



City of Westminster

Children, Environment and Leisure Policy and Scrutiny Committee

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Title:	Voluntary & Community Sector Support – Recommissioning of the Service and Wider Strategic Context
Report of:	Julia Corkey, Executive Director of Communications and Strategy
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Environment, Sports and Community
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	City for Choice City of Aspiration
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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Voluntary and Community Sector Support Service is a commissioned service which acts as a conduit and coordinator between the council and the large and complex range of organisations that make up Westminster's Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS).
- 1.2 As outlined in this report, the Support Service has recently been subject to a full process of competitive procurement, which is now in its closing stages. This is a pre-existing service in the sense that Westminster has commissioned some form of dedicated support for the local Voluntary and Community Sector for some years now. However, the future shape of the service, under the contract now being procured, will be quite unlike that which we have had in the past.
- 1.3 The City Council is committed to enabling a strong, empowered and sustainable charity sector in Westminster. We want a true partnership with the sector and see it taking an increasing role in delivering many of our core strategic objectives. This means charities need to be able to increase their capacity, make their voices heard, and work ever more effectively together with the council, the private sector and each

other, to take their role as an equal partner in delivering the services local people need.

- 1.4 Effective recommissioning of the externally-provided VCS Support Service is part of our strategic approach to enabling the sector to achieve its potential in this way. However, executing a successful re-let process is in itself not really the key. The degree to which we are able to achieve our strategic aims, using this contract as a vehicle, will hinge on the ongoing process of service development and co-design which will unfold through the life of the contract. The service has been recommissioned on the basis of a much expanded service scope and specification, but this only sketches out broad expectations. The finer details of how the service will look in the long term are ours – in collaboration with the appointed provider – to shape.
- 1.5 This Committee's views are sought at this critical point, therefore, to help us better understand how to get the greatest benefit possible out of this contract and the opportunity it presents for transforming local VCS support.

2. Key Matters for the Committee's Consideration

- 2.1 The following questions are suggested for the Committee's consideration:
 1. What are the Committee's views on the overall strategic approach currently proposed for developing our relationship with the VCS? In particular, does the Committee agree with our increasing emphasis on cross-sector collaboration, leveraging Corporate Social Responsibility and demonstrating Social Value?
 2. Does the Committee feel that the externally commissioned support service, as outlined in the new service specification (attached as Appendix 1), will effectively underpin our wider strategic aims in respect of working with the VCS? What else may be needed to complement this contracted element?
 3. How might the council best support delivery of Lot 3 of this contract, relating to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)? What specific opportunities might exist to further support and reinforce our CSR aims in other areas of council service delivery and transformation?
 4. Whom, aside from the provider of the new support contract itself, would the Committee see as our key partners in cementing and delivering our aspirations for an empowered, effective and sustainable VCS in Westminster?
- 2.2 The Committee's responses will form the basis of recommendations that will be incorporated into a short report that will be submitted to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Sports and Community for a response.

3. Background

Existing Contract

- 3.1 The Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Support Service is a commissioned service, managed within the council by the Policy, Performance and Communications team. The provider of this service acts as a conduit and coordinator between the council and the large and complex range of organisations that make up Westminster's Voluntary and Community Sector.

The contract is currently held by One Westminster and, broadly speaking their role is to support local VCS organisations in terms of:

- Information provision
- Infrastructure support (linking charities up with training, practical skills etc) that they may need in the course of their operations
- Advocating for the sector and influencing other key stakeholders
- Providing a focal point for identifying key issues affecting the sector and seeking solutions
- Supporting the networks where VCS organisations in Westminster come together
- Holding events and producing materials to promote the work of the VCS and raise profile/awareness.

3.2 A previous contract ran with One Westminster until 31st March 2017 and a short-term contract extension was put in place with the incumbent, which will end in September 2017. Officers are therefore currently in the latter stages of a full procurement exercise which will secure a new, longer term contract to last at least 3 years.

Connection to Wider Strategy

3.3 Recognising the critical role that the VCS frequently – and increasingly – has in public service delivery and meeting the needs of the people of Westminster, the council aims to facilitate a thriving, resilient, empowered and more sustainable sector. We want to ensure VCS organisations can work effectively across sectors, alongside the council and with each other, to deliver services to local people and contribute to the full range of City for All objectives. We are keen to see the VCS operate as a strong and increasingly self-sufficient partner.

3.4 This thinking is at the heart of the overall strategic approach the council wishes to take the VCS. Work is being undertaken to develop a 'policy framework' which would facilitate and give shape to this, supporting a new way of working with the sector. The framework will look at many aspects of the council's future working relationship with the VCS, including infrastructure support, future use of council buildings by charities, identifying and demonstrating social value, and potential connections to the use of ward budgets. Consideration of this policy framework is in its very early stages and the subject areas it touches upon will each be will be discussed and worked on in much greater detail in due course, independently of the procurement process for this contract. However it is important to view these pieces of work in context with each other, as the VCS Support Service provider will have a central role to play in enabling the necessary capacity growth within the sector.

