activities; communities who receive services from VCS groups.

How they are affected by the proposal:

VCS groups & organisations:

Some aspects of support enabling individual VCS groups to continue operating will be maintained. However, support for volunteering (matching interested volunteers to volunteering opportunities available within particular VCS groups) will no longer be provided. It will be up to individual groups to seek out alternative ways of promoting their volunteering opportunities. The support provided is generic and of benefit to all and any group requiring support in being able to continue their operations, based on their particular circumstances.

Volunteers:

There is insufficient information to clarify which VCS groups are most dependent on volunteers to deliver their services. There is a wide range of flexibility in how VCS groups operate and the basis on which they deliver local services – some do so entirely through volunteer provision, some are based on having employed members of staff providing that service, or a combination of the two. There will no longer be a service available to match volunteers to volunteering activities that interest them. They will have to seek out their own volunteering opportunities, using online resources to find out about and contact individual VCS groups about what is available. There is insufficient information available to determine which groups or types of services to the community (see below) will be affected. Variety of groups, organisations and agencies promote opportunities, recruiting and placing volunteers in a range of settings. This has gone on independently of Council-commissioned services and won't be affected by change in provision.

Communities served by city's VCS:

The 2012 State of the Sector report highlighted the range of activities provided by local VCS groups: of the sample 596 groups featured in the analysis, the top ten interests were: Social activities (282); Community Development (264); Advice (262); Health (235); Leisure (233); Children (228); Women (221); Training (208); Volunteering (9); Cultural (203). The report also captured how they identified as a group type – in other words, protected characteristics with which they associate themselves. As can be seen from the graph below, they represent a range of protected characteristics (race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, age, and sex). The largest 'identity' group is that of BME (Black Minority Ethnic) groups. This reflects the relative proportion of non-White residents in the 2011 census which is approximately 50% of the city's population. Given the number of diverse BME groups settling in the city (over 50 different ethnicities are reflected in our school census information), the significant number of BME VCS groups reflects the city's changing demography and the importance these communities place on having a community group presence. Although more BME groups are affected by the proposed changes, all other groups reflecting different protected characteristics are also affected in the same way. Therefore, these proposals do not discriminate against BME or any other group representative of a protected characteristic.

