

Wiltshire Council's Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy
DRAFT
2012-2015

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1. Executive summary

1. This document is Wiltshire Council's corporate strategy for the voluntary and community sector (VCS).
2. The VCS is sometimes referred to as the third sector or civil society organisations. In the context of this document, VCS is the term used to describe voluntary and community organisations, charities, and social enterprises.
3. The council regards the VCS as a key partner in delivering its vision for stronger, more resilient communities in Wiltshire. As such the council believes it is strategically important to develop a positive relationship with the VCS.
4. This VCS strategy sets out the council's corporate approach to working with and supporting the VCS in a way that is consistent with the Wiltshire Compact (<http://www.thewiltshirecompact.org.uk/>).
5. The Localism Act introduces new community rights designed to give local people the chance to take action on local services, assets and development. The council recognises that the VCS is well placed to support the implementation of the Localism Act in Wiltshire. This strategy helps to define the relationship between the council and the VCS in relation to the Localism Act.
6. The strategy describes the council's objectives in relation to the VCS. Four strategic objectives have been identified and in relation to each one, the strategy provides a definition, an explanation for why it is important to the council, and what outcomes the council expects.
7. The first strategic objective is 'achieving value for money'. The council is obliged to achieve value for money when spending public funds. Achieving value for money is not just about reducing costs, it is concerned with investing resources in the all round best option for meeting the needs of customers. The council expects that value for money can always be demonstrated in any funding it invests in the VCS.
8. The second strategic objective is focused on partnership working to deliver outcomes for communities. The council regards the VCS as an important partner with which it must work to support the development of resilient communities in Wiltshire. The council recognises that it has many opportunities for working with the VCS at both strategic and operational levels and intends to promote excellence in its practice of partnership working.
9. The third strategic objective is concerned with building capacity and capability in the VCS. The council believes that it has an important role in helping to create the conditions required to support a thriving VCS in Wiltshire. These include investment in the infrastructure support required to develop the sector.
10. The fourth strategic objective is 'enabling participation'. The council is committed to increasing local participation in decision making, design of services, and delivery of services. The council believes that the VCS is well placed to facilitate increased participation, given its tradition of focusing on inclusion and tackling inequalities. As such, the council will support greater participation in the VCS, particularly in relation to volunteering.

11. The achievement of the four objectives described in the strategy will be demonstrated through the delivery of measures set out in the action plan. The council's corporate VCS working group is responsible for the VCS strategy's action plan and will see that it is refreshed regularly and progress reported to appropriate partnerships, including the Resilient Communities Partnership.

2. What is the voluntary and community sector (VCS)?

The voluntary and community sector (VCS) is sometimes referred to as the third sector or civil society organisations. All are terms used to describe the range of organisations that are neither public sector nor private sector. It includes voluntary and community organisations (both registered charities and other organisations such as associations, self-help groups and community groups), social enterprises, mutuals and co-operatives. Three qualities unite the sector:

- Independence from government; this is also an important part of the history and culture of the sector
- 'value-driven'; this means the sector is motivated by the desire to achieve social goals (for example, improving public welfare, the environment or economic well-being) rather than the desire to distribute profit
- Not for personal profit; any surpluses generated in the pursuit of their goals are reinvested.¹

3. Why does the council need a VCS strategy?

The council regards the VCS as a key partner in delivering its vision for stronger, more resilient communities in Wiltshire. As such the council believes it is strategically important to develop a positive relationship with the VCS which is underpinned by mutual respect and understanding.

Significant measures have been put in place by the council to support the VCS since the unitary local authority was formed in 2009. Many of these measures were the result of the recommendations made through the review of working with the VCS which was undertaken jointly by Wiltshire Council and NHS Wiltshire in 2008. An update of the recommendations was reported to Wiltshire Council Cabinet in May 2010 and demonstrated that all but one of these had been delivered. In addition, the Council is supporting the Wiltshire Compact which was formally adopted at the Wiltshire Assembly conference in December 2011.

