

1.3.2 Legal

The draft Code of Practice refers, in Stage 3, to the need for procurement of contracts for services to follow EU procurement rules. Whilst this is correct for contracts above the threshold where those rules apply (approximately £159K), at values below that level the CBC Contract Rules will apply. Legal advice will be provided where requested on any issue related to commissioning services from the VCS. In addition, appropriate documentation will continue to be used where arrangements are entered into between the council and VCS organisations.

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1.4 Implications on corporate and community plan priorities

1.4.1 Community Plan: Improve partnership working

Ambition B.P. 3A	To retain existing business investment, while supporting our growth sectors and small businesses and ensure that investment can be accommodated within environmental goals.
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1.5 Statement on Risk

1.5.1 There are no risks as a direct result of this report.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 Good commissioning is much more than just procuring services. It is about delivering customer-centric outcomes.

Commissioning is the evidence based process through which the needs are assessed, potential resources available to meet those needs are identified and decisions are taken about how best to use resources to maximise outcomes. This in a culture where commissioning is valued as a vehicle for achieving an effective response to needs and value for money. It is a pragmatic approach of deciding, on a service by service basis, what the best method of future delivery is and for what period and is driven by a convincing business case.

2.2 Commissioners need to possess a firm grasp of the commissioning process, a

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County wide Compact Commissioning Standards.

Version 1.2

knowledge of their service field, its required outcomes and costs. They need to develop and regularly update their knowledge of the local market of supplier organisations to their field and their costs. They would also be required to develop markets where there were gaps or where current suppliers were weak. Through all this they need to be driven by recognised, and standardised, best practice.

- 2.3** It is recognised the commissioning local services, particularly from the third sector, is increasingly being practiced by public agencies. Members of the Gloucestershire Conference believe that within the county this approach should be governed by agreed principles of best practice and established a working group to develop these. The appendix to this report contains their draft Compact commissioning standards for consultation and endorsement.
- 2.4** The compact is an agreement for public sector bodies and the VCS to support and improve partnership working, with these proposed standards guiding positive relationships and engagement as the two sectors come together throughout the commissioning process. In addition to informing these standards, the research and engagement activity undertaken by the working group also identified a number of issues and challenges specifically related to the public sector agencies in Gloucestershire and their arrangements for working in partnership as commissioners. Similarly challenges for how the voluntary and community organisations can effectively operate collectively as a sector, in the commissioning process, were also raised. The working group continues to consider how to support both sectors' specific requirements, in addition to the Compact commissioning standards; to further improve the collective process of commissioning in Gloucestershire.

3. Consultation

- 3.1** A consultation exercise, on Compact principles, is currently being undertaken amongst stakeholders county wide by the Gloucestershire Conference.

Appendices

1 Compact commissioning standards - a draft Compact code of practice for Gloucestershire

Background Papers

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Scrutiny Function	Social & Community

COMPACT COMMISSIONING STANDARDS

A Compact code of practice for Gloucestershire

DRAFT January 2010

Introduction

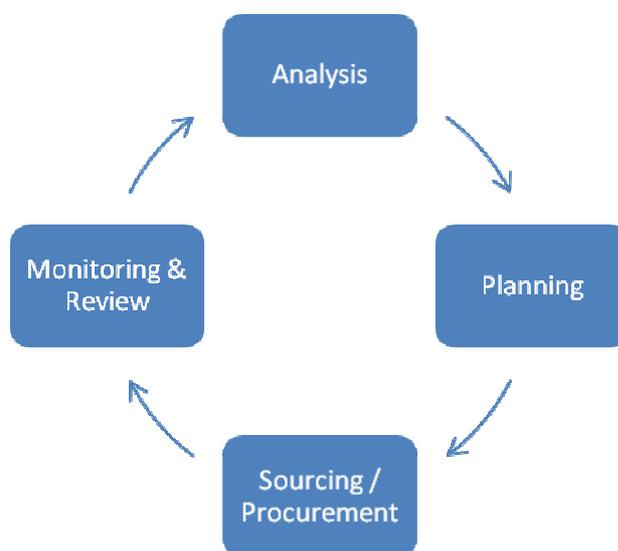
This document sets out the draft Compact commissioning standards for Gloucestershire. The standards are for both Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations and commissioners to aspire to achieve. They represent Gloucestershire's understanding of what good practice in VCS commissioning looks like and are clear statements of action and intent.

