

## VCF Commissioning Framework Workshop - 11th August 2017 Sandbach Town Hall

### Activity Outcomes, Discussion Points, Evaluation and Feedback

**‘Plotting the Pyramid’** - An activity which asked organisations to plot where they saw their services against the tiers in the triangle showing levels of need, and for each of 4 key themes. Health and Wellbeing, Early Help and Prevention, Reducing Dependency, and Skills & Education

Theme: Health and Wellbeing			
Organisation Name	Services		
	Few	Some	Many
South Cheshire CLASP	Family Support	CLASP Counselling - Adults and Children: Parenting Courses: Back to Work Courses: Group work for children and young people	
Friends for Leisure	Families with disabled children who have multiple challenges	Families of disabled children and young people	
		Supporting schools providing group work around emotional health: Parenting - supporting parents of troubled children: Creative action team - therapeutic services supporting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing	Family Ties: Tools for Schools
The Lighthouse Centre, Crewe		Mental health issues: health and wellbeing: alcohol/drug rehabilitation programme	Clothing: Bedding: Advice on support services: signposting to other services: Food/water/drinks/balanced diet: Shelter during the cold weather
Cheshire Without Abuse	Complex needs	Abuse recovery programmes: 1-1 support	Wellbeing Group: Survivor Voices
Diocese of Chester	Specialist support for people in hospitals, hospices & funerals etc from clergy	People engage with churches for specialist services/projects (loneliness, mental health): St Marys PC	General congregation and local communities
ADCA		Up to 200 people over 50 years in a population of 4,100	
Cheshire Community Action		Community Agents	
CVSCE		Community JSNA projects - H & W of carers, perinatal mental health support, peer support: Signposting to voluntary and statutory support making connections between organisations	
Age UK Cheshire	Wellbeing service: Wear Purple Arts Project: Dementia Advice Service	Statutory Advocacy: Brokerage: Men in Sheds: Falls Prevention Service: Supporting You: Money Matters: Day Services - Health/Fitness/Skills etc	Demential Advice Service: Information and Advice Service
ChALC			Through parish councils
EC NHS Trust		PRG	
Citizens Advice	Welfare Benefit sources for cancer patients or people living with life limiting illnesses	Mental Health Advocacy (General)	Universal Information and Advice: Information and Advice relating to the Care Act: Money Advice Services
Home Start East Cheshire			Offers support to parents with young children, friendship and help with improving confidence and wellbeing. Supporting parents with mental health issues
Carers Trust 4 All	Palliative/complex need - carers	Volunteer befriending: Carers 'In Time' carer breaks: Aspergers young carers (+ young adults)	
The Welcome			Offering support and help: Collecting residents to attend various classes
Bridgend Centre, Bollington	Young people aged 12 - 25 support moving from acute services to community services	Counselling services for young people 12 - 25: Partnership with CAMHS to provide service in community rather than 'medical model' funded by CECCG: Buddying scheme	Just Drop In - universal drop in for anyone needing friendship and support aged 12 - 25: Contribution to emotionally healthy schools project: Walks: Activities: Volunteering:
Age UK Cheshire East		Art Group: Craft Group	
Caudwell Children	Family support for families who have a child with a disability: early help -prevention - improved emotional wellbeing: Activities for children - improved health and emotional benefits		
Cheshire and Warrington Carers Trust	Relive project service for Carers in Crisis - encouraging them to look after own health and take regular breaks	Targeted breaks i.e. overnight residential to encourage carers to take a break/relax and reassure them the cared for is OK	Breaks and support groups for carers
YMCA		Provide some basic activities and activity programmes with children	Provide health and sports activities for homeless people in different programmes

