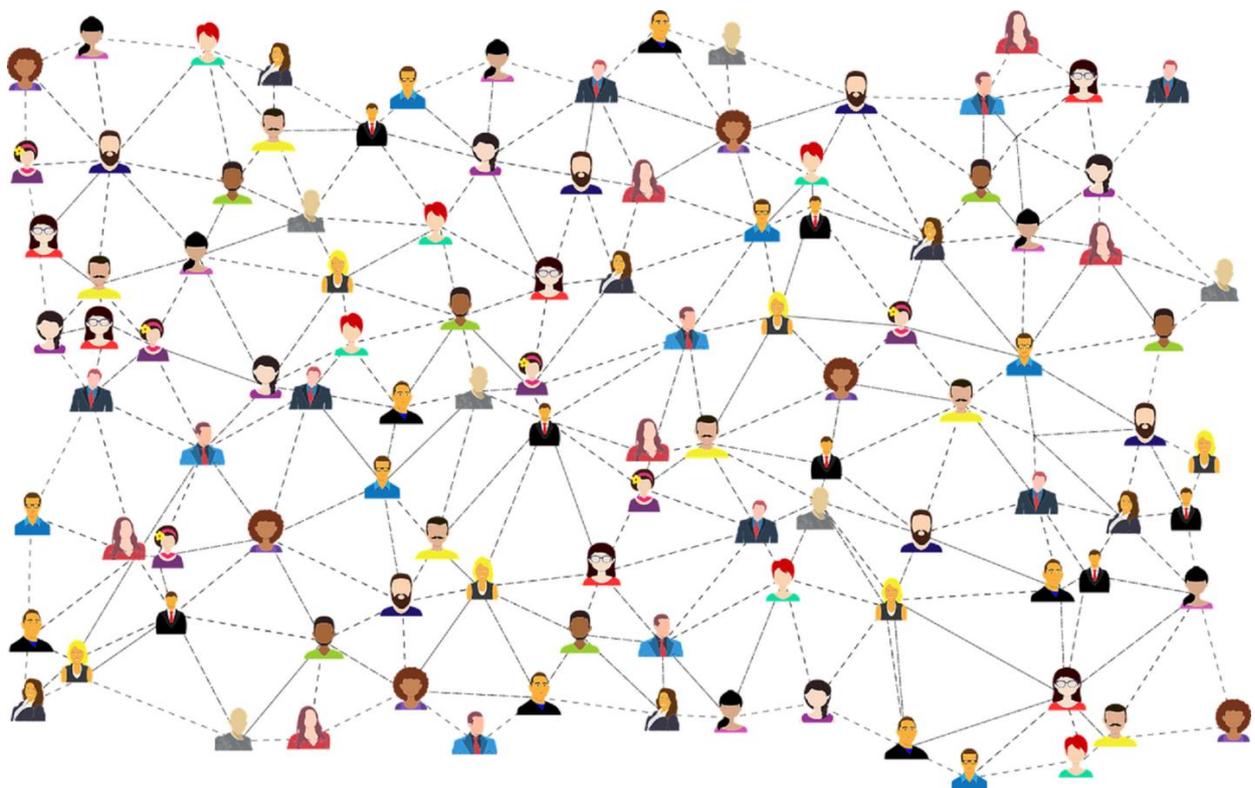


Devon, Plymouth & Torbay VCSE Assembly

Business Case Proposal for the Devon Integrated Care System Partnership Board

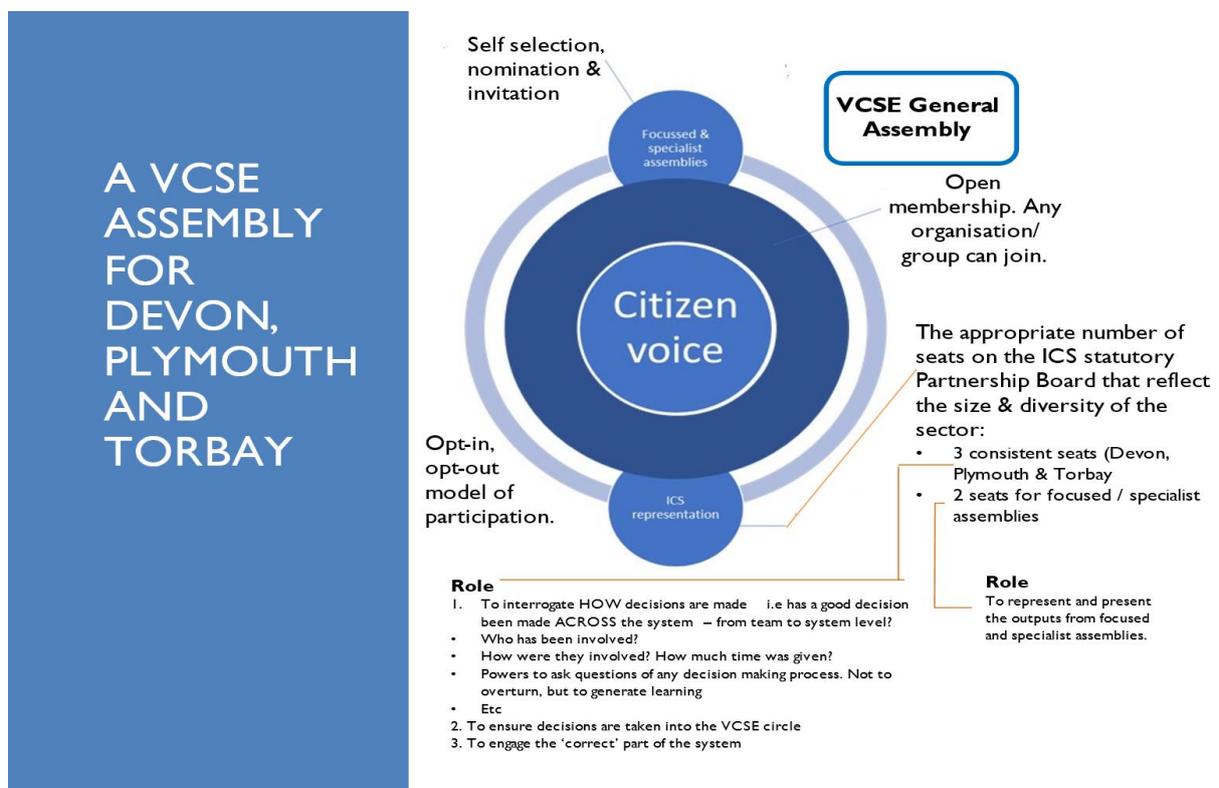


Devon, Plymouth & Torbay VCSE Assembly Development Group
May 2022

1. Context

VCSE organisations across Devon, Plymouth & Torbay have been for some time now developing the concept of a new more inclusive, collaborative, transparent and joined up way of working both across the large and diverse sector. Our proposed Assembly model supports joint leadership and cross sector partnership working with public sector providers.

An aim of the Assembly is to facilitate open and equal cross-sector partnership. The concept is one of a broad based inclusive and shared collaborative model where people, communities and organisations can contribute and engage in the way they want to. Everyone who wants to be included will be included.



2. Equality and Diversity

As a sector we are fully committed to promoting the Equalities and Diversity agenda. To reduce systemic inequalities in accessing Health and Social Care services, it is crucial that those people with protected characteristics and those from seldom heard groups (eg due to rurality, lack of literacy skills and poverty etc) are properly understood and supported. The new VCSE assembly will be instrumental in ensuring that organisations working with, and representing marginalised people are involved at the earliest possible stage across the Local Care Partnership and the Devon Assembly level. To help develop more accessible and inclusive services, practical tasks these specialist organisations can facilitate via the assembly might also include EDI quality assurance, equality audits, engagement and co-production work.

3. Scope of the VCSE Assembly

The not-for-profit sector has vital role in Devon's recovery. It is the largest service structure presently delivering early intervention / prevention and at scale, and across all determinants of wellbeing. It is also only through development of improved and more empowered early intervention / prevention capability, that any realistic opportunity for public service transition to sustainability can be achieved.

The VCSE ASSEMBLY is anticipated to be a service run by VCSE representatives that manages arrangements for engagements of 3rd sector organisations / community service specialists and people with lived experience, on the co-design / co-production / co-commissioning / joint leadership opportunity for developments of new / improved service delivery solutions. However the scale of the opportunity and task should not be underestimated, profiling of the sector has confirmed the following:

- 6,000 registered not-for-profit organisations, 33% - 2,153 social enterprise businesses, 67% 4,271 charities / voluntary community organisation.
- 32,000+ employed by social enterprise, 42,000+ volunteering for charities / voluntary communities.
- Total annual economic activity of £1bn plus (48% being social enterprise business activity, 51% charity / voluntary services overall, nearly 6% of the total economic output for Devon (measured at £17bn).

