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VCS engagement in the development of Children and Young People's Plans 2006/07: current status and good practice

Author: Sue Wade, Community Action Hampshire

Researchers: Andrew Brooker, Philip Collins, Elizabeth Slinger, Laura Walker

This report is produced by VCS Engage, a programme funded by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) to strengthen the engagement of the voluntary and community sector (VCS) in delivering the Every Child Matters: Change for Children agenda. It is steered by a consortium of infrastructure and delivery organisations working in the children, young people and families (voluntary and community) sector, and is supported by a large number of individual agencies who are committed to working as part of the programme.

Members of the consortium are:

- National Children's Bureau (NCB)
- National Council of Voluntary Child Care Organisations (NCVCCO)
- National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA)
- National Council for Voluntary Youth Services (NCVYS)
- Parenting UK
- Family Welfare Association (FWA)
- NCH

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Introduction

This study was commissioned by VCS Engage, a programme funded by DCSF to strengthen the engagement of the voluntary and community sector (VCS) in the Every Child Matters: Change for Children agenda. At the start of 2007 the programme carried out a range of studies to establish the baseline position of the VCS in terms of skills, knowledge and local authority (LA) engagement. This particular study focuses on the current status of VCS involvement in Children and Young People's Plans (CYPPs).

The groups that are part of the VCS vary greatly in size, capacity, specialism and nature. Current arrangements for engaging the VCS in children's trusts and partnerships also vary, from some children's trusts that support a local infrastructure to those where engagement is sporadic and uncoordinated. This is a time of significant change within the children, young people and families sector: many voluntary and community sector organisations are finding it hard to engage effectively in the development of Children and Young People's Plans: many local authorities and children's trusts are also finding it difficult to participate in the VCS, and many VCS agencies are concerned as to whether services will continue to be contracted to the VCS in the future.

Headline messages from the baseline study

Strengths

1. There was good progress on the representation of the VCS at most levels in partnership structures, particularly at the strategic partnership level where 80 per cent of CYPPs referred to the VCS at this level.
2. There was good progress from the VCS on protocols for representation, accountability and communication within the VCS.
3. The qualitative study produced some examples of good engagement practice, but a number of the promising areas identified in the desktop review had not progressed beyond the aspiration stage in the CYPP.
4. Even where good engagement was evident, development was slow and uneven, taking more than 12 to 18 months.
5. There were some examples of longer term (three-year) funding arrangements for VCS network (infrastructure) support, and these areas reported greater stability and capacity to develop effective engagement processes.

Challenges

1. The desktop review of CYPPs found that as the CYPP progressed from describing involvement in producing the plan, to the consultation processes, to describing governance mechanisms, to commissioning plans, to schools' commissioning arrangements and finally to mention of the Compact (the agreement between government and the VCS to improve their relationship for mutual advantage and community gain), there was diminishing involvement by the VCS.
2. There were considerable concerns about resilience and the sustainability of the areas of good practice. The majority of identified areas of good practice seemed to a large extent to be reliant on individual expertise and effort from a key person within either the local authority or the VCS network.
3. There was little evidence of mainstream LA funding to support the VCS infrastructure, and the VCS networks were still reliant on short-term government funding programmes.
4. Many CYPPs assumed that the role of the VCS was only that of a provider and they did not include references to VCS knowledge, expertise and access to local communities that could contribute to more effective strategic planning and assessment of need.
5. In the context of the CYPPs now being over a year old, there was little evidence of progress on commissioning. Few LAs had yet implemented commissioning structures and processes, and where these were beginning to be developed, there were very few examples of VCS involvement. Reference to the Compact was missing in 80 per cent of CYPPs.
6. Workforce development was mentioned in over 45 per cent of CYPPs but there was little evidence of changes to LA workforce development plans. Early Years sub-sector workforce development seemed more advanced than other sub-sectors.
7. There was little evidence of the development of partnerships or consortium arrangements for smaller VCS organisations.
8. Regional and larger local VCS were the predominant contributors of expertise and staff to VCS networks and to representation roles. Some tension was anticipated in the VCS networks between the regional and larger VCS and the smaller local organisations, particularly when recommissioning occurs.

Methodology

The baseline study incorporated a desktop review of one-third of CYPPs published by local authorities in England in November 2006. It used an assessment template that was developed following a literature review of research evidence of effective engagement, a discussion with consortium members and two pilot reviews using the template. The desktop review was complemented by a telephone survey of 23 senior executives from VCS networks, regional government offices and LAs, using a semi-structured questionnaire to obtain qualitative information.

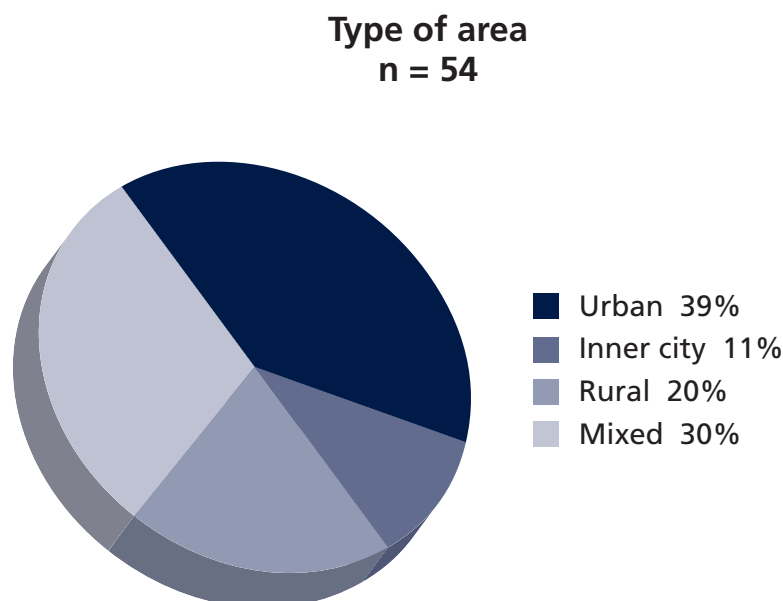
Baseline survey

Fifty-four CYPPs were selected for the baseline survey (see Appendix 1). The criteria for selection included being a local authority engaged in the current or previous wave of Local Area Agreements (LAAs), a representative sample of government regions, a mix of urban and rural authorities (see figure 1), and a mix of types of local authority: unitary, county, metropolitan and London borough (see figure 2). In addition, the sample was weighted to ensure adequate coverage of areas with high scores on the multiple needs index and higher proportions of residents from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities. Twenty per cent of the sample included local authorities already identified as likely to produce good practice examples of VCS engagement (evidence taken from Beacon status, pathfinders, Joint Area Reviews (JARs) and nominations from Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) networks).