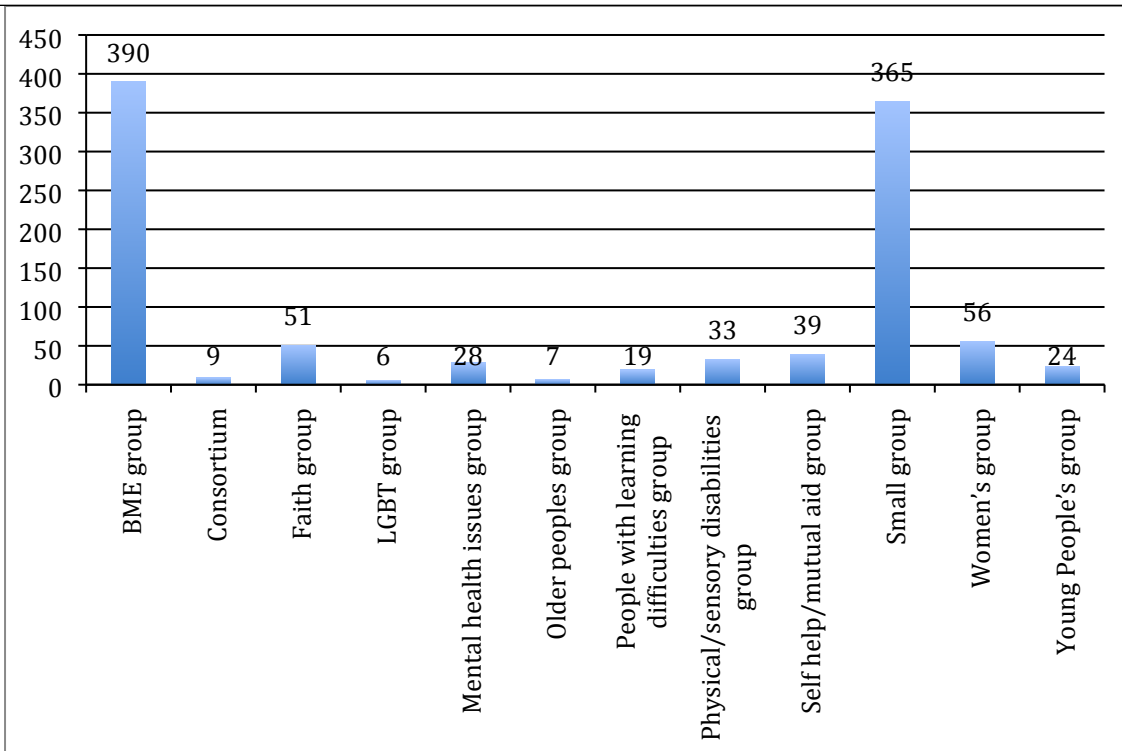


Table showing number of VCS groups/organisations that identify as a particular group type, based on 662 groups & organisations

The proposed changes will not directly affect the services these VCS group provide to the city's communities. The services that will be commissioned aim to support the resilience and sustainability of VCS groups within the city and as such the proposal seeks to indirectly positively affect the local VCS.

The proposed change to volunteering support could have an impact on the level of service all of the above groups provide to the community. However, the clear differentiation between different communities of interest, based on protected characteristic of those the VCS group serves, could be a basis for attracting those who wish to volunteer for interests with which they align themselves.

4. Information used to inform the equality impact assessment

What **data, research, or trend analysis** have you used? Describe how you have got your information and what it tells you. Are there any gaps or limitations in the information you currently hold, and how you have sought to address this, e.g. proxy data, national trends, etc.

Information on the activities of the city's VCS sector is based on VAL's 2012 State of the Sector report. Other information on support services provided to local VCS groups is based on the Council's knowledge of the sector through its historical and ongoing commissioning of VCS support and infrastructure services and its direct engagement with different VCS groups and organisations across the city. The consultation exercise featured below also informed the Council about support needs of some of the city's VCS groups and organisations. The Council's role as a statutory service provider provides it with insight as to how best to meet the diverse range of needs of the city's residents.

5. Consultation

What **consultation** have you undertaken about the proposal with current service users, potential users and other stakeholders? What did they say about:

- What is important to them regarding the current service?
- How does (or could) the service meet their needs?
- How will they be affected by the proposal? What potential impacts did they identify because of their protected characteristic(s)?
- Did they identify any potential barriers they may face in accessing services/other opportunities that meet their needs?

In considering possible future provision of support services to the city's VCS, we have sought a variety of views through a consultation on Citizen Space. An online survey, 'Voluntary and Community Sector Support Services' ran for 13 weeks (18 Nov 2016 to 10 Feb 2017). Results of that survey have informed options and recommendations in this report.

As part of this consultation exercise we have been particularly interested in finding out: how many VCS groups and organisations have accessed these services; how often VCS groups and organisations have accessed these services; how useful have VCS groups and organisations have found these services: what outcomes, if any, have been achieved as a result of the support; what future support do respondents believe the Council can give the city's VCS.

The intention was to develop a better understanding of the support services considered most valuable within the Sector and which the Council should consider retaining in some meaningful form within any future arrangements.

A summary of the consultation findings is included in the covering report. There was no conclusive view as to how the VCS sector could be best served in terms of infrastructure support.

6. Potential equality Impact

Based on your understanding of the service area, any specific evidence you may have on service users and potential service users, and the findings of any consultation you have undertaken, use the table below to explain which individuals or community groups are likely to be affected by the proposal because of their protected characteristic(s). Describe what the impact is likely to be, how significant that impact is for individual or group well-being, and what mitigating actions can be taken to reduce or remove negative impacts.

Looking at potential impacts from a different perspective, this section also asks you to consider whether any other particular groups, especially vulnerable groups, are likely to be affected by the proposal. List the relevant that may be affected, along with their likely impact, potential risks and mitigating actions that would reduce or remove any negative impacts. These groups do not have to be defined by their protected characteristic(s).