In addition to these registered organisations there are a vast array of additional community groups, voluntary organisations and individuals supporting people in many different ways. Strategically and across the wide range of activities undertaken across our communities there are unquestionably opportunities for better collaboration and engagement to effect positive system change delivering better outcomes for all, and genuine cash releasing efficiency savings (CRES) across the public sector through reduced demand.

There is a vast and growing deficit between needs of people and our communities and the capacity of services, and this despite the vastness of the 3rd sector and extent of caring that exists within our communities already. Success requires efficiencies to be found and capacity to be created, and the sooner the better.

4. Proposed VCSE Assembly Structure

From its membership, the VCSE Assembly will provide the infrastructure support necessary to create a fluid pool of people and organisations, with a broad range of skills, expertise, innovative solutions and lived experience that can fully engage in, inform and influence strategic partnership discussions, co-design of services, policy development, co-commissioning and joint leadership and decision making. The proposed VCSE Assembly model will collaboratively deploy VCSE infrastructure investment to:

- Influence strategic, people centred and place- based policy & service development to enable positive change
- Significant work has already been undertaken across the Devon ICS footprint both within the Devon, Plymouth and Torbay VCSE sector, through the 5 locality based Local Care Partnerships and across the wider Health and care system. There are lots of examples of effective collaboration and effective impact both at locality levels and across the patch. The Assembly will connect geographic groups & structures to share, draw in and join up intelligence and insight, through an inclusive Assembly approach
- Grow VCSE/ public sector collaboration to improve local community outcomes including – health & social care; wellbeing; economy; community wealth building; affordable housing, community resilience, digital inclusion; transport, inequalities & climate change
- Develop system change dialogue on creating culture shift and improved outcomes through Joint Leadership & social value based collaborative commissioning to support a new way of working.
- Continue data/ evidence – based approach through development of a shared VCSE sector asset map data-base of activity and social value adding insight & intelligence.

Key to the development of a new Devon, Plymouth & Torbay VCSE Assembly is to pilot and develop new ways of working that benefit communities. The approach is to create a positive environment for the development of specialist hubs, bringing together community – based insight, intelligence, innovation and lived experience on a broad range of community issues. In this way, the Assembly will develop coordination in the sector and act as a ‘known’ place to go to access the VCSE in Devon, Plymouth & Torbay. It will also provide a place where anyone can find out what is happening across local partnerships through an open and transparent process.

WHAT IS NEEDED TO MAKE IT WORK?

 GENERAL ASSEMBLY Facilitation	 FOCUSSED & SPECIALIST ASSEMBLIES Funding to cover nominated individuals time to lead, facilitate and attend decision making forums (e.g. ICB)	 ICB consistent representation A role for 3 locality people (ie Devon, Plymouth and Torbay) to work on behalf of the GENERAL ASSEMBLY and 2 specialist reps for communities of interest	 Digital resources Digital platform to allow: Direct access for ICS to convene conversations Data & intelligence on VCSE sector needs Self-organising for VCSE organisations	 Policy resource To support the activity of the GENERAL ASSEMBLY and the FOCUSSED & SPECIALIST sub - groups to carry out in depth policy and research analysis on critical issues
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5. Key Principles and Functions of the Assembly

5.1 Key principles of the Assembly are:

- Entry point is always kept open - anyone can join the Assembly
- Those with specific interests and strengths will be encouraged to step forward
- Those that feel they need to be heard will be
- Digital systems that support the Assembly will be made open by default
- Collaboration will be encouraged
- Transparency and honesty will be a priority
- To concentrate on engagement and not representation
- To engage with existing local structures and to play a central role in
- Developing new ones where there are gaps
- A place that provides sector peer support and development opportunities

5.2 Key functions of the Assembly will be:

i) To support the VCSE sector to

- Actively participate in joint leadership, influence policy, share good practice, support networking & collate & provide information and insight
- Create a mechanism for building the mutual understanding needed to nurture, establish, maintain and strengthen partnerships, as an essential pre-requisite of the kind of collaboration and co-design we all aspire to
- Collaboratively design service solutions harnessing the widest possible creativity and expertise of the sector
- Identify appropriate local VCSE partners to shape the delivery offer around themes or geographies
- Champion and position the VCSE within the strategic environment as high quality partners
- Operate as an equal partner within the Integrated Care System working alongside statutory partners
- Identify, promote and share peer learning, training and capacity building to ensure all members workforce are in a strong position to meet future demands.
- Seek and secure further investment as more of the requirements for the assembly, and importantly opportunity this new model way of engaging and collaborating, becomes surfaced going forward.