Desktop review

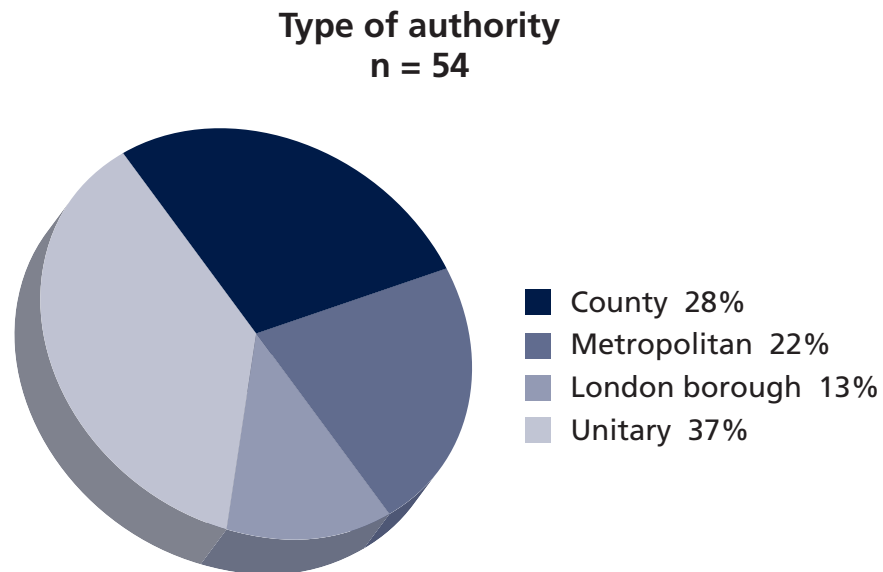
A review template was developed and tested on two CYPPs before being administered by a team of four researchers on the 54 CYPPs (see Appendix 2). Consistency of assessment between the researchers was maintained by an initial training seminar, by joint assessment of the pilot template, and by review sessions at

Figure 1



n = the total number of local authorities surveyed

Figure 2



n = the total number of authorities surveyed

the halfway and final points in the desktop survey phase. The desktop review results were cross-checked with LAAs' description of VCS engagement and, where they existed, with JARs' findings on VCS engagement.

The review questions were grouped around four themes. The first group of questions investigated the extent of VCS involvement in the production of the CYPP in:

- the drafting of the plan
- consultation about the needs analysis and priorities for the plan
- and accessing communities for their views.

The second group of questions investigated the extent of VCS participation in the new structural arrangements:

- governance and strategic bodies
- commissioning groups
- outcomes monitoring
- in delivery groups.

An important additional aspect of this group of questions was to discover evidence of any work that was planned to assist the VCS to engage at these different levels.

The third theme related to the development of the VCS infrastructure, including:

- communication and representation issues
- workforce development
- and good practice standards.

Within this theme, an assessment was made about the extent of the understanding within the CYPPs of the complexities of the VCS environment and the difficulties the VCS had in engaging with the local authorities' planning environment. VCS environment included size, range and sub-sector issues, and the local authorities' planning environment included linkages to the LAA, Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs), Community Safety Plans and Health Service National Framework strategies.

The fourth group of questions looked at commissioning, working down from general questions to specific areas of commissioning:

- evidence of VCS involvement in commissioning strategies
- existence of commissioning plans
- acknowledgement of extended school and children's centre commissioning issues for the VCS
- evidence of decommissioning
- transition arrangements for funding and delivery
- and mention of the Compact.

The desktop review used the content of the CYPPs to assess the engagement of the VCS. This produced several difficulties for the review. CYPPs are not written to a standard format and DfES guidance* gives LAs significant discretion to reflect local requirements in the type of plan they produce. Some are public facing documents written to describe strategy to local communities, while others are detailed agency-planning documents designed with future performance management and accountability processes in mind.

Among the CYPPs that were impressive and accessible public documents were the Tower Hamlets and Blackburn with Darwen CYPPs. However, the desktop review results for this type of CYPP produced a high number of 'unclear' answers, due to a lack of detail in the CYPP that was relevant to the review. Where this result was attributable to the style of the CYPP, an additional assessment using the LAA documentation and the JAR, where one existed, was completed. The results shown in Appendix 1 are the unaltered scores based solely on the desktop review.

Many CYPPs contained references to local infrastructure groups, and local organisations using terminology that may be understandable to local agencies but not to those outside the local professional agency networks. Free text cells within the template were used to record areas of practice that seemed promising but, due to unfamiliar terminology, were unclear. These were then investigated during the telephone interview phase of the baseline study. Some of these results therefore changed from an 'unclear' result on the desktop review to an identified area of good practice in the final assessment. Durham's VCS infrastructure network, the 'Community of Interest', is an example of this change in assessment as the baseline study progressed. Initially it was not clear what 'Community of Interest' meant and until the telephone survey, the existence of an effective network structure was assessed as 'unclear'.

Appendix 3 contains the results of the desktop review of the 54 CYPPs in the sample.

The desktop review results also were analysed by type of local authority to examine possible differences between the types of authority (see Appendices 5 and 6). Sample numbers are low and the differences found therefore are tentative conclusions.

Telephone survey

In order to complement the desktop review, a telephone survey using a semi-structured questionnaire was undertaken of a selection of the 54 LAs whose CYPPs had undergone a desktop review. The telephone survey produced qualitative material that was able to confirm or reject the initial assessment made of the CYPP in the desktop review. Some LAs, whose CYPP appeared to indicate good practice, were discounted by the telephone survey, while others, where elements of the CYPP were unclear, were able to demonstrate good practice.

Eighteen local authority areas and four regional government offices were included in the telephone sample and 23 interviews were conducted. Three local authority areas

* DfES rules and guidance are now being taken forward by DCSF.

and three government offices did not respond to the request for interviews. The sample was selected using evidence from the CYPP review that indicated a promising area for good practice in VCS engagement, evidence from JAR and LAA, and from recommendations by Councils for Voluntary Service (CVS), following a national request for nominations of their LAs.

Questions and themes

The telephone survey replicated the themes of the desktop review, but developed them in more depth, examining in turn VCS engagement in:

- the production of the plan,
- the strategic and delivery structures,
- infrastructure development,
- commissioning arrangements.

Detailed questions were asked about VCS networks and funding streams, VCS representation protocols, workforce development and commissioning plans. The size and variety of VCS organisations in the area and any particular local context were discussed.

Findings

There were diminishing returns as the review moved from examining the involvement of the VCS in constructing the plan and the VCS place in the structure – to planned involvement in work strands – to actual resources into VCS infrastructure, and actual involvement in commissioning.

In general, there were differences in progress towards effective VCS engagement by the VCS sub-sectors, with Early Years representing the most developed sub-sector, youth work less developed, and schools and intensive (residential) sectors least developed.