Theme: Early Help and Prevention			
Organisation Name	Services		
	Few	Some	Many
Friends for Leisure		Disabled children and young people	
Cheshire Without Abuse	Safeguarding Adults and Children	One to One Services	Awareness Advice
Cheshire Community Action		Community Agents	
Audlem and District Community Action		Luncheon Clubs and Coffee Mornings etc	
Diocese of Chester			Church based groups, Parent and Toddler etc
Cheshire East CVS		Community JSNA projects: Perinatal mental health peer support research: signposting to voluntary and statutory support: making connections and supporting collaboration	
AGE UK Cheshire	Wellbeing Service	Statutory Advocacy: Brokerage: Falls Prevention Service: Money Matters	Dementia Advice Service: Information and Advice Service
Deafness Support Network (DSN)	Mental Health: Deafness and Dementia: Residential/Hosp Care	Social Care/Health Assessments and Specialist Equipment	Youth Services: British Sign Language/Interpreting: Drop In Sessions: Deaf Community Deaf Clubs: DSN Projects (various funders) Child and Families, Deafness and Dementia, Positive Hearing
Citizen's Advice	Welfare Benefits Service for cancer patients and people living with life limiting illness	Mental Health Advocacy (General)	Universal Information and Advice: Social Care information and advice: Money Advice Service
The Lighthouse Centre, Crewe			Signposting Service: CAP (Christians Against Poverty) Course; Health and Wellbeing Course
Home Start East Cheshire			Volunteer help with families to contain possibilities of situations escalating
ChALC			Parish Councils
Bridgend Centre, Bollington	Buddy Scheme for the very frail and isolated and those with limited mobility to provide social contact and a means to have a more active life	Services for young people experiencing emotional and mental health difficulties (Just Drop In) - counselling - running/physical activity: Foundations early help and friendship groups (seeks to intervene earlier with 12 - 16 year olds to prevent them entering other services at a more acute level funded by Children in Need): - In school counselling	Universal Drop In for young people aged 12 - 25 (Just Drop In) for information and support any issue: My Pad Kitchen: Emotionally Healthy Schools Project
Age UK Cheshire East - over 50's		Information and Advice - Free Service: Dementia Day Support Service (paid for service) early stage dementia	
Cheshire and Warrington Carers Trust	Relive Project service for Carers in Crisis		Carers Support Groups: Caring with Confidence Course
YMCA		Homeless people who could otherwise place a demand on social care	After School Clubs; Parenting Clubs
Caudwell Children	Empowering parents to know their options and have the info they need for their long term needs potentially helps to prevent families needing long term social care support		
Cheshire Young Carers		Cheshire Young Carers - based on references	



Theme: Reducing Dependency			
Organisation Name	Services		
	Few	Some	Many
AGE UK Cheshire	Wellbeing Service: Dementia Advice Service	Brokerage: Falls Prevention Service: Supporting You: Money Matters	Information and Advice Service
Cheshire Without Abuse	Complex needs; effective multi-agency working & pathways	Step down intensive crisis recovery	Advice clinics: Wellbeing Group
ADCA		Up to 20 people supported in a small population	
Cheshire Community Action		Via Community Agents	
Diocese of Chester			General meetings and social activities/home visiting from churches - keeping people at home
Caudwell Children	Families getting early intervention and support promoted less dependency on statutory social care provision		
Cheshire and Warrington Carers Trust	Relive service for Carers in Crisis	Helpline for Carers	Drop in sessions for Carers
Cheshire Young Carers		Supporting young carers - hold East contract	
YMCA			We work with children from LSOA areas (100 per week): Homeless people in accommodation (up to 90 at any one time): Provide floating support for 62 people at any one time. Client groups - people with MH problems; substance misusers; offenders
Age UK Cheshire East		Men in Sheds: Help at Home service (paid for service) shopping, cleaning, transport to appointment	
Carers Trust 4 All	Palliative care - keeping and supporting people at home: complex needs -children and adults	Social groups and home based services; advice, advocacy and practical care for carers reduced need for long term services and H+ S care services; Carers 'in time'	Aspergers - independence and coping
The Welcome			Advice and practical help
The Bridgend Centre, Bollington	Bridgended Buddies - enables very frail people or with limited mobility to have a more active life	1-1 support for people experiencing mental health issues or crises. Information and advice service avoids people accessing other services: Just Drop In - partnership with CAMHS to divert young people from CAMHS medical model to more community interventions and person centred counselling	
Citizens Advice			
Home Start East Cheshire			Provides volunteer support for families with young children. Home visiting, family network days enabling families to learn and feel supported in order to move on.
The Lighthouse Centre, Crewe			Provide clothing and shower facilities to improve self-esteem: Job Centre sign posting service: Digital Inclusion Course





Theme: Skills and Employment			
Organisation Name	Services		
	Few	Some	Many
Friends for Leisure		Volunteering	
ChALC			Through Parish Councils
ADCA	ADCA coordinators/volunteers		
Cheshire Community Action	Community Agents		
Cheshire Without Abuse		Life skills coaches: Volunteering	Volunteering Peer Mentors: Court Support
Diocese of Chester			Pastoral workers, volunteers who would move from this into employment
CVSCE	GRIPP assurance	Young Trustees Project: New Leaf Project: Volunteer Managers Network: Trustees Network: Chief Exec's Network: Trainhg Programme (including volunteer management, grant writing, trustee roles, safeguarding etc): Development supprt for viluntray organisations (governance, funding, volunteers, training )	Supported volunteer recruitment (for organisations and individuals)
Deafness Support Network		New Leaf Programme	
Citizens Advice	Employment opportunities for experienced volunteers	New Leaf Financial inclusion: Universal Credit Budgeting Support	Volunteering opportunities to improve confidence and basic skills
The Lighthouse Centre, Crewe			Community/Social cohesion; Self esteem issues: Digital inclusion: Food/clothing needs: CV: Support with family
Home Start East Cheshire			Offers volunteers a training that can be used to support job application or a CV
The Bridgend Centre, Bollington		Just Drop In - support to young people who are unemployed CV's, computers, phones, practice interviews, interview clothes etc	Just Drop In - volunteer scheme for community volunteers including young people. Includes volunteering qualifications for young people Vinspired. We increase employability for volunteers. Participative approaches at Just Drop In, meaningful involvement of young people in services. Helping young people to improve emotional health helps them to continue or start to access educational services. IT tutoring and support
Carers Trust 4 All	Complex need - reducing escalation of need	Carers in employment; skills and confidence building - young carers and young adult carers: Aspergers social skills	
Age UK Cheshire East		ICT service - drop in service run by volunteers	Volunteering - giving people the skills needed for employment
Cheshire and Warrington Carers Trust	Relive programe for Carers in Crisis - looking at employment/volunteering opportunities	Specific training for carers - e.g. safer handling	Traning for Carers - work closely with Carers Connect
Caudwell Children	Use of volunteers to help deliver services improves skills and employment. Activities for children with a disability can help them to build up skills and employment skills		
YMCA		We provide training programmes for homeless young people	