A great many changes have occurred nationally and regionally since the review was undertaken in 2008. These include a coalition Government with its concept of the Big Society, a refreshed national Compact, the Localism Act, the Equality Act, and the drive to make efficiencies to balance the need for savings and an increasing demand for services. In view of these developments a corporate VCS Strategy for the council is needed to build on the recommendations of the 2008 review. This VCS Strategy ("the strategy") sets out the council's corporate approach to working with and supporting the VCS in a way that is consistent with the Wiltshire Compact.

This strategy is underpinned by agreed values and principles of the Wiltshire Compact:

- Fairness and equality
- Openness and transparency
- Enabling and supporting
- Partnership and inclusion
- Resilience and confidence

This strategy is intended to achieve 4 objectives:

- Value for money

¹ Taken from National Audit Office website:

http://www.nao.org.uk/sectors/third_sector/successful_commissioning/successful_commissioning/introduction/what_is_the_third_sector.aspx

- Partnership working to deliver better outcomes for communities
- Building capacity and capability in the VCS
- Enabling participation

For each of these objectives, this strategy sets out:

- the council's definition of the objective
- why it is important to the council
- the desired outcomes
- how the council proposes to achieve the outcomes

4. The Localism Act and its relevance to this strategy

The Localism Act was passed in November 2011. It is a key part of the Government's commitment to 'disperse power more widely in Britain'. It delivers more than 30 of the commitments set out in the coalition agreement and sets out a wide range of new rights and powers which are put at the disposal of local people to enable them to take charge of their future. The Act is part of the Government's 'Big Society' approach, designed to:

- empower communities, by giving community groups more power to take decisions and shape their area
- open up public services to enable charities, social enterprises, private companies and employee-owned co-operatives to compete to offer people high quality services
- Encourage and enable people to play a more active part in society.

For the council, the Localism Act will have a significant impact on its relationship with the VCS. The Localism Act enshrines three new 'Community Rights' into legislation, across a wide range of service provision. These are:

The Community Right to Build and Neighbourhood Planning: This will mean local people can decide where new homes and businesses should go and what they should look like (additional to those set out in the Council's core strategy). Parish and town councils or, where they exist, neighbourhood forums, can lead the creation of neighbourhood plans, supported by the local planning authority. Once written, the plan will be independently examined and put to a referendum of local people for approval. The Community Right to Build can also be used by community groups to provide planning permission for homes, including some in community ownership for example, with receipts able to be used to support local facilities.

Wiltshire Council will work closely with the groups that come forward with planning and development proposals and ensure that there is appropriate technical support in place, as well as a clear understanding of the process. Signposting to other appropriate sources of support to build the capacity of local organisations will also be important.

The Community Right to Challenge: The Localism Act gives voluntary and community groups, town and parish councils and local authority employees the defined right to express an interest in taking over the running of a local authority service. Wiltshire Council must consider and respond to this challenge; and where it accepts it, run a procurement exercise for the service in which the challenging organisation can bid.

Wiltshire Council values the VCS as a service provider and recognises further potential for the VCS to provide good value, high-quality services.

Community Right to Bid: Using new community rights, local community and voluntary bodies, and town and parish councils, will be able to identify land and buildings that are important to them, such as a village shop, local pub, community centre or library. They can then nominate them for inclusion on a list of assets maintained by the local authority. If an asset on the list comes up for sale, communities will be able to trigger a pause for up to six months, in order to raise capital and bid to purchase the asset before it goes on the open market. Although there is no guarantee that the community will not be outbid, this measure will help local communities keep sites in public use and part of local life. It should also help to inspire greater social action in tackling problems at a community level.

Community Area Boards are well placed to agree the lists with the input of local VCS organisations. Where listed 'assets of community value' are in the possession of the council, the council will work with the VCS to ensure that community groups get first refusal, under its existing community asset transfer policy.