The standards are based on research locally and nationally and on a process of engagement involving both VCS organisations and commissioners across the county. One of the key messages from that engagement is that good commissioning is all about effective relationships. The design and delivery of excellent public services has to involve public sector agencies, VCS organisations, service users and communities working together in an open, transparent and trusting way. These standards are the starting point for a better understanding and relationship between the VCS and commissioners.

What is commissioning?

Commissioning is the whole process of deciding what public services are needed and how best to use the resources available to improve outcomes for local people. It is usually described as a cycle of assessing need, planning services (including specifying the outcomes to be achieved), sourcing and procuring service delivery, then monitoring the service and reviewing what is needed.

The Four Stage Commissioning Cycle



The simplest representation of the commissioning cycle has four key stages. In Gloucestershire an 8 stage cycle is being used for Joint Strategic Commissioning Plans (see background information) and is referred to throughout the standards in italics. The commissioning cycle is a model - commissioning processes will work in different ways and may start at different points in the cycle.

Levels of commissioning

Commissioning happens at three levels - strategic, operational and individual. The VCS can contribute at each level, as shown below.

Strategic	Operational	Individual
Contribute: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of what is already working • Ideas on how services could change and develop • Knowledge of local needs and services • Knowledge of individual service user experience 	Contribute: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposals for innovation • Specialist expertise • Standards and quality • Monitoring and reporting on performance 	Contribute: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responding flexibly to individual need • Ensuring users can influence form and style of service • Being an advocate for service users

Increasingly public sector partners are working together to jointly commission services, particularly at a strategic level. It can be a challenge for agencies with different priorities and organisational policies to develop and agree joint commissioning processes.

Personalisation

Personalisation is a new way of purchasing adult and children's social care services. Individual service users will have a devolved budget and will be able to decide which services to buy. Personalisation represents a big change in how services are purchased at the sourcing / procurement stage. There will be fewer block contracts, and more flexible arrangements will be developed to cater for individuals' needs and aspirations. However, the other stages of the commissioning cycle are still needed and effective service user involvement will be important to ensure choice and good outcomes.

The challenge for VCS organisations is to market their services directly to service users and to move from being a 'wholesaler' for public sector agencies to become a 'retailer' for individual members of the public. VCS organisations will need to be more flexible in their service delivery in response to consumer demand. They may also need to restructure to reflect this change in funding arrangements.

Service user involvement

Commissioners and the VCS should actively seek to put service users at the heart of the commissioning process. Service users should be involved at each commissioning stage so that they become co-designers and co-producers of the positive outcomes which commissioning strives to achieve. Effective consultation and involvement processes are a key element of good commissioning.

Commissioning for outcomes

Commissioning for outcomes is:

- Judging success by tangible benefits for the people that services are designed to benefit.
- Moving away from counting services given (e.g. number of advice sessions) to measuring outcomes achieved (e.g. back in work, self-reported recovery)

An **outcome** is the difference a service makes to its users and the community i.e. the benefits and changes that happen as a result of using the service. An **output** is a measure of the service activity undertaken i.e. the number of people worked. Traditionally, funding performance targets have measured outputs and not outcomes.

The Standards

STAGE 1: ANALYSIS

Needs - What do we know about current and future needs?

Resources - What capacity and resources do we have available to respond?

Priorities - What is most important / urgent for us to deal with?

Introduction

Effective analysis is the foundation for good commissioning. It provides a clear understanding of the current and future needs of service users, highlights where resources should be directed and defines the outcomes that need to be delivered. It involves:

- Identifying unmet needs
- Identifying gaps in service provision
- Defining clear outcomes

Gathering the views of service users and communities is vital. Providers and VCS organisations are a key source of information and insight in this phase. The VCS needs to be part of, and understand the issues arising through, needs analysis in order to be able to develop and deliver appropriate personalised services.