## World Café Discussions - key observations

### **NETWORKING AND COMMUNICATION**

- Simplify language to make it more inclusive for smaller organisations that wouldn't normally engage with commissioning. Glossary of abbreviations and acronyms
- Commissioning documents are putting off smaller organisations and quality of tender documents could be improved
- Could documents be proof-read, précised, made relevant? Maybe use a Readers Panel to reduce jargon, repetition etc
- Needs to be appropriate to the audience it is aimed at. Pre-tender provider events useful
- Need to challenge cooperative working within Voluntary Community and Faith (VCF) Sector – in order of sorts 'who's mates with who'. Focus on loss of identity within VCF when working in partnership (consider) Larger Vs small organisations when it comes to discussion
- Cheshire East Council (CEC) to be more self critical and look at internally before blaming VCF sector
- VCF sector needs to be looked at as a family in terms of work and clients with them
- Different levels of contracts and consultation depends on value and risk of tenures
- Long specifications etc take time to go through for smaller groups and organisations
- VCF Family – can be dysfunctional but stick together in the heart of the community

### **ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION**

- Recommend commissioners coming out and going into services and engaging with users. How serious is CEC re: getting the voice of the sector?
- How to reach the disengaged – targeting where people go e.g. GP surgeries. Disconnected groups – need a targeted approach to 'get the voice'
- Groups e.g. faith – how to capture thoughts and get consistency? Could feed into one source e.g. via a website
- Give people a clear offer and a choice of options to respond. What is the value of the consultation – who is it for? What will it change?
- Emulate housing associations – use technology e.g. Ipads to support questioning. Could an app be developed to make it easy? Use social media to gather points of view. Use of facebook and analysis which ranks responses – better engagement – multi media, adapt to audience e.g. young people
- Multi channels to funding e.g. Participatory Budgeting (PB) approach which engages residents
- Feedback is crucial – what happened?
- Consider power dynamic – balance between commissioners and VCF sector
- Consider cost of consultation to the organisation – should be reflected in price of the contract? – or have the ability to take a collective approach. Recognise engagement requires resources
- Quarterly meetings between VCF sector and CEC to get a collective consensus – provide a forum to share
- Need to ask the right questions – understand the framework/perimeter – manage expectations – consider the alternatives
- Careful with terminology – not 'service users' but 'influencers' of service planning/developments/design – they are centre of process and not an add-on
- Engagement through journey – differing opportunities/levels – different ways – recognise levels of vulnerability and voice of individuals
- Commissioning process should be a golden thread throughout – horizontal process pre-consultation
- Need to ensure feedback – especially CEC – to explain why should be 360 degree approach
- Faith sector recognises challenge – bridge to be built – where can we partner? Where it works is very good. Challenge to engage with multi-faith e.g. Muslim community. VCF have trusted relationships with their people

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- Ensure methods of consultation are easy, fair and accessible