Taken together, the introduction of these new community rights is designed to give local people the chance to take action on local services, assets and development. Communities may require support to develop the knowledge and skills to take advantage of these rights. There will be a particular challenge to support inclusion and equality in how the new rights are taken up especially in relation to communities who currently lack power or resources. The council believes that it should work closely with the VCS on this agenda and the strategic objectives described in this strategy have been designed to support this. The community rights in the Localism Act are setting the basis for a new role for the council and a new relationship with the VCS:

1. The council will provide support to grow a strong, resilient VCS in Wiltshire – recognising that this may result in more responsibilities and funding being entrusted to the VCS so that local needs can be met
2. The council, working with public sector partners where necessary, will ensure future funding arrangements focus on clear outcomes (such as payment by results), and also encourage the development of new, innovative, and creative approaches by the VCS
3. The council will cultivate an open and transparent way of working with the VCS – sharing financial and performance information that is underpinned by the Wiltshire Compact principles
4. The council will support, develop, and encourage volunteering that meets the needs of local communities through its volunteering strategy.
5. The council recognises that the VCS will need to navigate its dual roles: 1. As a strategic partner – able to argue for, inform and shape better public services; and 2. as a service provider.

The Equality Act and its relevance to this strategy

The Equality Act was passed in October 2010 and brings together nine separate pieces of legislation into one single Act. This makes it easier to understand what our responsibilities are and for individuals to understand their rights. The law has also been strengthened in important ways to help tackle discrimination and inequality, protect individuals from unfair treatment and promote a fair and more equal society. The basic framework of the Act sets out nine characteristics which are protected from direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation in services and public functions, premises, work, education, associations and transport. These are:-

- age
- disability

- race
- sex
- pregnancy and maternity
- gender reassignment
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- marriage or civil partnership

In the context of this strategy, the Act provides an important framework for the council and the VCS to continue to build understanding of the needs of all communities in Wiltshire. It will also help the council to ensure that a range of services are delivered that can meet diverse needs and are of a consistently high quality.

5. Strategic objective 1: Achieving value for money (VfM)

What is Value for Money?

'VfM is a favourable combination of quality and price. By 'quality' we mean both 'fit for purpose' and meeting the needs of customers'

Achieving VfM is not just about reducing costs, or finding the cheapest solution, it is concerned with investing resources in the all-round best option for meeting the needs of customers. In the context of this strategy, VfM is the demonstration that the council's investment through the VCS both achieves agreed outcomes and represents efficient use of public funds.

Why is VfM important to the council?

The council must always be mindful of VfM when spending taxpayers' money. Taking account of the current economic climate and the spending pressures facing local government, the new reality for the VCS is that council investment into that sector can only be achieved by securing VfM; both in reviewing existing commitments and planning new ones. This means that in some areas savings will be identified in order to fund new requirements and to achieve the aspirations outlined in the council's Business Plan.

The council recognises that this will be challenging for the VCS, but believes that the sector is in a strong position to support and deliver our ambitions through the benefits of smarter working and exploring options such as sharing expensive 'back office' costs like premises, HR and financial management. It is also recognised that asking the VCS to deliver new things may mean the reduction or cessation of some provision which is not as high a priority for the council.

Outcome: VfM can always be demonstrated in any council funding invested in the VCS.
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How will VfM be achieved by the council?

For 2013/14 savings in VCS funding will be identified within the council in order to release funding to reinvest in our priorities as set out in the business plan (<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/council/focuson.htm?aid=117584>). Work on precise figures will be undertaken during 2012/3 with risk assessed prioritisation, but savings of 10% of the grants budget of £2m is the likely minimum, releasing £200,000 to help to achieve our aspirations in developing stronger communities. No change will be made to existing VCS funding without formal review and impact assessment including a consideration of equalities issues. All adjustments and associated consultation processes will be in line with the VCS Strategy, the council's priorities as set out in its business plan, and will be Compact compliant (<http://www.thewiltshirecompact.org.uk/>).