Protected characteristics	Impact of proposal: Describe the likely impact of the proposal on people because of their protected characteristic and how they may be affected. Why is this protected characteristic relevant to the proposal? How does the protected characteristic determine/shape the potential impact of the proposal?	Risk of negative impact: How likely is it that people with this protected characteristic will be negatively affected? How great will that impact be on their well-being? What will determine who will be negatively affected?	Mitigating actions: For negative impacts, what mitigating actions can be taken to reduce or remove this impact? These should be included in the action plan at the end of this EIA.
Age¹	Potential negative impact dependent on group or organisation's particular circumstances. Groups and organisations working for, with or on behalf of people identifying with protected	Potential risk dependent on group or organisation's particular circumstances. Groups and organisations working for, with or on behalf of people identifying with protected characteristic of age may become	Effective mitigating action dependent on group or organisation's particular circumstances. Support is freely available online to VCS groups and organisations. Such support can be accessed directly by the group without facilitation or mediation.

¹ Age: Indicate which age group is most affected, either specify general age group - children, young people working age people or older people or specific age bands

	<p>characteristic of age may become disconnected and no longer seek infrastructure support as a result of changes to current sources of delivery.</p> <p>These groups and organisations may not know how or where to access appropriate support.</p>	<p>less resilient, robust or sustainable.</p> <p>Activities held by these groups and organisations and services provided by them may be compromised, negatively affecting their service users who identify with this protected characteristic.</p>	<p>The proposed new provider of generic VCS business support will be commissioned to deliver appropriate information, advice and guidance, embedding good practice, which will improve the sector's efficacy, sustainability and viability. This will include regular communication with sector, referring interested parties to accessible support, including that available online. This should all contribute to mitigating risks described.</p> <p>In some matters, the Council can offer practical action (e.g. for groups and organisations requiring space to conduct meetings or business, via Transforming Neighbourhood Services and Community Asset Transfer programmes).</p> <p>Some financial assistance is available via VCS Urgent Support Fund.</p> <p>Commissioned provider will be required to demonstrate that a certain percentage of their delivery will focus on support for health-related VCS, which will mitigate any negative impact of proposal on individuals, families, communities, groups and organisations identifying with protected characteristic of age.</p> <p>Umbrella or infrastructure organisations are accessible in the city, serving particular areas of need arising from this protected characteristic (e.g. Age UK; West Indian Senior Citizens Project; age-related support activities provided via places of worship, community centres)</p>
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<p>Disability²</p>	<p>Potential negative impact dependent on group or organisation's particular circumstances.</p> <p>Groups and organisations working for, with or on behalf of people identifying with protected characteristic of age may become disconnected and no longer seek infrastructure support as a result of changes to current sources of delivery.</p> <p>These groups and organisations may not know how or where to access appropriate support.</p>	<p>Potential risk dependent on group or organisation's particular circumstances.</p> <p>Groups and organisations working for, with or on behalf of people identifying with protected characteristic of disability may lose ground in resiliency, robustness and sustainability.</p> <p>Activities held by these groups and organisations and services provided by them may be compromised, negatively affecting their service users who identify with this protected characteristic.</p>	<p>Effective mitigating action dependent on group or organisation's particular circumstances.</p> <p>Support is freely available online to VCS groups and organisations. Such support can be accessed directly by the group without facilitation or mediation.</p> <p>Provider will be commissioned to deliver appropriate information, advice and guidance, embedding good practice, which will improve the sector's efficacy, sustainability and viability. This will include regular communication with sector, referring interested parties to accessible support, including that available online. This should all contribute to mitigating risks described.</p> <p>In some matters, the Council can offer practical action (e.g. for groups and organisations requiring space to conduct meetings or business, via Transforming Neighbourhood Services and Community Asset Transfer programmes).</p> <p>Some financial assistance is available via VCS Urgent Support Fund.</p> <p>Commissioned provider will be required to demonstrate that a certain percentage of their delivery will focus on support for health-related</p>
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² Disability: if specific impairments are affected by the proposal, specify which these are. Our standard categories are on our equality monitoring form – physical impairment, sensory impairment, mental health condition, learning disability, long standing illness or health condition.