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

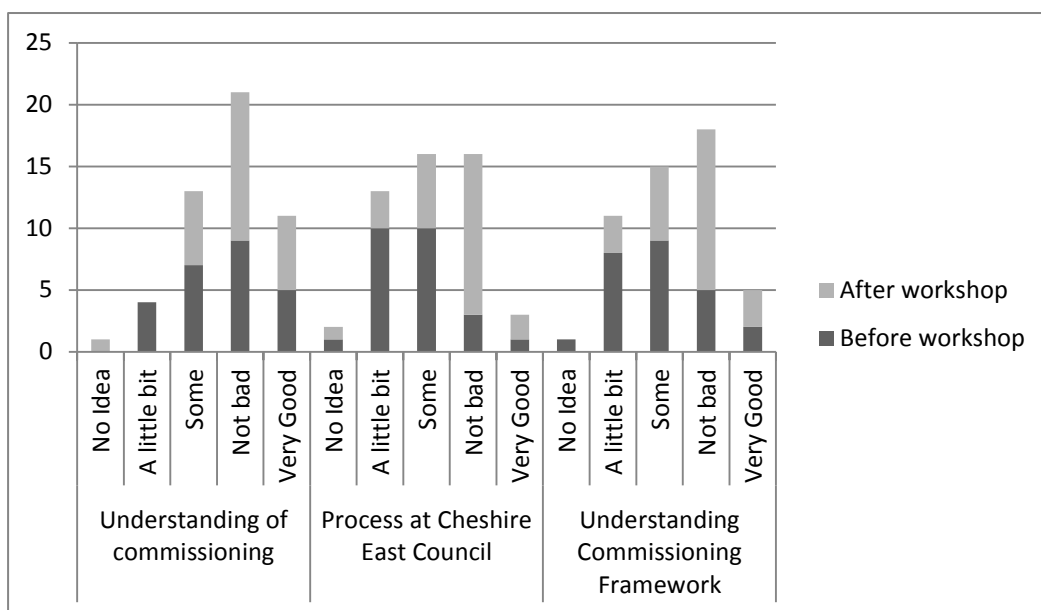
- Increase number of workshops and communication
- Proportionate. Monitoring needs to be appropriate to the level of the contract
- Room to celebrate what we are doing well and reflect on what is not working well
- Feedback from monitoring useful - Feel like no one ever looks at the data that takes so long to collate and submit
- Point of contact for monitoring moved on and org was not told for months. Communication/relationships need to be 2 way
- Formatted monitoring so you only add info once and calculations made for gender/age etc.
- Idea – standard database system (central monitoring system?) all commissioned groups use to submit Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) + data centrally
- Flexibility to provide additional data with monitoring proving value e.g. pictorial quarterly publications, extra feedback and outcomes
- Use monitoring to help identify where there is duplication and where there are gaps?
- Standardisation between adults and children – some organisations provide services across both and monitoring can be confusing
- Doesn't allow you to take risks with your service in order to trial innovation to develop services
- Use monitoring to help other organisations learn e.g. if some groups are doing some things very strongly pass on what works to others. Mentoring/sharing ideas
- Digital – self populating. Simple/streamlined. If new technology is advised /implemented there would need to be training provided
- Room to write about where organisations have signposted to other organisations who?/why? - to record where collaborations have taken place
- Case studies SO valuable, need the rich data for impact purposes and tell the story not just the statistics. Flexibility to add rich qualitative data to prove massive impact and possible outcomes. Organisations collect more information than monitoring requirements which can give a fuller picture

## **COMMISSIONING FRAMEWORK**

- Transparency can be an issue
- Chest – user unfriendly & quite difficult to use
- Sub contractors to be in Framework?
- Look at the timescales for tenders in terms of increasing them
- Commissioners need to be less tardy. Commitment to respond within 48 hours
- Ensure new groups can join the 'Framework' – is this right name? More detail regarding Framework to be provided by CE
- Clearer direction and continuation of way forward in terms of Framework Practical demands create a barrier – Indemnity for 12 years - £1million contract insurance – payment in arrears/partnership – PO pay details 15/30 days
- Make sure people can get onto the framework – be supported to get on to the Framework and Communicate WHEN this is going to happen. Ensure all providers are kept up to date with developments

## WORKSHOP EVALUATION

### Levels of understanding



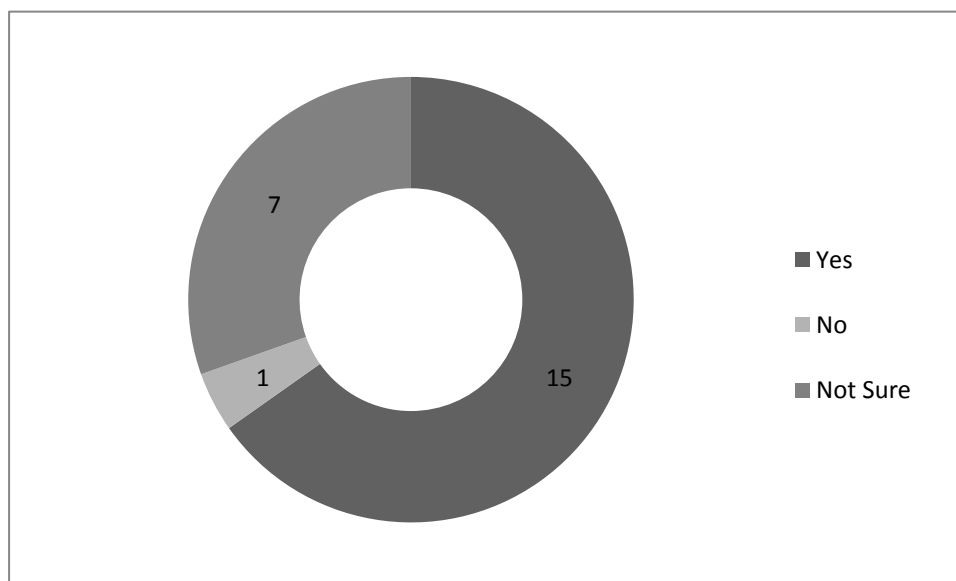
### What were the expectations?