Decisions made by the council about the investment will take account of the following:

1. **Overall aims and required outcomes will be described by the council;** providers (and potential providers) will decide how best to deliver the VfM requirements taking into account available data like the JSNA², Equality Profile for Wiltshire, council and NHS service reviews, changing policy and legislation and the priorities identified in this strategy. On occasion the available budget will be defined by the council; on other occasions required outcomes will be identified and prices negotiated or determined through a competitive

² Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Wiltshire

process. These will include a need to demonstrate compliance with the Equality Act through effective equality monitoring of both staff and customers.

2. **Demonstration of cost effectiveness of services;** the council will expect all organisations seeking funding or tendering for commissioned services to demonstrate the cost effectiveness of their services in delivering the desired outcomes. This could be through the use of recognised methods such as benchmarking and unit costing (for example). This should also reflect the fact that good practice on equalities and inclusion can be part of an efficiency solution.
3. **Evidence of good use of shared resources will be expected;** the council will seek to avoid duplicating funding for services which could be shared by providers. For example this might be through shared VCS resources for advice, information and signposting or for shared back office functions. It is anticipated that the VfM agenda will encourage the VCS to offer provision through partnership, collaboration, merger, and co-location.
4. **Innovation will be expected by service providers funded by the council;** this could be demonstrated by taking account of new ways of delivering services and in line with the wishes of groups and communities such as those reflected in Community Plans and Area Board local priorities
5. **“Impact of the VCS in Wiltshire” research;** the findings of a joint piece of research between the council and University of Bath will be published during the summer of 2012 and may result in the need for dialogue between the VCS and council to agree priorities in response to the outcomes.
6. **Formal Reviews;** all contractual arrangements undergo periodic review and the council will use this opportunity to explore whether the service funded by it is achieving VfM.

6. Strategic objective 2: Partnership working to deliver outcomes for communities

What does 'partnership working' with the VCS mean for the council?

The Wiltshire Compact makes this promise: *"We will work together as partners to build stronger and more resilient communities."* This promise aims to make a positive impact on the relationship between the public sector and the VCS and their joint commitment to establishing effective partnership working where appropriate. The Compact constitutes a set of principles about working in partnership which underpin the approach taken in delivering this strategy and all of the council's joint working with the VCS.

The council has many opportunities for working in partnership with the VCS. These can be split across two broad areas:

- **Strategically;** the council wants to work with the VCS to develop a shared vision of resilient communities for Wiltshire across a wide range of issues including housing, health, community safety, and transport (for example).
- **Operationally;** the council will fund the VCS to deliver services on its behalf for the benefit of Wiltshire communities through our commissioning and contracting arrangements and grants.

Why is partnership working important to the council?

The council wants to work in partnership with the VCS because it values the contribution the VCS makes to developing resilient communities in Wiltshire. The council also recognises that the VCS has a perspective on the needs of, as well as inherent talent and capabilities within, communities which is the result of its experience in delivering services. As such, the council believes that it has a responsibility to develop and nurture positive partnership working with the VCS because this can result in better quality services to all of Wiltshire communities, better value for money for public funding, and can deliver benefits to the local economy.

There is a well established history of strategic partnership working in the Wiltshire 'Family of Partnerships', the Wiltshire Assembly, and through various structures including the Compact Board and other thematic partnerships. Through these structures it has been possible for the council to work with the VCS to develop shared priorities and jointly agree actions. These actions are often translated into services for communities which may be funded by the council and delivered by the VCS. Although this kind of relationship is contractual, the council also wishes to use these arrangements as opportunities to deepen partnership working.

<p>Outcome: Partnership working between the council and the VCS in Wiltshire is characterised by trust, respect, and effective joint working. This results in a shared vision for, and excellent services to, all of our Wiltshire communities.</p>
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How will the council promote excellent partnership working with the VCS?