Metropolitan authorities' results were better than the other types of authorities and showed particularly high comparative scores in the questions on assistance to the VCS in engagement and infrastructure, and in the commissioning questions. The County authorities had high scores on the involvement of the VCS in strategic and governance structures but scored lowest on commissioning questions.

Engagement in producing the plan

The first theme area produced the highest number of 'unclear results' (shown in white in Appendix 1) due to the responses to the questions on VCS involvement in drafting the plan and on accessing communities for their views. The supplementary telephone interviews supported the view that, for these two questions, 'unclear' is likely to mean that the VCS became involved in those particular parts of producing the plan late in the process, sometimes after overcoming what were described as 'significant barriers'.

'We had to work hard to get our expertise in accessing communities understood, as there had been some reliance on commercial polling and surveys.'

VCS network senior manager

Strengths

- The VCS was mentioned specifically as partners in more than 80 per cent of CYPPs.

'We had to fight pretty hard to get our views across. We were consulted after the first draft. We are pleased with the result but the beginning was difficult, mainly I think because it was driven by a fairly tight timetable.'

VCS development officer

Challenges

- The VCS's role in many plans was assumed to be as a provider only, with no acknowledgement of expertise in assessing need or in helping to determine priorities.
- The VCS was not used to access communities' views in 20 per cent of CYPPs and their role in accessing views was unclear in a further 60 per cent.

VCS engagement in the new structures

The second theme area has the highest number of positive results (shown in dark blue in Appendix 3). The telephone interviews confirmed this as an area showing very good progress.

Strengths

- VCS representation at the strategic partnership board level was mentioned in just under 80 per cent of CYPPs.
- Just under 30 per cent of CYPPs mentioned representation of the VCS at all levels in structures (strategic partnership boards, commissioning bodies, delivery groups and outcomes monitoring groups).
- Sixty-five per cent of plans mentioned VCS representation in the context of delivery groups.
- In the identified areas of good practice, there was good progress on representation of the VCS at all levels in structures; and VCS representation protocols, communication and accountability agreements were all strong examples of good practice in a number of those areas.

Challenges

- Less than 40 per cent mentioned VCS representation in the context of commissioning groups.
- There was little evidence of progress on concrete resources to increase the capacity of the VCS to represent itself, in particular very few examples of 'backfill (hidden costs) and allowance' payments to encourage smaller VCS into representation tasks, and only two examples of meetings structures being changed to align to the needs of smaller VCS.
- There was some evidence of tensions between the different sizes of VCS with larger local organisations tending to be more active in representative functions.

VCS infrastructure

The third theme produced lower positive results and contained the highest number of 'no' answers (shown as pale blue in Appendix 3) with fewer 'unclear' answers. The two exceptions to this general trend were the questions on communication to and between the VCS, and on workforce development. The supplementary telephone interviews identified the workforce development result as an anomaly, possibly created by the DfES guidance[†] on the CYPP, which gave some prominence to workforce development. Many of the CYPPs contained specific statements on workforce development but these were subsequently found to be aspirational in many LAs, with very little progress made since the plans were written. The higher positive results on communication seem to represent the immediate successes of the VCS networks.

Strengths

- Most frequently occurring good practice was found in the area of effective VCS networks at LA area level and in strong constructive relationships with LAs.
- The identified areas of good practice had created dedicated roles and expertise to develop and sustain the VCS networks.
- The identified areas of good practice included LA and other partners' support for the infrastructure of VCS networks.
- There were some isolated areas of good practice in workforce development, with the VCS participating in training needs assessments (TNA) jointly with LAs.

Challenges

- Just over 20 per cent of plans showed evidence of assistance to the VCS to understand Every Child Matters.
- The majority of VCS networks were reliant on shorter term national funding streams, for example, Workforce Development Council PVI funding, Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, Children Fund (CF).

[†] DfES rules and guidance are now being taken forward by DCSF.

- Many of the good practice networks were at risk through resilience issues, with concerns about sustainability, particularly the lack of longer term LA mainstream funding and reliance on individual expertise.
- Small and community local VCS seem to be reliant in some areas on CF arrangements to engage and there was some concern about their sustainability when CF funding ends.
- Workforce development plans were usually limited to VCS access to established LA training. There was little evidence of changes to LA delivery of training to reflect the different patterns of employment in the VCS, particularly the needs of part-time staff and volunteers.

Commissioning issues

The commissioning section of the review produced the lowest positive responses, both in the desktop review and the telephone survey.

Strengths

- None were identified from the CYPPs, but some isolated examples were identified in the good practice areas.

Challenges

- Just over 20 per cent of plans mentioned joint commissioning arrangements and the most quoted partners were Health Service agencies. The telephone survey confirmed this, with the majority of areas not yet having developed commissioning plans. There were few examples of VCS involvement.
- Less than 15 per cent of plans showed evidence of support to the VCS to engage with extended schools.
- The Compact was mentioned in less than 20 per cent of CYPPs.
- A number of the promising areas identified in the CYPP desktop review had not yet been implemented.

'Putting effort into having an effective VCS network is only worthwhile if eventually we can see some positive changes happening in the relationship between the local authority and the network.'

CVS representative

- The majority of VCS representatives generally seemed to be tolerant of the slow progress, but many LAs were focused on internal restructuring and on Health Service partnerships. Process and structures for commissioning, rather than outcomes, featured in the LA interview responses. Timescales for real change were pessimistic, with two years as the mean answer when VCS representatives were pressed to estimate the timescale for commissioning changes.
- Some longer established networks were not seeing significant changes in local authority behaviour, particularly concerning commissioning. Those networks were consequently being self-evaluated for both effectiveness and value for money from the VCS perspective.
- There were only two examples of the development of VCS into consortia or the restructuring of local VCS to reflect new market opportunities.
- There was little evidence that local VCS organisations were positioning themselves to be mainstream providers, but several VCS network representatives reported anxiety within their networks about national and regional VCS ambitions.

'Delegation to second tier (assistant directors or heads of service) is appropriate and the size of authority is irrelevant. What matters is that it is somebody who has responsibility for partnership effectiveness and authority at high level within the organisation. It's the level and specific nature of the role that is critical to success. The DCS has the ultimate authority for engagement of all partners and has to ensure that VCS engagement is taking place.'

Director of Children's Services

Structural and accountability issues

Within both the LA and the VCS structures, responsibility for VCS engagement had been delegated below chief executive or Director of Children's Services (DCS) level. In LAs, the area of work usually had been delegated to Assistant Director Children and Families, or Head of Service, or Head of Planning and Resources. These were typically second-tier posts with sufficient authority to deliver change and resource decisions.