More confidence that CEC are continuing to respond to the VCF sector and genuinely working in partnership with us and action properly what we agree!

An understanding of the commissioning intentions going forward and any intended changes in the commissioning framework.  
Also to start working collaboratively with other third sector orgs

A better understanding of what commissioning is about and how CE wants to work with partners in the process

### Did the workshop meet expectations?



1 = No, 7 = Not Sure, 15 = Yes

### What additional information was required?

I'm not sure if the event was aimed at informing me or supporting CE's understanding of the groups attending and their relationships with each other

Don't think the purpose of the workshop was clear in the invitation

Really felt more time needed to answer Q's in detail

### Other Comments

Great opportunity to be part of the developing framework

Looking forward to feedback after the September workshop and being able to engage with the process in the future

Really useful in understanding where CEC are up to with regard to redesigning commissioning

I welcome the conversation and future conversations and better clarity. The future does feel bright but confusing

Very useful to feedback issues directly to CEC, some really good ideas and suggestions



**VCF Commissioning Framework Workshop - 29th September 2017 Macclesfield Town Hall**  
**Activity Outcomes, Discussion Points, Evaluation and Feedback**

**‘Plotting the Pyramid’** - Organisations were asked to plot where they saw their services against the tiers in the triangle showing levels of need and for each of 4 key themes.

Health and Wellbeing: Early Help & Prevention: Reducing Dependency: Skills & Education:

<b>Theme: Health and Wellbeing</b>	<b>Services</b>		
<b>Organisation Name</b>	<b>Few</b>	<b>Some</b>	<b>Many</b>
CarersTrust4all	Carer Breaks, Young Carers, Young Adult Carers, Carers Support Groups		
HOPE	Night Shelter		Street Angels, HOPE Centre
Arch North Staffs	Support in accessing Health services for Homeless & Refugees, Domestic Violence Refugees	Holistic support planning with all customers, MH Supported Housing & Floating support, Healthy Relationship programmes, Health Literacy friendly to support Health and attendance to A&E and hospital admittance	
CRE8	Referrals/Support for individuals to access services as needed/wanted.	Healthy Eating Programme	New projects
Space4autism	Adult Social Group	Yoga, Mindfulness, Parent/Carer workshops	
CAB-North	Your Voice - for Adults with Mental Health problems	Mental Health Advocacy, IACE Services	Financial capability skills, Universal Information and Advice
Alzheimers Society	Dementia Advice and Support, Support with progression of dementia	Dementia Adviser, Dementia Support, Side by Side & Singing for the Brain groups and cafes	Dementia friendly communities, Raising awareness and understanding of dementia, Raising awareness and support available for carers, Pre-diagnostic advice & support
Disability Information Bureau	Wheelchair loans, RADAR keys, Shopmobility services, Specialist employment support(visual impairment), 1to1 learning support with adaptive technology, Voluntary opportunities	Learning opportunities, Drop in IT centre, Employment support people with learning disabilities, Mental Health, Low basis skills, Welfare rights form filling	Information and Advice, Volunteering opportunities, Employment support, Hate crime advice centre, Learning Centre, Drop in IT centre
Age UK Cheshire East	Dementia Support Service	Help at Home	Information & Advice, Volunteering
Neuromuscular Centre	Physiotherapy with hydrotherapy, Specially adapted gym	Psychological/emotional wellbeing support, Mindfulness, Carers activities	
Home-Start East Cheshire			Emotional and practical support to families with Mental Health issues
Methodist Homes			Live at Home - Promotes health/falls prevention/emotional wellbeing
Deafness Support Network	Deafness & Dementia - proven links between hearing loss and cognitive decline (Impact on social isolation, physical and mental health)	Health promotion in accessible communication format	Accessibility to Health/Social Care-barriers presented by increasing telephone access/111 service etc.