3.5 So, as the new contract arrangements will be instrumental in delivering our wider strategic goals for the VCS, care has been taken to ensure these aims are reflected and borne out in the contract specification.

Expanding the Scope of the Service

- 3.6 Re-procurement of the service obviously gave us the opportunity we needed to drive the required changes forward. A brand new service specification was developed, setting out a considerably expanded and reframed service scope, with particular emphasis in some new areas of delivery which extend far beyond what the service provider has previously done. The most notable changes are outlined below.

a) Network Support

The specification expands the existing support and coordination functions provided by the contractor for VCS networks. Formal networks are a vital mechanism through which VCS organisations can meet, discuss common issues, share learning and represent themselves with a more unified and coordinated voice. The holder of this contract has historically coordinated and supported the main network of VCS organisations in Westminster, the Westminster Community Network (WCN). In addition to the main WCN there is a health and wellbeing-specific VCS network which was previously been coordinated separately by the Public Health team. To take a more strategic, efficient and coordinated approach, support for this network has been incorporated into the new service specification so that it will be managed directly alongside the WCN. By Cabinet Member decision, funding to support this aspect of the service will transfer from Public Health to PPC.

b) Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

A significant new service element has been developed, focusing on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The proposed CSR 'brokerage service' is designed to facilitate more effective joint working between the VCS and private sector businesses, increasing our ability to leverage the benefits of CSR locally. This aspect of the specification has been designed to align fully with the council's wider CSR strategy and to, ensure it gets the profile and resource allocation it needs, it constitutes an entire lot of the new contract in its own right. The detail of what this new element of service will include has been outlined in broad terms in the service specification attached at Appendix 1, which states that the contractor will be responsible for promoting and facilitating CSR and business support for the VCS in a wide range of forms. It is expected that in practice this will mean that, at a minimum the contractor will:

- Act as the go-to organisation for businesses who want to get involved with small local charities. This will mean helping businesses to understand where and how they can contribute to make the greatest impact, know what issues to tackle, and find out who it would be best for them to partner with; and
- Ensure investment into the community has the biggest impact by promoting the Council's priorities framework as set out in City for All opportunity.

However, our precise expectations in this area of the specification are still to be established, as it is very much part of the undertaking for the new contract provider to work with the council in co-designing what a good Corporate Social Responsibility brokerage service would look like. This will need extensive, detailed discussion between the council and the contractor as part of contract mobilisation, and thereafter. This co-design process will also involve engaging with wider partners, too, seeking their feedback and insights, and to benefit from the experience of others. Significant work is already underway under the 'Heart of the City' initiative – the largest responsible business network in the country – spearheaded by City of London. There is much we can learn from existing good practice examples such as

this, as we design our own CSR brokerage service to be fit for purpose for Westminster's needs.

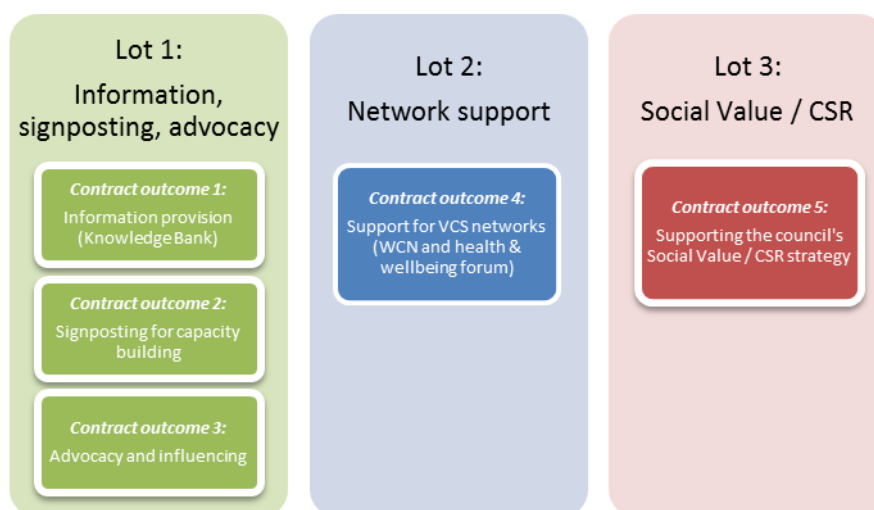
c) Social Value

The new service specification and scoring criteria place significant emphasis on the provider showing their own social value, while also helping other VCS organisations to effectively demonstrate theirs. In practice this means helping other charities to identify, understand and clearly articulate what tangible impact they are having for Westminster's residents. This is crucial to promoting the importance, contribution and wider potential of VCS service provision across all sectors, and winning support in the form of funding, access to commissioning opportunities, and CSR.