Within the VCS umbrella organisations (whose roles span social care as well as children, young people and education sectors as well as community development), engagement with Every Child Matters was often delegated to youth, children and families sections or to the Children Fund strand (where CF was located in the CVS). The VCS organisations were generally small and had flat management structures. Responsibility and expertise frequently rested with a single person, often the development officer. Several of the identified areas of good practice had larger teams within the VCS umbrella organisation responsible for the VCS network, or had a single expert at a higher level in the VCS umbrella organisation, but this was not a consistent finding.

Within regional government offices, delegation for VCS engagement in children's services also seemed to have occurred below the level of Director, Children and Learners (DCL). VCS engagement was placed more generally within the context of work being undertaken with LAs on their LAAs, which ensured that conversations were focused more on adult social care, drugs and alcohol, and on community safety work streams.

'The general direction of government scrutiny is towards self-assessment and peer review, not detailed performance management by government. The government office (GO) role and relationship with LAs requires clarity in decisions about which areas should attract priority attention. We would need a clear directive from DfES if performance management of VCS engagement was required. What would be helpful would be more clarity about what constitutes effective VCS engagement. The use of a small amount of resource to provide material that could form the basis of questions when GO are in regular contact with a DCS or other Chief Execs of children's organisations would be a productive approach.'

Deputy DCL

Areas of good practice

The desktop review and the telephone survey identified 11 LA areas, from the sample of 54, where elements of good practice in the engagement of the VCS can be demonstrated. Not all the elements are present in each LA area. Appendix 4 lists the elements of good practice compared to the number of LA areas in which good practice was identified. A more detailed description of the examples of good practice in those LA areas is given in Appendix 7.

The examples of good practice can be grouped into six themes:

Networks

Nine of the 11 good practice areas demonstrated strong networks for the VCS in the children, young people and families sector. These networks were often part of the CVS network but some were independent. The networks accommodated a large number of VCS organisations working in their area and delivering services to children, young people and families. Regional, larger local and smaller local VCS were represented, although larger local organisations seemed to be the more dominant participants in many of the networks.

Durham VCS Community of Interest Group:
50 per cent of the role of the Partnership Development Officer in the LA (funded by the LA, the PCT and district councils) is dedicated to servicing Durham's Community of Interest network.

The networks reflected local structures and, particularly, historic arrangements that had been adapted to the changing needs of the sector. The sources of funding streams were an important contributing factor to the type of structure and to its stability. While the majority of VCS networks were reliant on shorter term national funding streams (for example, the Workforce Development Fund, Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, Children Fund), several networks had secured longer term funding from the LA or joint funding from various sources, including the LA, Connexions, Health Service Primary Care Trusts (PCTs), district councils, and the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) or the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). In some cases, LA support took the form of staff seconded into the networks or support in kind. There were also several examples of LA funding for staff from the VCS to be seconded into LA policy and planning teams.

Several of the VCS networks in county or larger metropolitan areas were beginning to develop subsidiary networks at a more local or sub-sector level, to reflect the LA's development of very local children's services planning structures.

Representation

The VCS networks had all developed processes to ensure that representation on the various children's partnership bodies was effective and accountable to the network members. Some had developed appointment procedures, including role descriptions and accountability agreements and, in some instances, formal election processes. All the networks were alert to the conflict-of-interest issues inherent in the representation role. The networks were also responsible for well-developed

communication and information systems that worked both to inform VCS organisations about LA children's services issues but also served as an effective route for consultation and lobbying of the LA by the VCS.

Nottingham's Community Network and its Provider Reference Group have a formal recruitment system for representatives.

Bradford's Voluntary Sector Network has a written protocol for representation and feedback.

LA support for VCS infrastructure

Five of the 11 good practice areas were receiving LA mainstream support for their network infrastructure. Others were receiving support via other funding streams, often short-term government grants. LAs reported significant benefits from effective networks, particularly in reducing communication and consultation costs. The baseline study has found a consistent pattern of the absence of LA mainstream funding for networks. The examples of good practice identified in this baseline study are either where LAs have committed their own resources to the networks (in the form of jointly funded posts, seconded staff or direct mainstream funding) or where other sources of funding are currently supporting the network and the VCS are hopeful of LA support in the future. Several networks had negotiated funding from the LA to VCS representatives for either attendance or travel costs. Several LAs reported working to align and reduce meetings in order to reduce demands on VCS representatives.

London Borough of Richmond on Thames fund 40 per cent of the CVS Children's Project Manager post in order to develop VCS engagement.

Commissioning

The baseline study found few examples of changes in commissioning yet, with most LAs still in the early stages of a process to produce commissioning plans, and the majority describing joint commissioning between LAs and PCTs but not yet engaging the VCS. The small number of good practice examples identified includes LA areas that have changed commissioning arrangements and others where engagement with the VCS has been real and active.

Tower Hamlets Youth Services have been recommissioned by London Borough of Tower Hamlets, outsourced, and awarded to several consortia, including VCS organisations.

Workforce development

The good practice examples in workforce development highlighted in this study are those where practice has developed beyond the standard description in CYPPs of access to LA training courses. Active involvement of the VCS in assessing and prioritising training needs, as well as input as to how the training is delivered, are the key characteristics of the good practice examples identified. In addition, good practice includes LA training delivery changes to reflect the different employment patterns of VCS, including more part-time staff and volunteers.

Blackburn CVS has received all of the Workforce Development Council PVI funding from the LA and are undertaking a training needs analysis and a mapping exercise.

Smaller and community based VCS engagement

Five of the 11 good practice areas demonstrated a variety of approaches to engage smaller local and community VCS organisations. These approaches ranged from trying to reduce meetings and align meetings with the time requirements of smaller VCS organisations, to LA funding representatives in the form of backfill payments and travel expenses, and encouraging consortia of smaller VCS to become more effective in the commissioning processes. A number of these good practice areas were actively engaged with BME community groups and one area had a specific post identified in partnership with the local Race Equality Council (REC).

Nottingham CVS has arranged training workshops for smaller VCS organisations divided by sub-sector (example, under fives, family support, drugs and alcohol services), with the purpose of encouraging natural allies within the VCS.

Conclusions/discussion

- The telephone survey was more accurate than the desktop review in assessing the direction of VCS engagement, leading to the conclusion that future assessments to ascertain improvements in VCS engagement will need to combine both a quantitative assessment and a qualitative assessment to be effective.
- Although there was a general agreement among VCS organisations about what constituted good practice in VCS engagement, GOs and some LAs reported a need for more specific headline guidance. However, the example of workforce development demonstrates the potential disadvantages of a 'headline' guidance approach. The evidence from the desktop review of CYPPs indicated good progress in the engagement of VCS in workforce development. A contributory factor may have been workforce development featuring prominently on the DfES website guidance on CYPPs. However, the qualitative telephone survey produced a less promising assessment, with the finding of very little progress by most LAs. This led to a conclusion that the CYPPs can reflect 'headline' guidance without turning this into action.