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Theme: Early Help and Prevention	Services		
Organisation Name	Few	Some	Many
CarersTrust4all		Carer Breaks, Young carers, Young Adult carers, Signposting to Carer Services	
Arch North Staffs		Domestic Violence Services, Mental Health floating support for tenancy sustainment, PRS Mediation & Prevention of Homelessness(providing a voice for young people), Supported Housing	Work in schools surrounding Homelessness and Healthy Relationships. PRS Advice & Accessibility
CRE8	Alternative Education(Preventing escalation through Social Care), Sexual Health/Exploitation	Clubs (Activities, Restorative justice, Informal Education)	Community events (Empowering decision making in communities), Food giveaways
Space4autism	Pre-school Group	Clubs for Children/ Young People	
CAB-North		Mental Health Advocacy, IACE Services	Universal Information and Advice
Alzheimers Society	Side by Side (People with dementia), Advisers and Support Worker Intervention, Crisis prevention and management(CriSP), Live Well with dementia (Self management for people with dementia)	Dementia Adviser/Support, Post diagnostic support for all types of dementia	Dementia Awareness and Support, Combating stigma around dementia, Campaigning for Services/ Support to "Have the conversation" - pre diagnostic
Disability Information Bureau	Wheelchair loans, RADAR keys, Shopmobility Services, Specialist Employment Support(Visual Impairment), 1to1 learning support with adaptive technology	Learning opps with adaptive technology, Employment support people with learning disabilities, Mental Health, Low basis skills, Welfare rights form filling	Information and Advice, Volunteering opportunities, Employment support, Hate crime advice centre, Learning Centre, Drop in IT centre
Age UK Cheshire East	Dementia Support	Help at Home, Men in Sheds	Information & Advice
Neuromuscular Centre	Early Help for all- Opportunities to achieve training and develop new skills	Physiotherapy for management of condition	Crisis Avoidance -Support of family
Home-Start East Cheshire		Support to Families to prevent breakdown at home and going into Child Protection or Child in Need.	Supporting Parents to feel in control
Methodist Homes			Live at Home - Social activities/Falls Prevention/ Preventing social isolation
Deafness Support Network		Youth services, British Sign Language/Interpreting, Drop in sessions, Deaf community Deaf clubs, DSN projectschild and families, Deafness and dementia, Positive hearing, Technological advances in communication support	1 in 6 of Cheshire East population experience significant hearing loss/deafness. As the population ages this will move to 1 in 5 and impact on the 'Many' or 'Some' definition

Theme: Reducing Dependency		Services	
Organisation Name	Few	Some	Many
CarersTrust4all	Palliative care, End of life care at home, Young carers, Young Adult carers, Complex Needs care	Carer Breaks, Support Groups, Signposting to Carer Services	
Arch North Staffs	Housing First, Domestic Violence Services, Supported housing for homeless, Housing for refugees and asylum seekers, 24hr DV Helpline	Mental Health accommodation for Recovery & Independence, Resettlement support for homeless & refugees, Equipping with skills, Healthy relationship course, Supported housing for homelessness & resettlement	Private rented sector advice with support to tenants and landlords, Money & Debt advice, Prevention & Education services (LD reality of independent living delivered in schools), Tenancy training
CRE8	Alternative Education, Life skills, Practical skills development.	Music clubs (tuition, drop in, concerts), Clubs YP 8-16, Employment experience for young adults.	Role modelling in community/ neighbourhood
Space4autism	Signposting to other services	Social skills groups, Educational workshops, Employment training, Parent carer support	Early Intervention support
CAB-North	Your Voice - for adults with mental health problems	Mental Health Advocacy, IACE Services	Financial capability skills, Universal Information and Advice
Alzheimers Society	Post hospital discharge advice	Dementia adviser, Delaying move to LT care, Preventing hospital admissions, Carer support, Dementia cafes and groups	
Disability Information Bureau	Wheelchair loans, RADAR keys, Shopmobility services	Information and Advice (specialist), Welfare rights, Employment support, Specialist adaptive technology (to combat digital inclusion)	Information and Advice, Volunteering opportunities, Employment support, Hate Crime advice centre, Learning Centre, Drop in IT centre
Age UK Cheshire East	Dementia support	Help at Home, Men in Sheds	Information & Advice, Volunteering opportunities
Peaks and Plains	Falls prevention, Frailty discharge support, Specialist DFG adaptations	Talking therapies, Trustlink	One You Cheshire East
Neuromuscular Centre	Support individuals and their families to manage their neuromuscular condition	Support people to evaluate their own needs and increase their confidence	Reduce dependency on statutory services (forward planning of Health/Social/Work needs)
Home-Start East Cheshire		Focused support for families on CAF/CIN plan.	Support for all families with children under 5
Methodist Homes			Live at Home - Reduces reliance on families/carers

Theme: Skills and Employment	Services		
Organisation Name	Few	Some	Many
Arch North Staffs		Support for individuals as an holistic approach to improving Income & Independence, Links with JCP, Remploy & PM Training	Volunteering opportunities, Apprenticeships
CRE8	Employment experience for young adults at risk through CRE8 social enterprise	Skill development in group activities at clubs/residentials eg gardening, cooking, construction, performance	Information /Process/Good Practice sharing with other organisations.
Space4autism	IT Help, form filling, PIPs advice, EHCP advice, Cygnet course	Employment training, Educational workshops, Social skill clubs	
CAB-North		Financial capability skills	Employment caseworker support (Info & Advice), Small business start up(Info & Advice)
Alzheimers Society		Dementia awareness & understanding for communities, Voluntering opportunities	
Disability Information Bureau	Specialist work placements & Voluntary opportunities for disabled people, Adaptive Technology, 1 to 1 learning support, Specialist support for Visually Impaired & Disability	Learning opportunities, Drop in, Employment support	Volunteering opportunities, Employment support, Learning Centre, Drop in IT centre, Work placements
Age UK Cheshire East		Men in Sheds	Info & Advice, Volunteering opportunities
Neuromuscular Centre	Training on site and distance learning - graphic design, animation, photography	Employment opportunity in design & print social enterprise, Volunteering opportunities	Skills for carers, Mindfulness sessions, Peer group support with activities
Home-Start East Cheshire			Group support for parents to make healthy choices and improve knowledge
Methodist Homes			Live at Home - Volunteering opportunities
Deafness Support Network		Youth clubs-D/deaf led but open to all young people- Encourages integration and reduces isolation and loneliness	