1.1 We will work together to ensure effective needs analysis sets out what information already exists, what information is needed and what the gaps are.

Commissioners will

- 1.1.1 Be clear about the parameters for needs analysis and what its purpose is.
- 1.1.2 Share the information they already have about needs with the VCS and service users.
- 1.1.3 Breakdown data by target group and geographical area, in order to address pockets of need across the county.
- 1.1.4 Be willing to change their assumptions about need and provision.

VCS organisations will

- 1.1.5 Contribute knowledge about emerging and unmet needs and views on gaps in service provision.
- 1.1.6 Participate in strategic planning processes, both within the VCS and with public sector partners.

1.2 We will work together to ensure effective and proactive consultation to determine the current and future needs and aspirations of people and communities.

Commissioners will

- 1.2.1 Consider supporting the VCS to carry out consultation work as part of the needs analysis process, recognising that VCS is a conduit for reaching excluded and diverse communities and people.
- 1.2.2 Work with VCS organisations that represent people from the equalities strands to understand their specific needs.
- 1.2.3 Give enough time for consultation, in line with Compact commitments, and listen with an open mind to what is being said.

VCS organisations will

- 1.2.4 Contribute constructively to the design and implementation of consultation and needs assessment processes to help ensure they engage relevant communities.
- 1.2.5 Facilitate access to 'hard to reach' communities.
- 1.2.6 Be clear about whose views they are representing during consultation processes – their organisation's or service users' views.
- 1.2.7 Develop information management and analysis skills.

1.3 We will develop a common knowledge base, as a shared resource for commissioning, to include both quantitative and qualitative data. This will be an ongoing activity.

Commissioners will

- 1.3.1** Be proactive in seeking information about needs from a wide range of VCS organisations, valuing their role as advocates for service users and communities and as providers of services.
- 1.3.2** Look at national research and good practice, particularly for niche or new services.
- 1.3.3** Disseminate the information gathered during needs analysis to relevant VCS organisations, including VCS development and support bodies such as Council for Voluntary Services (CVSs), so they can use it to inform their planning and services.

VCS organisations will

- 1.3.4** Develop more systematic approaches to gathering and presenting evidence, particularly qualitative data, to commissioners e.g. case studies instead of anecdotal information.
- 1.3.5** Be proactive in advocating both the holistic and unmet needs of the communities they work in and with.

1.4 We will work together to define and publish clear outcomes that stem from the needs analysis process.

Commissioners will

- 1.4.1** Involve relevant VCS organisations in defining outcomes.
- 1.4.2** Develop their capacity to undertake outcomes-based commissioning through training and other developmental activities.

VCS organisations will

- 1.4.3** Contribute to defining outcomes as advocates for service users and based on their experience as service providers.
- 1.4.4** Develop their capacity to participate in outcomes-based commissioning through training and other developmental activities.

STAGE 2: SERVICE PLANNING

Options - What different solutions are there and who might be involved in developing them?

Strategy - What are we going to do and how are we going to do it?

Introduction

Effective planning considers different ways of addressing the needs identified in the analysis stage. It is about shaping and designing the best solution to achieve the agreed outcome. It includes looking at how needs can be addressed effectively, efficiently, equitably and in a

sustainable way, to ensure optimal use of available resources.

It is important that VCS organisations are involved in this stage. They have valuable expertise about what works, based on their experience of advocating for service users and delivering services. They should contribute to shaping service specifications to ensure that they are realistic and achievable. This does not create a conflict of interest as long as the process is open, transparent and in the public domain. Planning involves:

- Designing services to meet agreed outcomes
- Developing the market
- Considering the best way to commission/fund services
- Producing the service specification

Good commissioning involves deciding what is being commissioned before deciding how best to commission it. There are a number of options for sourcing providers – formal procurement processes are only one approach.

2.1 We will work together to co-design effective services that meet the agreed outcomes and are responsive to local needs.