			<p>VCS, which will mitigate any negative impact of proposal on individuals, families, communities, groups and organisations identifying with protected characteristic of disability.</p> <p>Umbrella or infrastructure organisations are accessible in the city, serving particular areas of need arising from this protected characteristic (e.g. Headway; Leicestershire Centre for Integrated Living; Mosaic; Network for Change).</p>
<p>Gender Reassignment³</p>	<p>Potential negative impact dependent on group or organisation's particular circumstances.</p> <p>Groups and organisations working for, with or on behalf of people identifying with protected characteristic of age may become disconnected and no longer seek infrastructure support as a result of changes to current sources of delivery.</p> <p>These groups and organisations may not know how or where to access appropriate support.</p>	<p>Potential risk dependent on group or organisation's particular circumstances.</p> <p>Groups and organisations working for, with or on behalf of people identifying with protected characteristic of gender reassignment may lose ground in resiliency, robustness and sustainability.</p> <p>Activities held by these groups and organisations and services provided by them may be compromised, negatively affecting their service users who identify with this protected characteristic.</p>	<p>Effective mitigating action dependent on group or organisation's particular circumstances.</p> <p>Support is freely available online to VCS groups and organisations. Such support can be accessed directly by the group without facilitation or mediation.</p> <p>Provider will be commissioned to deliver appropriate information, advice and guidance, embedding good practice, which will improve the sector's efficacy, sustainability and viability. This will include regular communication with sector, referring interested parties to accessible support, including that available online. This should all contribute to mitigating risks described.</p> <p>In some matters, the Council can offer practical action (e.g. for groups and</p>

³ Gender reassignment: indicate whether the proposal has potential impact on trans men or trans women, and if so, which group is affected.

			<p>organisations requiring space to conduct meetings or business, via Transforming Neighbourhood Services and Community Asset Transfer programmes).</p> <p>Some financial assistance is available via VCS Urgent Support Fund.</p> <p>Commissioned provider will be required to demonstrate that a certain percentage of their delivery will focus on support for health-related VCS, which will mitigate any negative impact of proposal on individuals, families, communities, groups and organisations identifying with protected characteristic of gender reassignment.</p> <p>Umbrella or infrastructure organisations are accessible in the city, serving particular areas of need arising from this protected characteristic (e.g. Leicester LGBT Centre, Leicester Butterflies).</p>
Marriage and Civil Partnership	The marital status of those affected by the proposal is not considered to be relevant.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Pregnancy and Maternity	<p>Potential negative impact dependent on group or organisation's particular circumstances.</p> <p>Groups and organisations working for, with or on behalf of people identifying with protected characteristic of age may become</p>	<p>Potential risk dependent on group or organisation's particular circumstances.</p> <p>Groups and organisations working for, with or on behalf of people identifying with protected characteristic of pregnancy and maternity may lose ground in</p>	<p>Effective mitigating action dependent on group or organisation's particular circumstances.</p> <p>Support is freely available online to VCS groups and organisations. Such support can be accessed directly by the group without facilitation or mediation.</p> <p>Provider will be commissioned to deliver</p>

	<p>disconnected and no longer seek infrastructure support as a result of changes to current sources of delivery.</p> <p>These groups and organisations may not know how or where to access appropriate support.</p>	<p>resiliency, robustness and sustainability.</p> <p>Activities held by these groups and organisations and services provided by them may be compromised, negatively affecting their service users who identify with this protected characteristic.</p>	<p>appropriate information, advice and guidance, embedding good practice, which will improve the sector's efficacy, sustainability and viability. This will include regular communication with sector, referring interested parties to accessible support, including that available online. This should all contribute to mitigating risks described.</p> <p>In some matters, the Council can offer practical action (e.g. for groups and organisations requiring space to conduct meetings or business, via Transforming Neighbourhood Services and Community Asset Transfer programmes).</p> <p>Some financial assistance is available via VCS Urgent Support Fund.</p> <p>Commissioned provider will be required to demonstrate that a certain percentage of their delivery will focus on support for health-related VCS, which will mitigate any negative impact of proposal on individuals, families, communities, groups and organisations identifying with protected characteristic of pregnancy and maternity</p> <p>Umbrella or infrastructure organisations are accessible in the city, serving particular areas of need arising from this protected characteristic (e.g. Leicester Mamas; National Childbirth Trust).</p>
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<p>Race⁴</p>	<p>Potential negative impact dependent on group or organisation's particular circumstances.</p> <p>Groups and organisations working for, with or on behalf of people identifying with protected characteristic of age may become disconnected and no longer seek infrastructure support as a result of changes to current sources of delivery.</p> <p>These groups and organisations may not know how or where to access appropriate support.</p>	<p>Potential risk dependent on group or organisation's particular circumstances.</p> <p>Groups and organisations working for, with or on behalf of people identifying with protected characteristic of gender reassignment may lose ground in resiliency, robustness and sustainability.</p> <p>Activities held by these groups and organisations and services provided by them may be compromised, negatively affecting their service users who identify with this protected characteristic.</p>	<p>Effective mitigating action dependent on group or organisation's particular circumstances.</p> <p>Support is freely available online to VCS groups and organisations. Such support can be accessed directly by the group without facilitation or mediation.</p> <p>Provider will be commissioned to deliver appropriate information, advice and guidance, embedding good practice, which will improve the sector's efficacy, sustainability and viability. This will include regular communication with sector, referring interested parties to accessible support, including that available online. This should all contribute to mitigating risks described.</p> <p>In some matters, the Council can offer practical action (e.g. for groups and organisations requiring space to conduct meetings or business, via Transforming Neighbourhood Services and Community Asset Transfer programmes).</p> <p>Some financial assistance is available via VCS Urgent Support Fund.</p> <p>Umbrella or infrastructure organisations are accessible in the city, serving particular areas</p>
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⁴ Race: given the city's racial diversity it is useful that we collect information on which racial groups are affected by the proposal. Our equalities monitoring form follows ONS general census categories and uses broad categories in the first instance with the opportunity to identify more specific racial groups such as Gypsies/Travellers. Use the most relevant classification for the proposal.