Focusing on demonstrable social value ties in with the council's Responsible Procurement agenda, which requires all parties directly commissioned or contracted by any part of the council (including, of course, the provider of this very contract) to demonstrate the Social Value delivered by their own day to day operations. Providers are required to show their positive impact in respect of our three social value priority categories: opportunity, neighbourhood, and environment. (Further information on Westminster's Responsible Procurement approach is provided at Appendix 3). So, aside from the aspects of the service specification which relate furthering our strategic social value aims for Westminster as a whole, bidders for this contract were required to submit their own social value statements as part of the agreed scoring criteria.

Structuring the Contract

- 3.7 The redrafted service specification is therefore ambitious and represents a significant change to current provision. In the interests of clarity the contract has been restructured into three lots, as follows:



- **Lot 1** – general support, information, signposting and advocacy services for VCS, based on existing service. Includes, critically, the ongoing management and maintenance – plus proactive work to optimise – existing VCS 'directory'.
- **Lot 2** – support for VCS networks, including health and wellbeing focused network, as outlined in expanded scope above.
- **Lot 3** – supporting delivery of Social Value. Incorporates CSR brokerage function for VCS organisations.

Developing the ITT

- 3.8 Full ITT documentation for the new contract, including the service specification and details of how tenders were to be scored and evaluated, was developed with input from key internal stakeholders, including colleagues in Public Health. (Their participation was particularly important in view of the decision to incorporate support for the health & wellbeing-focused VCS network into the new service scope). ITT documentation was finalised earlier this summer and, following Gate 1 sign off, the OJEU notice was issued and the tender period opened, running from late July into the middle of August.

Key Challenges

- 3.9 It is worth noting at this point that customised support for the VCS is a very niche, specialist area of service which, in many areas outside Westminster, barely exists in any formalised way. This presents particular challenges in respect of the contract procurement process, as it makes for a very limited market of potential providers. This restricted market, along with the level of ambition captured in the service scope and the application of TUPE rules in this case, unavoidably presents a number of potential obstacles to prospective new providers.
- 3.10 To attempt to mitigate this, great emphasis was placed on engagement with potential providers throughout the procurement process. Just one part of this was the open invitation 'Engagement Day' which was held halfway through the tender period. This event was actively promoted to all providers via Capital ESourcing, in hopes of instigating interest in the tender and providing any clarification that might be needed. The event also offered a networking opportunity, which could support partnership discussions between providers with a view to potential consortium bids. Detailed information was provided before the event and a full write-up was produced and shared openly afterwards, making it as easy as possible for any potential bidder to access the information even if they would be unable to attend on the day. This was all done with the aim of diversifying the mix of interested bidders.

Next Steps

- 3.11 The tender period ended in mid-August and the detailed process of evaluation and scoring followed. The scoring matrix was based on the six contract outcomes outlined above, with additional elements focused on bidders' commitment and ability to transform the service during the life of the contract, to meet with the City Council's ambitions for the future of Westminster's VCS. Ordinarily some element of service development capability might be assumed as part of the service requirements and resulting scoring criteria for a standard contract. With the importance of ongoing service development and growth being so great in this case, though, it was decided that we would require the provider to demonstrate both the ability and the inclination to be a driving force in that process. Explicit inclusion of this in the evaluation criteria effectively makes the provider's plans for transforming the service over time a specific condition of their winning the contract.
- 3.12 The scoring process has also had an important role to play in establishing our baseline understanding of existing strengths and weaknesses, which in turn informs plans for how the necessary service transformation will be taken forward. Key findings have been captured in an early draft action plan which will begin implementation when the new contract commences, on 1 October 2017. To further develop and flesh out this plan we seek the views of this Committee, with the aim of benefitting from its objectivity and fresh perspective. Feedback from the chair and

members of the Children, Environment and Leisure Policy & Scrutiny Committee at this stage will therefore provide vital additional input which will directly influence how, together with the contract provider, we co-design and deliver a VCS support service which is fit for Westminster's future.

If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers please contact Report Author

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APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: Service Specification - VCS Support Service (2017)

Appendix 2: Examples of local authority work with VCS

Appendix 3: Explanatory note on WCC Responsible Procurement

Appendix 1: VCS Support Service Contract Specification

**Specification and Requirements for
the VCS Support Service
for Westminster City Council
(WCC)**

VCS Support Service

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1. Overview of project

1.1. Vision

1.1.1. The City Council has a vision for a Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in Westminster which:

- Has strong capacity to network, advocate and influence.
- and
- Can be more financially sustainable continuing to become more independent and resilient over time.