Commissioners will

- 2.1.1** Involve current and potential service users and relevant VCS organisations in planning services and identifying solutions from the beginning of the process.
- 2.1.2** Work with VCS organisations that represent people from the equalities strands to design services that will be appropriate for them.
- 2.1.3** Be open to new solutions that are not based on current services.
- 2.1.4** Be clear about available resources so that solutions are realistic and achievable.
- 2.1.5** In the design process, focus on the outcomes of the service not the mechanism for delivery.
- 2.1.6** Take account of localised needs in designing/commissioning county-wide services.
- 2.1.7** Identify good practice elsewhere and learn from what is working in other areas e.g. inviting potential providers to visit services in other areas.

VCS organisations will

- 2.1.8** Contribute innovative and creative ideas about how best to address the identified needs.
- 2.1.9** Contribute knowledge and experience of what works at a local level.
- 2.1.10** Work with other providers and potential providers to design solutions and avoid duplication.
- 2.1.11** Draw on regional and national networks to identify best practice solutions.

2.2 We will work together to develop the market to ensure there are appropriate potential providers.

Commissioners will

- 2.2.1 Be proactive in getting to know the market and the range of potential VCS providers.
- 2.2.2 Develop the capacity of VCS providers e.g. through partnering arrangements, in order to enable the VCS to fill identified gaps in service provision.
- 2.2.3 Where possible, enable the VCS to access support 'in kind' from statutory services e.g. access to training and development opportunities, staff secondment and access to premises, to facilitate the development of the VCS's skills, knowledge and abilities.
- 2.2.4 Invest in effective infrastructure support for the VCS, including support to engage in commissioning and develop collaborative working.
- 2.2.5 Give clear guidance on partnership and consortia bids e.g. guidance on collusion and competition.

VCS organisations will

- 2.2.6 Respond to identified gaps and work with commissioners to plan new services if they fit with the agreed purpose and aims of individual VCS organisations.
- 2.2.7 Be realistic about their capacity to deliver public services and engage in commissioning.
- 2.2.8 Participate in capacity building activities e.g. partnering with other relevant agencies to develop relevant skills, knowledge and abilities.
- 2.2.9 Be open to opportunities to work in partnership with other relevant VCOs.
- 2.2.10 When developing partnerships, ensure management functions and accountability for delivery between partners is clear.

2.3 Commissioners will engage in dialogue with the VCS about the best sourcing/purchasing method for achieving the agreed outcomes.

They will

- 2.3.1 Consider the most appropriate funding mechanism to secure the required outcomes, checking it is 'fit for purpose' and giving a clear rationale for why this method has been chosen.
- 2.3.2 Assess the likely impact of how funding is allocated and if it is likely to attract those organisations best placed to deliver the required outcomes.
- 2.3.3 Use grants to fund projects and where it is not cost effective or necessary to tender for a service.
- 2.3.4 Ensure processes do not create unnecessary bureaucratic barriers for potential providers, including smaller VCS organisations and partnerships.

2.4 Commissioners will seek to develop effective service specifications.

They will

- 2.4.1 Involve relevant VCS organisations and partnerships in informing and shaping service specifications.
- 2.4.2 Make sure specifications are clear and avoid being over-prescriptive on how outcomes should be delivered.
- 2.4.3 Retain responsibility for writing the service specification, without the involvement of VCS organisations, to ensure there is no conflict of interest.
- 2.4.4 Consider wording the tender specification to emphasise local knowledge and community links where this is an important part of the service. However, a local provider cannot be specified.

STAGE 3: SOURCING / PROCUREMENT

Implementation - Commissioning of new capacity & de-commissioning of old capacity

Introduction

Effective sourcing / procurement secures the most appropriate provider(s) to deliver the required outcomes. The end result is that individuals and local communities receive the best services. Funding and investment decisions should be based on work done during the planning stage and the sourcing process chosen will depend on what is being commissioned.