			of need arising from this protected characteristic (e.g. Leicestershire Aids Support Service; Somali Development Services; The Race Equality Centre).
Religion or Belief ⁵	<p>Potential negative impact dependent on group or organisation's particular circumstances.</p> <p>Groups and organisations working for, with or on behalf of people identifying with protected characteristic of age may become disconnected and no longer seek infrastructure support as a result of changes to current sources of delivery.</p> <p>These groups and organisations may not know how or where to access appropriate support.</p>	<p>Potential risk dependent on group or organisation's particular circumstances.</p> <p>Groups and organisations working for, with or on behalf of people identifying with protected characteristic of religion or belief may lose ground in resiliency, robustness and sustainability.</p> <p>Activities held by these groups and organisations and services provided by them may be compromised, negatively affecting their service users who identify with this protected characteristic.</p>	<p>Effective mitigating action dependent on group or organisation's particular circumstances.</p> <p>Support is freely available online to VCS groups and organisations. Such support can be accessed directly by the group without facilitation or mediation.</p> <p>Provider will be commissioned to deliver appropriate information, advice and guidance, embedding good practice, which will improve the sector's efficacy, sustainability and viability. This will include regular communication with sector, referring interested parties to accessible support, including that available online. This should all contribute to mitigating risks described.</p> <p>In some matters, the Council can offer practical action (e.g. for groups and organisations requiring space to conduct meetings or business, via Transforming Neighbourhood Services and Community Asset Transfer programmes).</p>

⁵ Religion or Belief: If specific religious or faith groups are affected by the proposal, our equalities monitoring form sets out categories reflective of the city's population. Given the diversity of the city there is always scope to include any group that is not listed.

			<p>Some financial assistance is available via VCS Urgent Support Fund.</p> <p>Umbrella or infrastructure organisations are accessible in the city, serving particular areas of need arising from this protected characteristic (e.g. Churches Together in Leicestershire; Federation of Muslim Organisations; Leicester Council of Faiths; Muslim Burial Council; St Philip's Centre).</p>
Sex⁶	<p>Potential negative impact dependent on group or organisation's particular circumstances.</p> <p>Groups and organisations working for, with or on behalf of people identifying with protected characteristic of age may become disconnected and no longer seek infrastructure support as a result of changes to current sources of delivery.</p> <p>These groups and organisations may not know how or where to access appropriate support.</p>	<p>Potential risk dependent on group or organisation's particular circumstances.</p> <p>Groups and organisations working for, with or on behalf of people identifying with protected characteristic of gender reassignment may lose ground in resiliency, robustness and sustainability.</p> <p>Activities held by these groups and organisations and services provided by them may be compromised, negatively affecting their service users who identify with this protected characteristic.</p>	<p>Effective mitigating action dependent on group or organisation's particular circumstances.</p> <p>Support is freely available online to VCS groups and organisations. Such support can be accessed directly by the group without facilitation or mediation.</p> <p>Provider will be commissioned to deliver appropriate information, advice and guidance, embedding good practice, which will improve the sector's efficacy, sustainability and viability. This will include regular communication with sector, referring interested parties to accessible support, including that available online. This should all contribute to mitigating risks described.</p> <p>In some matters, the Council can offer practical action (e.g. for groups and organisations requiring space to conduct</p>