ii) To support the Wider System

- To agree governance as a critical starting point, with clarity about decision making, delegation, etc as we test and develop new ways of working
- By building a functional platform which supports joint leadership with the VCSE sector in the wider system
- By working in partnership with the wider system to meet its priorities

- Identifying the right people/organisations to engage with the right for a/ partnership groups at the right time
- Acting as a critical friend of the wider system contributing suggestions and solutions where appropriate
- Collaborating to challenge, influence and develop the systems and processes to ensure an effective ICS
- Supporting the engagement of people with lived experience into the co-design / co-production of activities.

iii) To support Data Management, Communications and Engagement

- Joining up intelligence – giving VCSE organisations better access to data and ‘market intelligence’ and vice versa
- Using technology and new IT digital platform based solutions to facilitate open, transparent, real time information sharing
- Establishment and maintenance of a range of communications channels recognising that one size does not fit all.
- Timely communications to keep all members of the Assembly fully informed so that intelligence flows back and forth between the Assembly members, initiatives and projects
- Ensuring a steady and consistent information flow between the sector and the ICS and vice versa

6. Case for ICS formal partnership with the VCSE Assembly

NHSE(I) produced guidance in September 2021 titled “ICS implementation guidance on partnerships with the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector”. Its key recommendations were that:

- The VCSE sector is a key strategic partner with an important contribution to make in shaping, improving and delivering services, and developing and implementing plans to tackle the wider determinants of health
- VCSE partnership should be embedded in how the ICS operates, including through involvement in governance structures in population health management and service redesign work, and in system workforce, leadership and organisational development plans.

Devon, Plymouth & Torbay have a vibrant VCSE sector, keen to work as part of the whole Integrated Care System. We have identified the need for a local VCSE Assembly to fulfil the aspirations set out above.

We recognise that Devon has led the way by being one of the first systems in the country to recruit a system wide lead for the VCSE. This role has proved to be successful and has raised the profile and understanding of the sector, increased its interaction with the wider health and social care system and has brought more financial resource into the VCSE.

This role however would have even more impact with the development of the VCSE Assembly, enabling a more transparent two-way flow of information ensuring that the right people from the wider system and the VCSE are brought together to form a team around a specific issue.

A sector of around 6,000 organisations is extremely difficult for the ISC lead to navigate in a fair, transparent and efficient way, but an effective and collaborative VCSE Assembly would make it possible resulting in better more informed outcomes.

7. ICS investment requested to set up and run the Assembly

7.1 We have agreed £50k ICS investment 2022/23, to support and contribute to the further development and sustainability of the new VCSE Assembly for Devon, Plymouth & Torbay and to ensure that the ICS specific requirements will benefit from access to local expertise and practice that holds inclusion central to governance and decision making:

- 0.6 fte VCSE Assembly Development Co-ordination Resource £30k (full cost recovery rate)
- 0.2 fte Intelligence & Communications Resource £10k (full cost recovery rate)
- Annual fund to backfill 300 hours of VCSE leadership resource to input into ICS related strategic activity at Partnership Board and Task and Finish Group level £10k.

7.2 It is important to note that the VCSE sector has, to date, largely self-funded the operation of the VCSE Reference Group and the VCSE Assembly Development Working Group. The supporting ICS infrastructure investment this paper refers to represents circa 4.25% of an estimated £2m+ in existing multi-source funding already being invested in VCSE activity, infrastructure and partnerships across Devon, Plymouth and Torbay.

The additional infrastructure investment this paper refers to is in addition to the £2m+ existing multi-source funding already being invested in VCSE activity, infrastructure and partnerships across Devon, Plymouth and Torbay. The investment requested will support securing the resource necessary for the sector to make the systemic change required to establish the new functional Assembly structure, needed to bring about engagement and collaboration across Devon, Plymouth and Torbay.