The two main approaches to funding public services are:

Grants: A grant is a sum of money given to support a VCO to fund activities that are in broad alignment with the public sector funder's objectives and its own public benefit remit. Grant funding is most appropriate when there is no existing market for service and if the service is new, developmental or strategic. There are two types of grant funding:

- **Grant-in-aid** is a payment by a public sector funder to finance all or part of the costs of the body in receipt of the grant-in-aid. Funding to a VCO given as grant-in-aid will be income to the unrestricted funds of the organisation because it is to support of the organisation's overall activities.
- **Grants** are used by public sector organisations in different ways. They may be used to offer financial support for specified aspects of a VCO's expenditure or they may be offered as project grants to support the provision of services specified by the funder. Project grants should be treated as 'restricted funds' in the VCO's accounts i.e. they may only be used for defined purposes.

Contracts: A contract involves the provision of services to the relevant public sector body, in return for payment representing the price of that service. The terms and conditions of a contract regulate the exchange of services for payment and contracts must include measurable targets. The process of awarding a contract is called procurement.

The decision between awarding a grant or a contract will be determined by the decision making processes of commissioning organisations. (See the National Audit Office's [Decision Support Tool](#) for more information.)

N.B. There is often a lack of clarity in the labelling of funding arrangements and in distinguishing between grants and contracts, including misunderstanding around the term

“service level agreement”. Such an agreement should function either as a contract, or as a grant, yet is often viewed as a third type of relationship. In practice a “service level agreement” is often a contract specification document.

Procurement

Procurement of contracts for services must follow EU procurement rules and general EU Treaty principles, including free movement and non-discrimination, fairness, transparency and proportionality.

There are four different standard EU procurement procedures:

- **Open procedure:** Contract is advertised and any bidder can express an interest and bid.
- **Restricted procedure:** Contract is advertised and a pre-qualification stage is used to eliminate bidders. This is the most widely used approach to procurement in Gloucestershire.
- **Negotiated procedure:** The contracting authority can carry out post-bid negotiations with selected bidders.
- **Competitive dialogue:** A procedure for complex procurements applicable in certain situations where there is a very limited market.

It is important for both commissioners and VCOs to be clear when a formal procurement process, as distinct from the wider commissioning process, has begun.

3.1 We will work together to ensure effective public sector funding arrangements in Gloucestershire.

Commissioners will

- 3.1.1** Be clear about when to use grants and when to use contracts, based on the outcomes identified.
- 3.1.2** Be clear about the type and terms of any funding relationship.
- 3.1.3** Ensure that VCS organisations, including those that represent people from the equalities strands, have equal opportunities to access public sector funding.
- 3.1.4** Be consistent across sectors when requesting cost breakdowns from organisations.
- 3.1.5** Ensure that both prime and sub contractors work within the Compact by making it a requirement of funding arrangements.
- 3.1.6** Work towards developing effective arrangements for co-operation and joint funding between public sector partners.

Acknowledge the characteristics of the VCS

- 3.1.7** Respect the voluntary and community sector’s independence and its right to campaign within the law and guidelines set by the Charity Commission, irrespective of any funding relationship that might exist.
- 3.1.8** Agree the level of reserves a voluntary or community organisation can legitimately hold when being funded solely by the public sector, drawing on Charity Commission recommendations.
- 3.1.9** Agree a clear definition of the term ‘full cost recovery’ and reach an agreed position on how this is applied in commissioning in relation to VCS costings.

VCS organisations will

- 3.1.10** Commit to the highest standards in the use and administration of public funds.
- 3.1.11** Ensure effective and proportionate systems for the management, control, propriety and audit of finances in order to be accountable for spending public money.
- 3.1.12** Comply with all relevant and mandatory accounting frameworks and financial regulations.

3.2 We will work together to promote and develop the effective use of grant funding.

Commissioners will

- 3.2.1** Support the provision of funding advice for the voluntary and community sector, whilst recognising that the public bodies may not have the resources to directly fund such provision.
- 3.2.2** Work towards a period of 3 months between notification of a new grant funding opportunity and the deadline for receiving applications, where this is within the control of the public sector body.
- 3.2.3** Provide clear objectives and eligibility criteria for all grant funding and ensure application requirements are proportionate to the size and scope of grant funding.