The council recognises that there are challenges to achieving real partnership working. These can include competing and conflicting priorities and the different cultures in the public sector and the VCS. However, the opportunity to better meet the needs of our communities by working in partnership must compel us to work through these challenges. Economic pressures tend to increase competitiveness but also offer an opportunity to look at smarter ways of working collaboratively and to deliver services in innovative ways. Wiltshire has already seen some successful examples of mergers in the VCS which have produced efficiency savings. There are also good examples of

innovative collaboration between organisations in the VCS. The council welcomes these measures as they should improve the sustainability of the VCS.

At a strategic level, the council will promote and develop excellence in partnership working with the VCS through:

- continuing to involve the VCS at a strategic level so that it can help to shape a shared vision for resilient communities
- inviting the VCS to organise itself in such a representative way that it can properly participate at a strategic level, have a voice for all of our communities in Wiltshire and influence decisions
- committing to Compact ways of working

Where the council funds the VCS to deliver a service the council will seek to work with the provider on a collaborative basis. At this operational level, the council will promote and develop excellence in partnership working with the VCS through:

- complying with its VCS funding framework which will ensure that processes are clear, equitable and accessible
- considering the impact of its funding decisions and procurement processes on the local VCS 'market' including any impact on equalities
- committing to Compact ways of working

7. Strategic objective 3: Building capacity and capability in the VCS

What is capacity/capability building?

In this context, capacity, or capability building, is work that develops the skills, knowledge, and resources of voluntary and community sector organisations in order to improve governance and increase their ability and effectiveness in the delivery of services.

VCS “infrastructure organisations” are umbrella organisations that support and advise groups in the VCS who otherwise may have limited or no access to information, training, or representation. Many small groups rely on their “infrastructure organisations” to provide them with up-to-date information, legal guidance, financial services and employment advice. Some organisations have access to national or regional parent organisations (e.g. sports clubs with their governing bodies and Citizens Advice Bureaux with their national body). There are also national and regional infrastructure organisations whose role is to support local infrastructure providers e.g. ACRE (who support rural community councils) and the South West Forum. In Wiltshire, the VCS are able to access infrastructure support from a range of organisations providing either issue specific (e.g. Village Halls and Young People) or more generalist support.

Why is it important for the council to build capacity and capability in the VCS?

It is important to the council to see the right conditions put in place to support a thriving VCS in Wiltshire for the reasons outlined earlier in this strategy. The council believes that quality infrastructure support is critical as it can help to build the capability and capacity of the VCS. Nationally, the role of infrastructure is well understood and supported. Having a thriving and resilient VCS is an essential component of building civil society and delivering the Localism agenda. Having sustainable organisations that can support the VCS and help build capacity and capability is therefore crucial. The national importance of infrastructure support can be seen in the coalition government’s Transforming Local Infrastructure fund, (£30 million in 2012).

Local research³ undertaken highlighted some clear and consistent priorities for infrastructure support and representation. The issues that groups indicated had the biggest impact on them and helped them to achieve their aims included:

- **Funding** (access to adequate, long term funding, effective funding advice)
- **Volunteers**
- **High quality staff and skills development** (the training and development of professional and competent staff, including managers)
- **Effective partnership working**
- **Organisational development** (this was a particular priority for community groups without paid staff and was also important to larger groups that wanted to grow or expand)

Conversely some of the things that groups said hindered them included lack of funding, lack of volunteer support, lack of time and resources and poor relationships with the statutory sector. Groups recognised that **effective infrastructure support** could help them to overcome these issues. More recently these issues have been identified as current through the Partnership Improvement and Progress group.

³ ‘On a plate’ research into the infrastructure needs of the VCS in Wiltshire, 2005

Evidence shows that despite the identified infrastructure issues described above, take-up of infrastructure support in Wiltshire is relatively low⁴. Some of the barriers that stopped groups from accessing infrastructure support were lack of knowledge about what was available, poor or inconsistent service delivery, lack of time and irrelevant support. Data from some of Wiltshire's infrastructure providers also shows that proportionate to the number of VCS organisations in Wiltshire (estimated at around 7,500), take up of infrastructure support is quite low. For example two infrastructure organisations have reported working with c400 organisations in a year which as a proportion of the estimated total population of organisations is only some 6%.