It is important to recognise that the total costs for development of the Assembly is a work in progress just as the requirements for what is needed of the Assembly are. Subsequently maintaining progress on iterative development and implementation of the Assembly will require funding beyond that of the ICS. To this end and in addition to this investment request, the VCSE sector has also secured additional investment specifically for Assembly development in the form of:

- NHS England - 2022/23 £10k funding for VCSE staff to attend ICS related activity at LCP level (£2,000 per LCP – funding 66 hours annual VCSE engagement activity)

- Devon - £40k VCSE infrastructure funding investment from Devon Recovery Co-ordination Group 2022/23 will contribute towards the Assembly development work through 4 key work streams:

i) To co-ordinate development of the new VCSE Assembly model structure and data management system

ii) To develop a new version of the Community Support Plan

iii) To support a prototype Assembly cross sector Food Insecurity Specialist Hub

iv) To support a prototype Assembly cross sector Health Inequalities informed Community Led Wellbeing Specialist Hub, to take a strategic and collaborative approach among VCSE organisations to begin to map current engagement of the VCSE in the development of community-led wellbeing initiatives and to work with public health to review and evaluate community-led wellbeing initiatives against wider health priorities, such as the work going on around the Community Mental Health Framework, Asset Based Community Development and Social Prescribing.

- Plymouth - In Plymouth there has been long and historic good relationships and collaboration between the statutory sector, particularly Plymouth City Council and the VCSE sector. Over the last few years this has deepened. Plymouth has some critical and well-established networks covering environment, food, social enterprise, culture and heritage, trauma Informed approaches and grassroots activity.

Partnership working happens across all streams of support work and includes the smallest community groups in its work, which has been observed within the latest LGA peer review into community empowerment. These networks form the foundation on which collaboration is built and which the Devon VCSE Assembly taps into and benefits from. Plymouth Octopus Project (POP) currently receives £30k from Plymouth City Council and some additional grant funding. There maybe be VCSE funding within Fair Shares, but decisions have not yet been made about the use of this.

- Torbay - The VCSE sector has come together in an unprecedented way, creating a series of alliances, networks and partnerships that support more effective, timely and preventative support, some of which has been supported with statutory funding from the CCG, Torbay Council and others as well as grant makers and foundations. This locality investment will reasonably contribute towards and feed into the building of the new Assembly This is now being further enhanced through the creation of a new VCSE alliance, commissioned by Torbay Council, that will link into the established systems below, resourcing 15 VCSE`s to become a panel to bring intelligence, gaps and new solutions to inform adult social care spend, to enable a more insightful and co productive system.

8. Next Steps

We have pro-actively engaged with the core VCSE Development Group for several months now and have 100% confidence the combined investment budget above will give us enough capacity to fuel the next stage of the VCSE Assembly development. The funding requested will enable us to:

1. Establish the VCSE Assembly, through a responsive planning approach
2. Set up robust governance systems based on networks
3. Ensure connection into the ICS Partnership Board from July 2022 (nominate VCSE members)
4. Demonstrate financial transparency on the spend to make the development work fully accountable to both the VCSE, ICS and Local Authority investors.

We will use a sprint methodology to set aspirations and goals on a three monthly basis and to review mechanism to set further goals as the work develops. For example, over the next three months our priorities are to:

- Establish an IT platform that is configured for transparency as a default to both share information and invite in engagement and membership of the assembly
- Establish the first iteration of an open decision-making process for the deployment of Assembly Development investment
- Establish the first iteration of a governance/network structure.

Appendix

Current Active Members of the Devon, Plymouth & Torbay VCSE Assembly Development Group

Name	Infrastructure Organisation	Email address
Matt Bell	Plymouth Octopus Project	matt@plymouthoctopus.org
Steven Chown	Exeter Community Initiatives	steven.chown@eci.org.uk
Nora Corkery	Devon Communities Together (Co-Chair Devon Recovery VCSE Group)	ncorkery@devoncommunities.org.uk
Diana Crump	Living Options Devon (Chair Devon VCSE Reference Group) & Devon Health and Wellbeing member representing vulnerable people via Devon's Joint Engagement Forum	diana.crump@livingoptions.org
Richard Foxwell	Wellmoor	richard@wellmoor.org.uk
Nicola Frost	Devon Community Foundation	nicola@devoncf.com
Pat Harris	Healthwatch Devon, Plymouth & Torbay	PHarris@hwdevon-plymouth-torbay.org
Karen Nolan	Devon Voluntary Action	karen@involve-middevon.org.uk
Simon Sherbersky	Torbay Community Development Trust	Simonsherbersky@torbaycdt.org.uk
Paul White	Eculture Solutions (Co-Chair Devon Recovery VCSE Group)	paul.white@eculturesolutions.com
Darin Halifax	NHS Devon CCG (VCSE Lead)	darin.halifax@nhs.net