The application process

- 3.2.4** Provide acknowledgement of grant applications, details of who is dealing with the application and the date when decisions will be made.
- 3.2.5** Update applicants of any likely delays in processing applications.
- 3.2.6** Inform applicants of the decision and the reasons for it, and provide an opportunity to discuss this decision and its implications.
- 3.2.7** When grant funding is awarded, provide formal confirmation of what will be paid, when and any conditions.
- 3.2.8** Publicise a list of VCOs that receive grants.

VCS organisations will

- 3.2.9** Comply with the conditions of any grant funding received.
- 3.2.10** Acknowledge public sector funders on publicity etc. when asked to do so.
- 3.2.11** Recognise that funding may end if the recipient of the grant (grantee) can no longer deliver the required outcomes.

3.3 We will work together to develop effective procurement processes and mechanisms, based on good practice.

Commissioners will

- 3.3.1 Work towards advertising all tendering opportunities in a single website where VCS organisations can sign up to receive email alerts to notify them about new tendering opportunities.
- 3.3.2 Usually use a restricted two stage process so that VCOs that do not fulfil requirements do not waste their time bidding and develop a standard Pre Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) that is used by all public sector agencies and asks the same information.
- 3.3.3 Ensure, where this is within their control, that there are reasonable timescales and enough working days between different stages of the procurement process. They will publish the timetable at the start of the process and strive to adhere to it.
- 3.3.4 Recognise that funding innovative projects involves a degree of risk and requires robust performance management.

The tendering process

- 3.3.5 Ensure that procurement documentation includes a glossary of terms and a clear process and contact for getting further information.
- 3.3.6 Ensure that tender scoring is made explicit and has a balance between cost and quality.
- 3.3.7 Be clear about how payments are structured and consider scheduling some payment up front, recognising that cashflow is an issue for VCS providers. Build in flexibility in tender and post tender negotiations.
- 3.3.8 Take into account differentiation between preparation/set up and delivery phases.
- 3.3.9 Build in monitoring requirements up front as these can be costly.
- 3.3.10 Provide timely feedback to all VCS organisations that bid, whether they are successful or not, and disseminate the learning from this feedback with the wider VCS.

VCS organisations will

- 3.3.11 Accept competition and consider collaboration with other VCOs, in order to deliver the best quality services.
- 3.3.12 Be realistic and open about their capacity and not be over ambitious or expect special treatment.
- 3.3.13 Share the learning from feedback about tenders with the wider VCS.
- 3.3.14 When developing bids, understand the direct and indirect costs associated with delivery of the service.
- 3.3.15 Consider possible Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) obligations.

3.4 We will work together to implement effective de-commissioning of services that receive funding but do not meet identified needs and outcomes.

Commissioners will

- 3.4.1 Discuss the implications of any likely funding cuts or changes to local and national funding priorities and programmes with the VCS at as early a stage as possible.
- 3.4.2 Give as much notice as possible if an existing funding relationship is to terminate, providing a minimum of 3 months' notice of an intention to reduce or withdraw funding, where this is within the control of the public sector body, and give reasons for the decision.
- 3.4.3 Discuss with any VCOs who have contracts and are not meeting their performance management requirements what action can be taken to improve. Should the performance not improve as a result of these discussions, or should the effective use of public funding be at risk, funding may be terminated early.

VCS organisations will

- 3.4.4 Recognise that funding may end as needs and priorities change over time.
- 3.4.5 Plan in good time, and in partnership with commissioners, for different situations to reduce any potential negative impact on both service users, the organisation and commissioning partner(s).
- 3.4.6 Recognise that any funding arrangement is for a specified period and may not be available beyond the end of this period.

STAGE 4: MONITORING AND REVIEW

Monitoring - Is the strategy delivering the improvement needed? Are there unexpected consequences we need to address?

Review - What changes are needed to our strategy?

Introduction

Effective monitoring and review of outcomes serves two purposes. Monitoring is about the services commissioned - it ensures value for money and that outcomes are being met. Monitoring should be transparent, proportionate to the value of the funding involved, and focus clearly on the required outcomes.