## **Table Discussions - Key Observations**

### **NETWORKING AND COMMUNICATION**

- Clarity around titles – better publication of services
- Pre notification to give time to build partnerships
- Linked to more timely and effective communication with sector before a tender is released
- Don't want to be called family as we are distinct organisations that come together
- Want to be trusted and respected seen as a professional organisation
- Ensure that social value is built into the framework and it has a local element to it
- Ensure that contracts are resourced adequately – “volunteers aren't free”
- Can't afford to run contracts at a loss or subsidised from charity funds
- Need to have the discussions about real cost of services
- Glossary provided – explanations more complicated than the terms themselves! Who is it written for?  
Make it local – ref the HM Treasury
- What does that mean in Cheshire East?
- Consistency of approach – communication. Important that communication continues after consultation – ongoing communication
- Commissioning team doing a “road trip” of selected organisations to speak with groups and 2-way communication

### **ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION**

- Partnership working to be encouraged – more of these type of network events
- Lip-service only often given to consultation, need proper market/customer engagement. E.g. spec already written, how are trends fed back?
- Early warning of tenders/grants that may be coming
- Longer notice periods would help
- Can tenders be commissioned e.g. 1 year before contract end dates
- Longer contract periods if possible
- Learning from other LAs – find out what's worked well – possible to pool resources
- More clarity on desired outcomes – better specs
- Existing involvement groups – self selected, tend to be older, with particular views = polarised view all the time.
- Creativity in social media, existing community groups e.g. schools, parents etc.
- Use local Healthwatch to gather views
- Groups engage with their service users very well, ask for those views.
- Charity shops used at hubs?
- Commissioners going out and seeing the services etc. in situ rather than holding events
- If information doesn't connect or trigger, it can pass you by and you won't engage.
- Use many routes to access ranges of people.
- Faith sector – may not even consider bidding for a contract or consider themselves as a contracted service.
- Difficulties in connecting with different denominations e.g. Methodist group connecting with another denomination.
- Housing group meetings have had involvement with churches.
- Recognising that there are many organisations/groups who provide extensive support in the “many” area of triangle that are not contracted services.
- Are we using all assets/routes we have as effectively as we can to engage and provide services? Broad commitment for groups to work together.

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- Death by email? Phone calls/conversations much more productive.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- Specific dates advised at start of year (only told quarterly)
- Need time/lack of notice
- Meaningful data needs to be requested and tell us WHY data is wanted, what will be done with it, will it be acted upon – not convinced it'll be put to good use
- Staffordshire have quarterly forums and working groups e.g. homelessness partners meet in Newcastle and Stoke – need structured agenda's issued ahead of meetings
- On-line is OK but still need face-to-face meetings
- IMPACT – it has on people – they should always be at the centre.
- If contracts aren't working well, ability to go back and say = co-production should not just be at the start of the commissioning process but all the way through. Continuous improvement.
- Numbers vs impact sometimes – individual impact can be huge.
- You can say you've helped 100 people but might not have had much impact, as opposed to life-changing support to 10 people. Ability to capture that.
- Numbers don't necessarily tell the story. One intervention can be the start of a relationship which is ongoing (and possibly preventative)
- "Capturing the journey" of people rather than numbers.
- Why are the commissioners asking for that particular information? An the commissioner justify if – is it needed? E.g. rather than the number of PA's involved, how many sick hours have been taken? Are they asking the right questions to discover value? Ask provider what information they can give to give the fullest picture.
- Does anyone read the contract monitoring submissions? Limited feedback.
- AS long as you know what is needed and why/who for?
- Prime opportunity before procurement starts to speak to providers – pre-procurement consultation. Get it right at the start – do it once and properly.
- Have terms and conditions littered with typos and referring to non-existent clauses. Contracts and monitoring forms etc. should all the be checked.
- CCIL don't like the term "co-production"
- Use of info graphics can be very powerful (complexity of contract taken into account)
- Also learn from process where case studies don't have happy endings – "near misses" idea, where service developments can adapt and encourage innovation.
- Period of allowing groups to learn and evaluate – allow to test service delivery without fear of failure.
- Reflection on contracts at the end of the contract.