Performance management frameworks, where they existed, focused appropriately on outcomes for children and young people. It may be important to include some output indicators for VCS engagement in order to ensure that outcome targets are related to VCS engagement. It also may be useful to develop specific questions in the form of a checklist for GO DCLs, which enables them to identify or stimulate good practice in VCS engagement within Children's Services during their contacts and conversations with Connexions chief executives, Youth Service principal officers and DCS.

- The areas of good practice that were found seemed isolated and there were no general indications of progress towards these standards by other LAs in the sample. The critical success factors in the good practice areas seemed to be:
 - the existence of a role concentrating on VCS engagement, located in either the LA or VCS, and
 - occupied by a person with expertise in the development of networks and with good knowledge of strategic commissioning issues, and
 - the person having developed trust and influence in both the VCS and LA structures.
- This identification of critical success factors may lead to two further conclusions:
 - that those areas where good practice has been identified are at risk if the role or person changes, and that investment to ensure sustainability needs to be associated with structural solutions, while continuing to allow creativity and expertise to flourish
 - that a promising approach to improve VCS engagement in other LA areas would be to identify critical posts, where training and coaching to improve expertise and influence may lead to successful outcomes.

Findings – critical factors in the good practice areas:

- mainstream LA funding for VCS network support
- LA support for VCS representation through payments and/or meeting alignments
- accountability and communication protocols for VCS representation
- workforce development plans actively include VCS at the levels of training needs analysis, prioritisation and delivery of training
- work on realignment of VCS organisations, including consortia approaches for smaller VCS
- active identification of services that could be provided by the VCS
- concepts of a managed market at strategic commissioning level
- LA in-house services unit costed and examined for commissioning
- balance between stability and change to create effective services
- realistic assessments of where high-risk work and therefore intensive accountability processes preclude cost-effective re-providing
- three-year contracts and adherence to the Compact.

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VCS Engage
8 Wakley Street
London EC1V

Tel: 020 7843 6356
Email: info@vcsengage.org.uk
Web: www.vcsengage.org.uk



Appendix 1

CYPP sample

Barnsley	Kirklees
Birmingham City	Leicestershire
Blackburn	Luton
Blackpool	Manchester
Bournemouth	Medway
Bradford	Newnham
Brent	North Somerset
Brighton & Hove	North Yorkshire
Calderdale	Northamptonshire
Cambridgeshire	Nottingham City
Coventry	Peterborough
Croydon	Richmond on Thames
Cumbria	Rutland
Derby	S Gloucestershire
Derbyshire	Sandwell
Devon	Staffordshire
Doncaster	Stockport
Dorset	Stockton on Tees
Durham County	Stoke on Trent
East Riding Yorks	Suffolk
Enfield	Sunderland
Essex	Telford and Wrekin
Gateshead	Tower Hamlets
Hackney	Wakefield
Herefordshire	West Sussex
Hounslow	Wigan
Isle of Wight	Wirral

Telephone survey sample

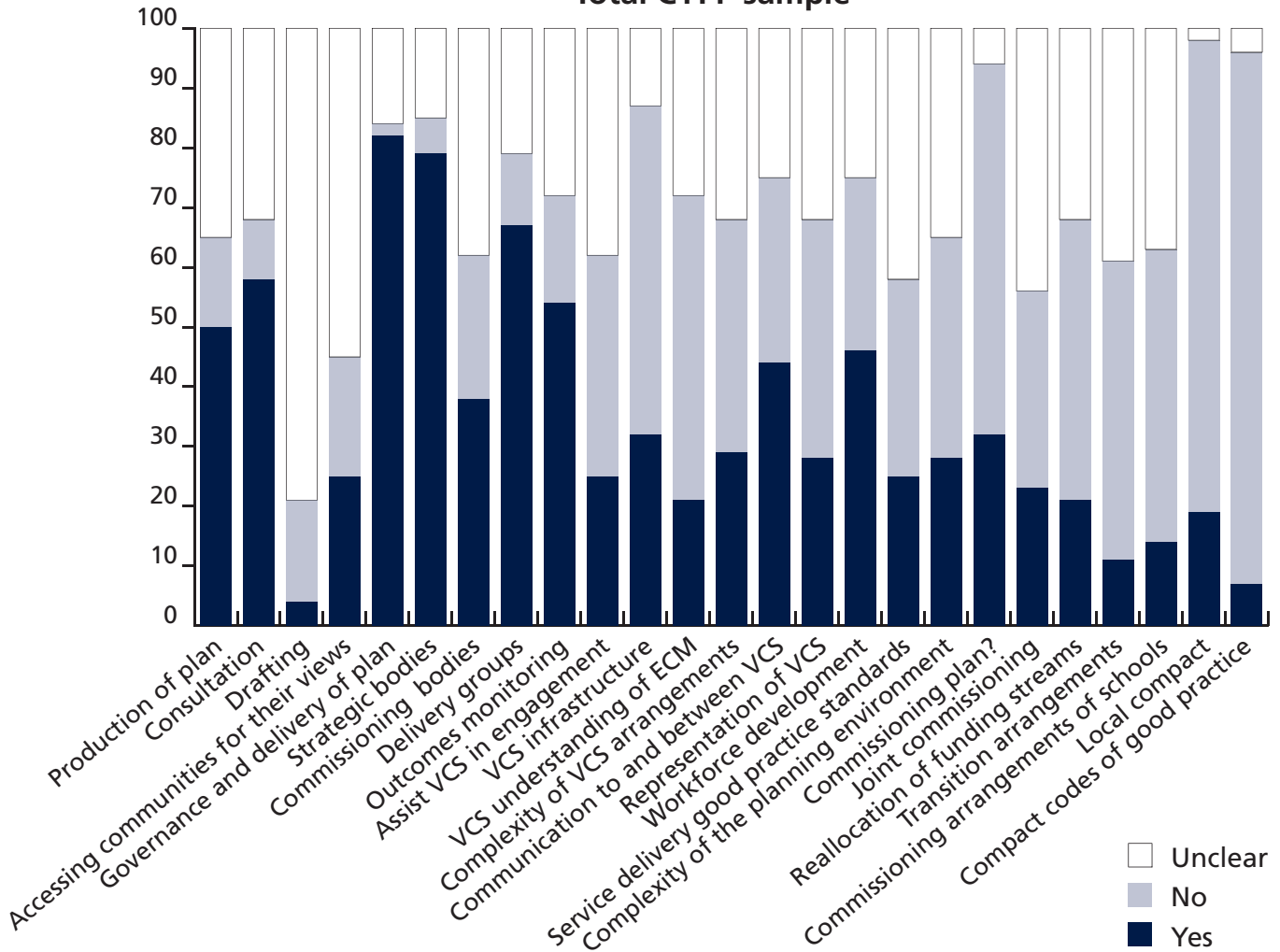
Blackburn with Darwen
Bradford
Brighton and Hove
Birmingham
Hackney
Calderdale
Doncaster
Durham
North Somerset
Nottingham City
Peterborough
Richmond on Thames
Sandwell
Staffordshire
Stoke on Trent
Telford and Wrekin
Tower Hamlets
Wigan