Review is about the whole commissioning process and provides information to inform and improve future service delivery. In effect it is asking - did our approach to sourcing and procurement deliver on the plan we put in place to meet the needs we identified? Service users should be involved in monitoring and reviewing service delivery.

4.1 We will work together to ensure effective and proportionate monitoring of funding arrangements.

Commissioners will

- 4.1.1 Focus on evidencing outcomes when developing monitoring requirements.
- 4.1.2 Ensure monitoring requirements only ask for information that is needed and are proportionate to the level of funding and risks associated with the service, recognising that monitoring has resource costs to both the provider and funder, and excessive monitoring may detract from a focus on service delivery.

- 4.1.3 Ensure monitoring measures the right thing and that there is a dialogue and negotiation about enhancing appropriate outputs and indicators after the contract is awarded.
- 4.1.4 Introduce standardised joint reporting procedures in cases where VCS services are jointly commissioned. Encourage active dialogue with VCS providers to develop better ways of working.
- 4.1.5 Involve service users, including the views of 'hard to reach' groups, in monitoring, in collaboration with VCS organisations where appropriate.
- 4.1.6 Ensure user satisfaction, including assessment of compliments and complaints, is included in monitoring requirements.

VCS organisations will

- 4.1.7 Ensure that robust monitoring systems are in place from the start of service delivery to capture the required outcomes / outputs stipulated within the contractual agreement and are generated and provided in a timely and accessible manner.
- 4.1.8 Be honest, timely and transparent in reporting problems and under performance at the earliest possible stage.
- 4.1.9 Put in place systems to evaluate the services delivered to evidence positive impact on required outcomes.
- 4.1.10 Identify the social and added value of services, including any unintended consequences.
- 4.1.11 Involve current service users in monitoring and include measures of user satisfaction e.g. assessment of compliments and complaints.

4.2 We will work together to develop effective processes for service review.

Commissioners will

- 4.2.1 Seek to maximise involvement of current and potential service users, including the views of 'hard to reach' groups, in reviews and consider funding the VCS to carry out consultation work as part of the review process, recognising that VCS is a conduit for reaching marginalised and diverse communities and people.
- 4.2.2 Involve current and potential VCS providers in reviewing services.
- 4.2.3 Give enough time for involvement in review, in line with Compact commitments, and listen with an open mind to what is being said.

VCS organisations will

- 4.2.4 Contribute positively to reviews of services to inform future practice and commissioning processes.
- 4.2.5 Facilitate the involvement of service users, including 'hard to reach' groups, in service reviews.
- 4.2.6 Be clear about whose views they are representing during review processes – their organisation's or service users' views.

Compact commissioning standards summary

STAGE 1: ANALYSIS

- 1.1 We will work together to ensure effective needs analysis sets out what information already exists, what information is needed and what the gaps are.
- 1.2 We will work together to ensure effective and proactive consultation to determine the current and future needs and aspirations of people and communities.
- 1.3 We will develop a common knowledge base, as a shared resource for commissioning, to include both quantitative and qualitative data. This will be an ongoing activity.
- 1.4 We will work together to define and publish clear outcomes that stem from the needs analysis process.

STAGE 2: SERVICE PLANNING

- 2.1 We will work together to co-design effective services that meet the agreed outcomes and are responsive to local needs.
- 2.2 We will work together to develop the market to ensure there are appropriate potential providers.
- 2.3 Commissioners will engage in dialogue with the VCS about the best sourcing/purchasing method for achieving the agreed outcomes.
- 2.4 Commissioners will seek to develop effective service specifications.

Stage 3: SOURCING / PROCUREMENT

- 3.1 We will work together to ensure effective public sector funding arrangements in Gloucestershire.
- 3.2 We will work together to promote and develop the effective use of grant funding.
- 3.3 We will work together to develop effective procurement processes and mechanisms, based on good practice.
- 3.4 We will work together to implement effective de-commissioning of services that are currently funded but do not meet identified needs and outcomes.

Stage 4: MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 4.1 We will work together to ensure effective and proportionate monitoring of funding arrangements.
- 4.2 We will work together to develop effective processes for service review.