Outcomes: The VCS benefits from the council's investment in fully accessible infrastructure support. This results in a thriving VCS in Wiltshire which is characterised by strong governance and effective service delivery

How will the council build capacity and capability in the VCS?

The council will commission VCS infrastructure services providing a number of core functions in line with the National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA) five core functions of local infrastructure organisations:

- Services and support
- Liaison
- Representation
- Development work
- Strategic partnerships

Groups in the VCS will be able to access a range of support services ranging from one-to-one development support; opportunities to network (via geographic forums and thematic clusters including equality networks and clusters), peer support, comprehensive and up to date information on and about the sector (e.g. e-bulletins, fact sheets, model policies and publications); funding advice, learning and development opportunities and equipment hire. The council will also support the commissioned infrastructure service to provide a county wide Volunteer Centre.

However, the council recognises that taken together, national policy, local research and the 2010 national survey results suggest that whilst the need for infrastructure is both essential and clear, take up and satisfaction are not at the levels expected. The council will expect the infrastructure services it commissioned to be effectively marketed and promoted and for all groups to take up the support that is available if it is to represent value for money.

⁴ 2010 *National Survey of Charities and Social Enterprises (Ipsos MORI for the Cabinet Office – Office of civil society)* reveals that in Wiltshire take up of the support available from VCS infrastructure bodies (including specialist social enterprise support) is quite low with only 17% of survey respondents receiving support from such bodies and 51% indicating that they don't (from a total of 533 respondents).

8. Strategic objective 4: Enabling participation

What is 'participation'?

Participation, engagement and involvement tend to be interchangeable terms. While there are some differences in the meaning of these terms there is also a lot of overlap. All of these terms are associated with the importance of involving wider groups of people in decisions, design of services, and delivery of services (particularly through volunteering).

"We are entering an era in which progress is only possible if individuals, communities and public services are each able and willing to contribute to the solution. For this to happen, public participation must become the core, not the counterpart, of the future of public service decision-making". Peopleandparticipation.net

Why is supporting greater participation important to the council?

The Equality Act and the Localism Act impose legal duties on local authorities to support local participation in decision making, design of services, and delivery of services to all. The council needs no persuasion that increasing participation is a good thing and this is evidenced in its ambition for resilient communities and by the Area Board structure across Wiltshire which can encourage democracy at a more local level. However, the council also recognises that not all people wish to engage with the council through traditional ways like committee meetings.

The VCS has a tradition of focusing on inclusion and tackling inequalities and the council believes that it has an important role to play in supporting increased participation in Wiltshire. This could be through removal of barriers to volunteering or it could be working to meet the different or additional needs of particular groups of people.. In addition, there is an important role for the VCS to play in influencing the policy and practice of the statutory sector to ensure that it is inclusive. Participation is not only important for the council and its VCS partners, it also has the potential to change how individuals and communities live and interact. Taking part in local decision-making and helping shape future policy can change how people think about themselves and help build resilient communities.

<p>Outcome: At a community level in Wiltshire there is a high level of participation by local people in making decisions, designing services, and delivering services that meet community needs</p>
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How will the council support greater participation in the VCS?

It is inevitable that some people don't want to engage with the council, get involved in meetings, or participate in the commissioning of services. The council recognises that it must consider how best to give people the opportunity to participate while recognising their right not to. The VCS is well placed to reach people who might otherwise not be reached by services and to provide opportunities for participation. As such the council will seek to work with the VCS to find innovative methods by which people may be encouraged to 'get involved'.