Appendix 3

Desktop review results

n = 54

Total CYPP sample



n = the total number of local authorities surveyed

Appendix 4

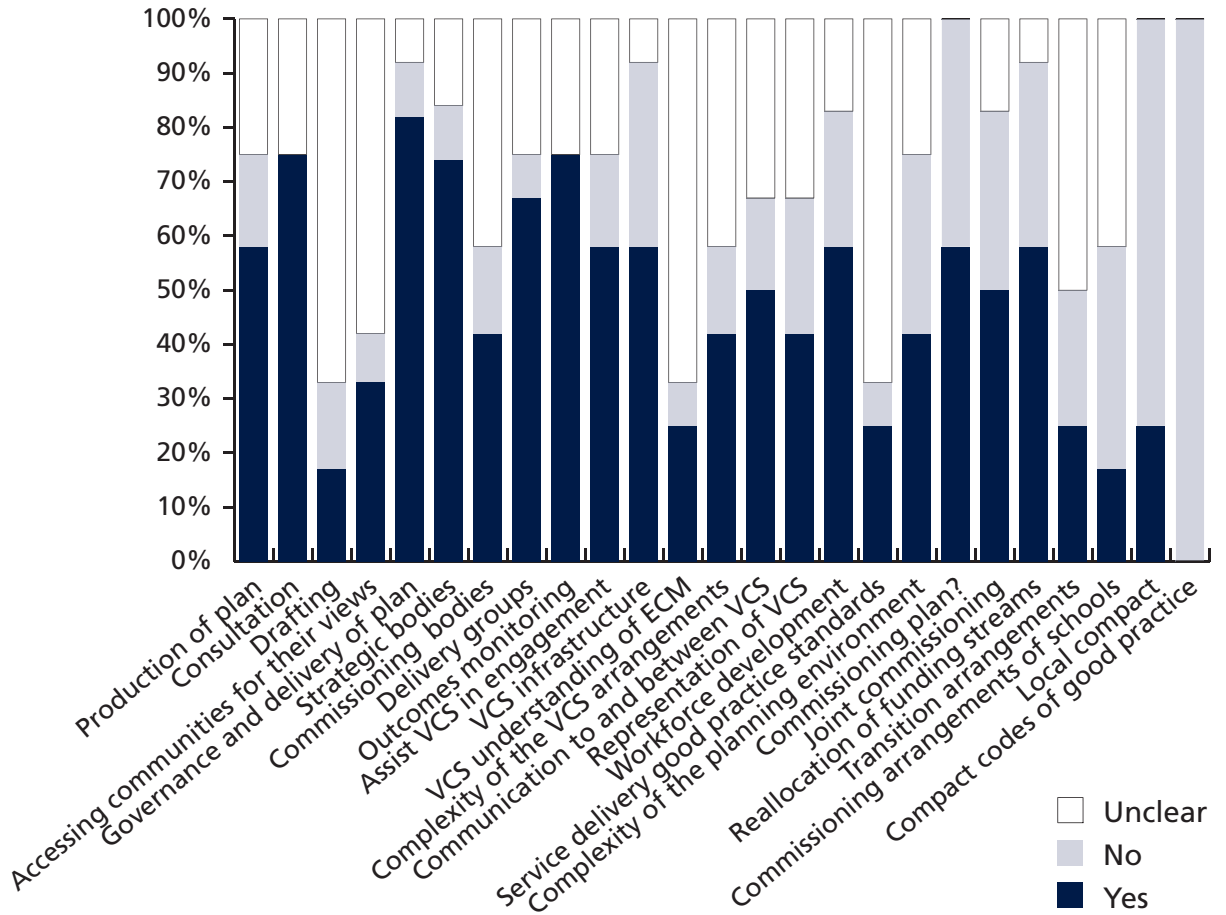
Elements of good practice

Good practice theme	Number of local authority areas
VCS network	9
Engagement with smaller local VCS	5
Commissioning	6
Infrastructure resources	5
Workforce development	4
Regional network	1
Engagement with BME community groups	1

Appendix 5

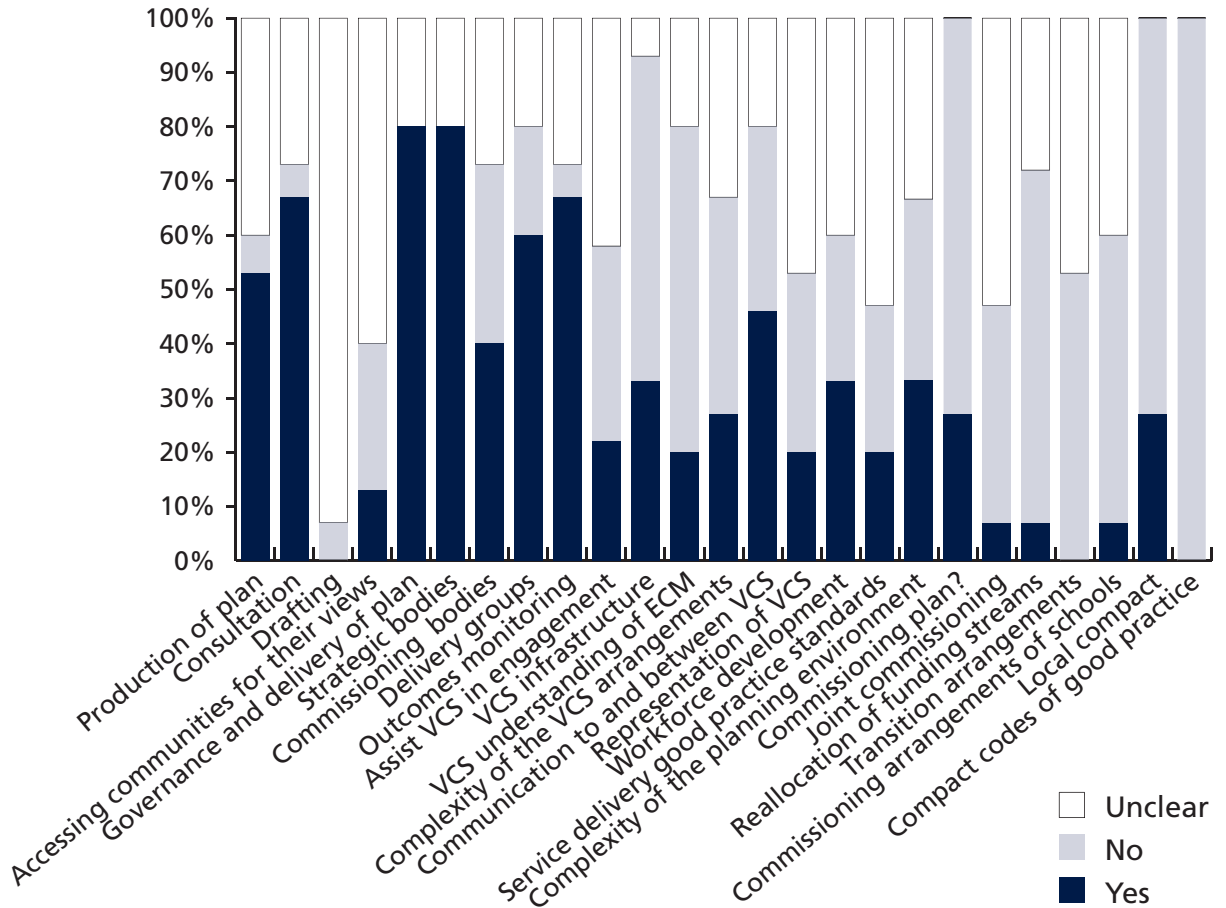
Desktop review results by type of local authority, metropolitan and county