⁶ Sex: Indicate whether this has potential impact on either males or females

			<p>meetings or business, via Transforming Neighbourhood Services and Community Asset Transfer programmes).</p> <p>Some financial assistance is available via VCS Urgent Support Fund.</p> <p>Commissioned provider will be required to demonstrate that a certain percentage of their delivery will focus on support for health-related VCS, which will mitigate any negative impact of proposal on individuals, families, communities, groups and organisations identifying with protected characteristic of sex.</p>
<p>Sexual Orientation⁷</p>	<p>Potential negative impact dependent on group or organisation's particular circumstances.</p> <p>Groups and organisations working for, with or on behalf of people identifying with protected characteristic of age may become disconnected and no longer seek infrastructure support as a result of changes to current sources of delivery.</p> <p>These groups and organisations</p>	<p>Potential risk dependent on group or organisation's particular circumstances.</p> <p>Groups and organisations working for, with or on behalf of people identifying with protected characteristic of gender reassignment may lose ground in resiliency, robustness and sustainability.</p> <p>Activities held by these groups and organisations and services provided by them may be</p>	<p>Effective mitigating action dependent on group or organisation's particular circumstances.</p> <p>Support is freely available online to VCS groups and organisations. Such support can be accessed directly by the group without facilitation or mediation.</p> <p>Provider will be commissioned to deliver appropriate information, advice and guidance, embedding good practice, which will improve the sector's efficacy, sustainability and viability. This will include regular communication with sector, referring interested parties to accessible support, including that</p>

⁷ Sexual Orientation: It is important to remember when considering the potential impact of the proposal on LGBT communities, that they are each separate communities with differing needs. Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people should be considered separately and not as one group. The gender reassignment category above considers the needs of trans men and trans women.

	<p>may not know how or where to access appropriate support.</p>	<p>compromised, negatively affecting their service users who identify with this protected characteristic.</p>	<p>available online. This should all contribute to mitigating risks described.</p> <p>In some matters, the Council can offer practical action (e.g. for groups and organisations requiring space to conduct meetings or business, via Transforming Neighbourhood Services and Community Asset Transfer programmes).</p> <p>Some financial assistance is available via VCS Urgent Support Fund.</p> <p>Commissioned provider will be required to demonstrate that a certain percentage of their delivery will focus on support for health-related VCS, which will mitigate any negative impact of proposal on individuals, families, communities, groups and organisations identifying with protected characteristic of sexual orientation</p> <p>Umbrella or infrastructure organisations are accessible in the city, serving particular areas of need arising from this protected characteristic (e.g. Leicester LGBT Centre; Leicestershire Aids Support Service; Trade Sexual Health).</p>
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Summarise why the protected characteristics you have commented on, are relevant to the proposal?

This impact assessment comments on the protected characteristics, reflects current service users and indicate changes to anticipated service users within these protected characteristics, changes in population which will be increase diversity.

Summarise why the protected characteristics you have not commented on, are not relevant to the proposal?

See above.

7. Monitoring Impact

You will need to ensure that monitoring systems are established to check for impact on the protected characteristics and human rights after the decision has been implemented. Describe the systems which are set up to:

- monitor impact (positive and negative, intended and unintended) for different groups
- monitor barriers for different groups
- enable open feedback and suggestions from different communities
- ensure that the EIA action plan (below) is delivered.

8. EIA action plan

Please list all the equality objectives, actions and targets that result from this Assessment (continue on separate sheets as necessary). These now need to be included in the relevant service plan for mainstreaming and performance management purposes.

Equality Outcome	Action	Officer Responsible	Completion date
Identify worsening situations for affected parties as a result of our scheme.	Analyse the monitoring information to see if the proposals have had an impact on any particular group	George Ballentyne	Continuous monitoring through ongoing discussions with affected parties.