For example, Wiltshire Voices is an exciting new project already underway which seeks to engage with people from a very wide diversity of backgrounds including boating communities, military families and stroke survivors. The project involves recording people's stories with the aim that these will build empathy, shift common misconceptions and stimulate action. The project is being co-produced by service professionals, support services, VCS organisations and with the target groups themselves so representing a multi-agency, cross sector approach with a strong emphasis on

community involvement. The results of each local project will be presented in both DVD and magazine style articles. Wiltshire Voices will highlight and celebrate good practice and will spotlight the challenges and difficulties that exist for many people.

In addition, Equal Chances, Better Lives (ECBL) serves as a single point of contact for equality information and support for the voluntary sector in Wiltshire. It has established a cross sector Equality Network for Wiltshire and is also developing equality clusters for a more specific focus on particular equality characteristics which will enable greater participation for all.

One of the key elements for building resilient communities is volunteering. Formal volunteering (not that associated with assisting friends or family) is defined as *“Giving unpaid help through groups, clubs or organisations to benefit other people or the environment, for example the protection of wildlife, or the improvement of public open spaces”* Volunteering therefore represents a meaningful way in which people can participate in their local communities. Taking into account that in Wiltshire it is estimated that some 78,500 people are engaged in regular formal volunteering, the provision of services that enable VCS organisations and volunteers to be matched and volunteering best practice to be supported, is unquestionably a key priority for the council. There is a separate strategy for volunteering which sets out a range of measures to address barriers to volunteering and encourages more people to benefit from getting involved in local community action. The time credits pilot scheme, for example, will be looking at new ways of incentivising and rewarding volunteering.

9. Delivering the action plan

The action plan for this strategy is found at appendix 2. Progress and performance against the action plan will be the responsibility of the council's Corporate VCS Working Group. This group sees senior managers, across all areas of the council, working together to ensure a consistent approach to the VCS. The group includes the independent chair of the Compact Board. However, it is recognised that the council has a responsibility to report progress on this strategy to the VCS also. This will be done primarily through the Resilient Communities Partnership but also to other thematic partnerships as appropriate.

Appendix 1: Action Plan

Strategic objective & outcome	Actions
SO1. Value for money (VfM) can always be demonstrated in any council funding invested in the VCS	SO1.1 Assessment of VfM for all services requiring funding both at the outset and through interim reviews.
	SO1.2 Compliance with the council's VCS funding framework which will ensure that processes are clear, equitable and accessible
SO2. Partnership working between the council and the VCS is characterised by trust, respect, and effective joint working for a shared vision for, and excellent services to, Wiltshire communities.	SO2.1 Consistent application of Compact principles in Council dealings with VCS
	SO2.2 Maintain and develop key strategic partnerships where the VCS and the council can develop shared vision for resilient communities (e.g. Resilient Communities Partnership, VCS Forum for Children and Families, etc)
	SO2.3 Improve effectiveness of VCS through longer contract periods
	SO2.4 Support a thriving VCS through council procurement activities
SO3. A thriving VCS characterised by strong governance and effective service delivery; designated investment in infrastructure; increased take up of infrastructure services	SO3.1 Undertake research into why take up and satisfaction levels with current infrastructure services are comparatively low
	SO3.2 Work with infrastructure providers to address research findings
	SO3.3 Develop investment plans for infrastructure, including capital support, with ring fenced budgets
	SO3.4 Develop a partnership approach to building capacity and capability so as to add value and avoid duplication
SO4. Increased participation at community level in making decisions, designing services, and delivering services that meet community needs	SO4.1 Comply with our legal responsibilities under the Equality Act, respond appropriately to the public sector equality duty, demonstrate good practice and work with partners to ensure shared resources and a consistent approach in Wiltshire
	SO4.2 Develop the Area Boards Wiltshire Voices project which will build understanding of the experiences of groups of individuals with different needs in terms of involvement in local democracy
	SO4.3 Support the development of the Equal Chances, Better Lives service to build infrastructure and support for VCS equalities groups and organisations in Wiltshire and raise awareness of the needs of people who may experience barriers to participation
	SO4.4 Deliver the action plan for the Wiltshire Volunteering Strategy including development of the Spice project to ensure an inclusive approach