Metropolitan n = 12



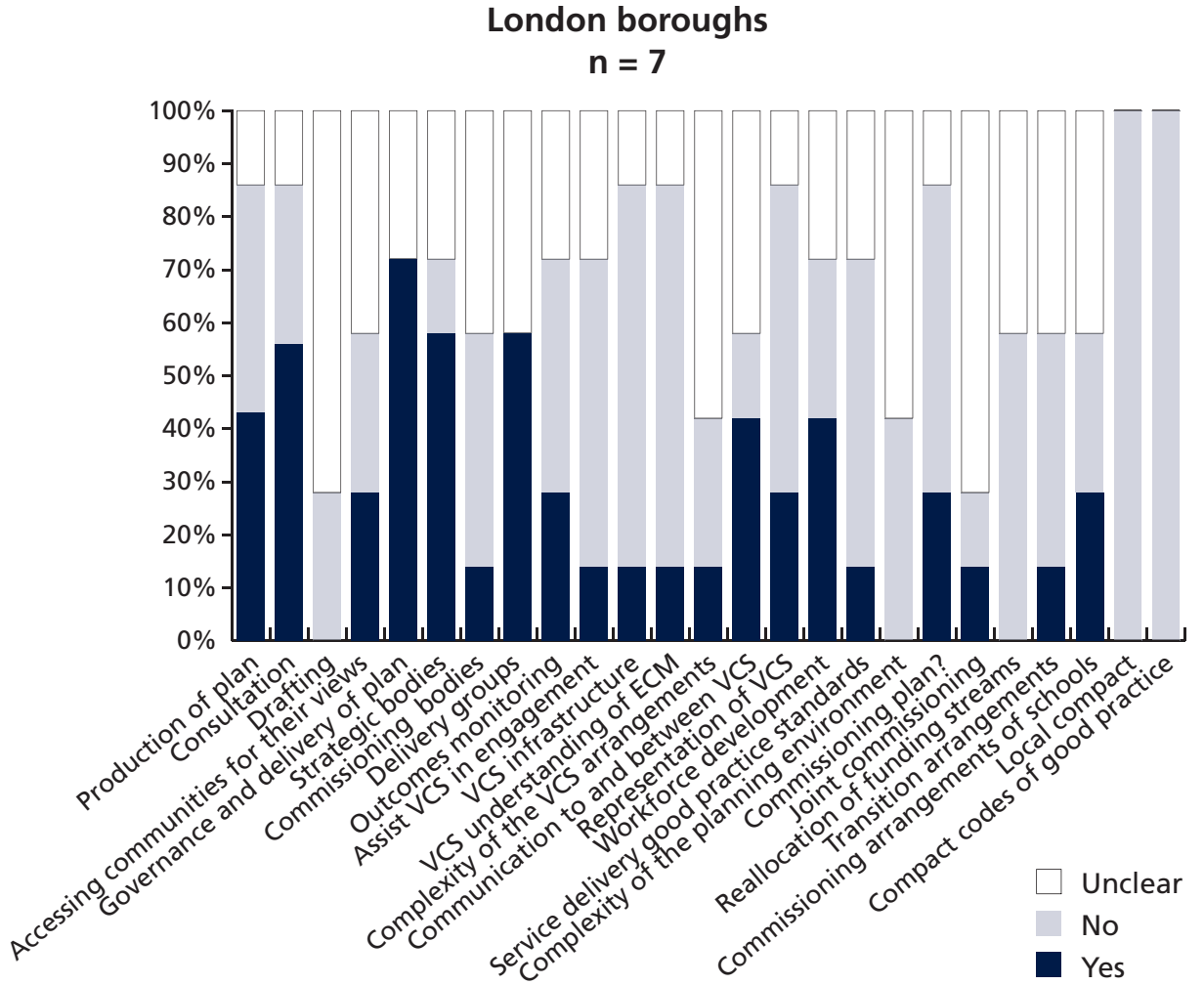
Desktop review results by type of local authority