## COMMISSIONING FRAMEWORK

- Will obtain further feedback re. CHEST
- Like messaging area
- More notice/longer contracts to give stability
- Trusted/preferred supplier list then makes it easier and quicker over time
- Larger single contracts
  - Want conditions around the contract to ensure range of providers and choice rather than having single provider e.g. % on management, % delivery for lead
- Role of lead to provide the outcomes/ reporting process for small organisations to be able to be involved
- Discussion around should it be split between 4 areas or all, some, few – all have challenges as services cross cut all of them

- Type issues if any CEC staff have to transfer within any contracts e.g. pension costs.
- If lead and subcontractor - need to have time to develop the contract between them
- Lead should lead with limited delivery in contract history of doing that well
- Lead respect, understand and utilise skills of the partners
- Time of the sector to choose it's Lead
- Transparent what the management fee is
- Transparent what all contractors get
- Council needs to pass on any savings made by fewer contracts e.g. fewer contract management staff
- Transparency around who scores and how they analyse the bids
  - do they know the service?
  - Do they know how to assess?
- Is there a way to stop them being over impressed with "glossy vs quality"
- Participatory Budget process not effective way of spending money "popularity contest" rather than spending based on real need. Small organisations put off by having to do public speaking
- How to decide what services in framework
- Task and finish group pull together and then carry out full consultation – VCFS on this not just council!
- Lack of understanding of what some charities do sometimes
- Lack of realisation of how much time and effort the bid writing can take
- Before new contracts etc., map what is already going on in the region, be aware of existing partnerships/interfaces
- Having lighter touch terms and conditions – proportional to the contract
- Response time is key – 100s of pages of terms and conditions, post issues on CHEST etc. Onerous process. Terms and conditions tailored to the contract and value.
- Really clear about set up if encouraging partnerships. Partnership agreements key rather than main provider and sub-contractors.
- TUPE – lots of issues. Expectation that people transfer from NHS, Council, potential risk re. pensions etc is massive. Plus impact of heightened terms and conditions. Being realistic about ring-fenced money for TUPE process.
- Clear that when process starts, have TUPE information sheets attached to the contract to be fully aware of implications to organisations
- Takes time to build partnerships and to do it well
- Payment in arrears – could be a deal breaker for smaller groups. Larger charities can manage it better, Can be compounded by delays in management process.

## **WORKSHOP EVALUATION**

### **Levels of understanding**

Organisations were asked to indicate their level of understanding against the following questions before and after the workshop.

- How would you rate your understanding of commissioning and what it entails?
- How would you rate your understanding of the commissioning process at Cheshire East Council?
- What level of understanding do you have of the term 'Commissioning Framework'?

There were 16 feedback forms completed and 15 of these identified the same or improved understanding in relation to the above questions following the event.

### **What were the expectations?**

A clear understanding of what the framework may look and feel like

To hopefully understand more and influence change

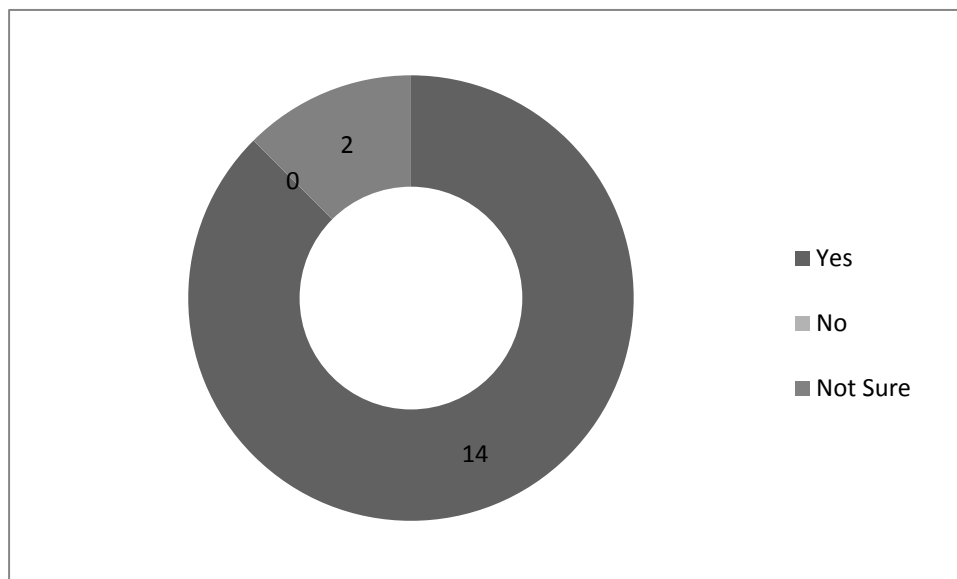
To get an understanding of where we are moving to in the CEC commissioning process and how we can improve partnerships and monitoring outcomes

More knowledge of how to get involved

An understanding of the new commissioning direction and process

An idea of what Cheshire East might commission next year

### Did the workshop meet expectations?



0 = No, 2 = Not Sure, 14 = Yes

### What additional information was required?

No requests for additional  
information received

### Other Comments

Well organised,  
thanks!

Great opportunity to learn and  
meet some useful contacts

Good networking event and  
some really rich valuable  
conversations on our table

Very welcoming with a real  
desire to pull together and  
improve the offering across the  
sector

I don't think my level of understanding  
has changed because the focus was on  
questions and developing the process