County
n = 15

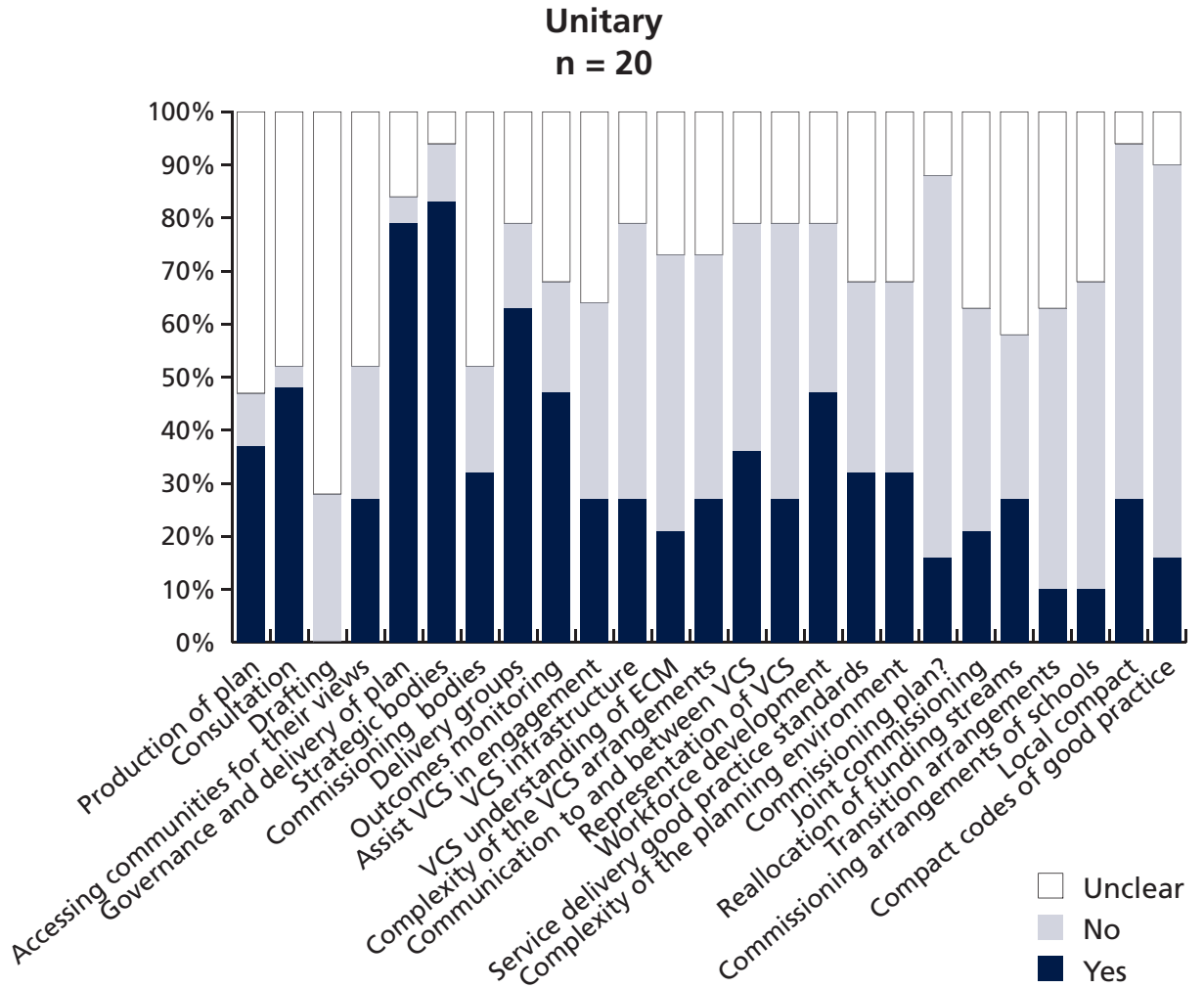


Appendix 6

Desktop review results by type of local authority, London boroughs and unitary



Desktop review results by type of local authority



Appendix 7

Background information on the selected areas of good practice

Area	Good practice examples
Bradford Metropolitan District GO Yorkshire and The Humber	VCS network; VCS Forum and Community Empowerment Network developed from Voluntary Youth Sector Network. Three posts funded by Connexions using NRF and CYPSP contribution. VCS representation protocol and fund for representatives' allowances. Independent review of representation protocol underway. Seconded VCS post in LA change for children team. Resilience in VCS infrastructure but not mainstreamed yet.
Brighton and Hove Unitary GO South East	VCS network; Children and Young People's Network. One post funded 3 days per week using Workforce Development Fund. Well-established structures for engagement. VCS representation process including elections and LA payment for attendance.
Blackburn with Darwen Unitary GO North West	VCS network; Voluntary Representatives Group. One post funded by CF but LA mainstream funding being negotiated. Workforce development; training needs analysis of VCS with a joint strategy. Joint Commissioning team with VCS representation. Commissioning plan including an LA in-house commissioning team who will examine internal services – unit costing of in-house services being undertaken.
Doncaster Metropolitan Borough GO Yorkshire and The Humber	VCS network; VCS Forum, funded by CF. LA mainstreaming being negotiated. Regional network for VCS development officer posts.
Durham County Council GO North East	VCS network; Community of Interest Group, with development into local COI groups. Joint mainstream funding for VCS – 50 per cent of LA post dedicated to VCS network support, funded by LA, PCT and district councils. Workforce development – CAF training via Connexions with £50,000 funding. Commissioning strategy in development led by LA.

Area	Good practice examples
Nottingham City Unitary GO East Midlands	VCS network; Nottingham Community Network and Provider Reference Group for smaller local VCS funded via CVS through NRF with some LA support. Commissioning workshops and training for 'natural allies'. VCS representation and accountability protocols – called appointees rather than representatives.
Richmond upon Thames London Borough GO London	Children's Centre/Extended schools commissioning with Board including VCS, building on good CF work. LA mainstream funding for VCS engagement – 1 post funded 2 days a week – effective smaller local VCS network. Key strategic umbrella organisations (example Richmond Youth Partnership) are funded by LA to undertake the representative function.
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough GO West Midlands	Capacity building approach to commissioning.
Stoke on Trent Unitary GO West Midlands	VCS network; Voluntary Sector Consultative Group Secondments and partnership arrangements. Large team of staff with some dedicated to VCS engagement and others working as part of brief. Funded by CF and NRF and secondments. Mainstreaming not an option due to particular Stoke on Trent financial issues. BME community groups network – 1 post dedicated to engagement in partnership with REC.
Telford and Wrekin Unitary GO West Midlands	VCS network; Collaborative Forum including separate Forum for smaller VCS. One post funded for 18 months by Connexions. CVS offer an HR support function to VCS. Capacity building using Change Up and Capacity Fund. Commissioning – joint funded post by PCT and LA, beginning to examine VCS and have identified all grant/discretionary funding.
Tower Hamlets London Borough GO London	VCS network; Community Organisations Forum. LA mainstream funding for one VCS network post. Commissioning of Youth services contracted out of LA to a number of different consortia including VCS. Vibrant local youth service provision with engagement by small local providers. Consortia approach for smaller VCS to engage in commissioning.

Appendix 8

Glossary

BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
CF	Children Fund
CVS	Council for Voluntary Service
CYPP	Children and Young People's Plan
CYPSP	Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership
DCL	Director Children and Learners, Regional Government Office
DCS	Director of Children's Services, Local Authority
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
ECM	Every Child Matters
GO	Government Office
IdeA	Improvement and Development Agency for local government
JAR	Joint Area Review
LA	Local authority
LAA	Local Area Agreement
LGA	Local Government Association
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
PVI	Private, Voluntary and Independent (referring to a Workforce Development Council funding stream for LAs).
REC	Race Equality Council
TNA	Training needs assessment
VCS	Voluntary and Community Sector