1.2. Aim of the Service

1.2.1. The Voluntary and Community Sector have a unique and essential role in supporting local communities and delivering services that they need. The City Council sees the partnership between us as Local Authority and the local VCS as absolutely critical in the achievement of our collective aims and aspirations for the city of Westminster and all those that live, work and visit here. We therefore want to work in close partnership with a strong, resilient and empowered VCS to maintain and improve the quality, range and sustainability of voluntary and community sector services in Westminster and to improve the ability of Westminster's VCS to deliver the strategic objectives of the City Council. This is what we hope to achieve through the Voluntary and Community Sector Support Service.

1.2.2. The service is therefore made up of a number of components which are aimed at supporting and strengthening the VCS in Westminster. The core responsibilities of the contract provider include: providing information; connecting organisations by providing a fora / focal points for joint working and discussion; advocating and profile raising on behalf of the sector; and driving forward the council's vision for delivering social value in Westminster by acting as a conduit and learning source.

1.2.3. What the City Council seeks to achieve by procuring the service at this time and with this specification is to strengthen and develop the nature of support available to the VCS in Westminster. To deliver our vision of a strong, active, resilient, connected and sustainable Voluntary and Community Sector which plays a critical role in achievement of the council's core aims, we hope to provide it with an effective and continually improving support service which meets its current and future needs. This is the thinking **behind the ambitious specification which we are now using to shape the service.**

2. Current service

2.1. **The existing VCS Support Service has historically been built upon three intended outcomes:**

- **Outcome 1** - Strong knowledge, both within Westminster City Council and the VCS, about the VCS in Westminster and the needs and expertise of the different types of VCS organisations in Westminster.
- **Outcome 2** - Strong quality and sustainability of VCS service provision and community activities through tailored signposting to capacity building services to meet the different needs of the different types of VCS organisations

- **Outcome 3** – A VCS that has strong capacity to network, advocate and influence.
Strong networking capacity of the VCS to meet a wide range of local VCS organisations, to discuss local and national issues and new ways of working, from which to form shared views, priorities and strategies

2.2. Service Scope

2.2.1. The council now intends to expand the scope of the existing service in a number of ways, to facilitate an enhanced offer to Westminster’s voluntary and community sector, in line with its core priorities under the council’s City for All vision. It is intended that the degree and value of support offered to the voluntary and community sector in Westminster will continue to develop and improve yet further over time. Key changes to the existing service scope under the contract now being procured will be as follows:

2.2.2. Expand scope to include support to the North Westminster Community Network and South Westminster Community Network. Both these networks provide a similar function to the WCN at a neighbourhood level but in the past commissioned separately. Bringing the support of these local networks in alongside the broader, city-wide VCS support offer will enable greater coordination and more effective use of resources overall.

2.2.3. The addition of a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) brokerage service as part of a wider role in supporting the council’s ambitions for a more strategic approach to Social Value and the role of the private sector in delivering VCS priorities.

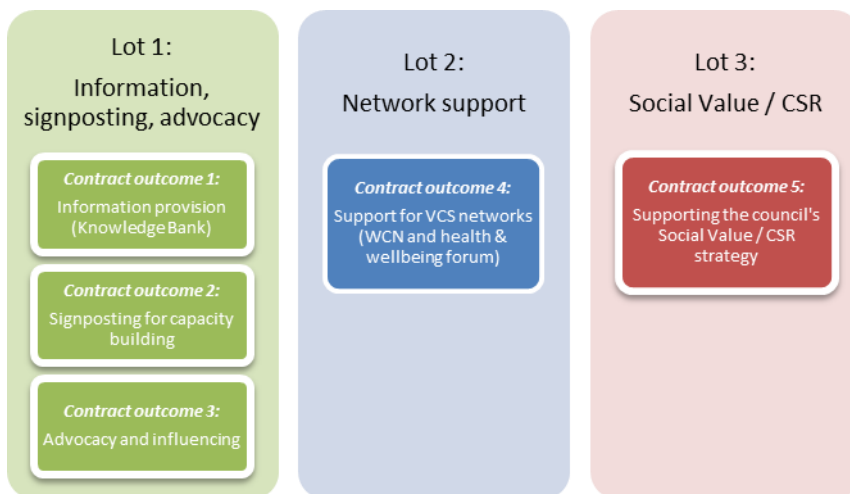
2.2.4. Although the intention is to bring these new elements in to a single contract, the contract is structured into three distinct lots to enable the best and most effective delivery of each element. Nonetheless, the City Council is determined to ensure that the contract outcomes as a whole are taken forward in a coordinated way, in line with one clear vision and a coherent strategic direction. To that end, the council does not intend to let the three lots of the contract separately, but will instead evaluate and score bids on the basis of all three lots together.

2.2.5. We recognise, though, that this specification would represent a On this basis we do not require that all outcomes across all three lots of the contract are necessarily delivered by a single provider in isolation. The council will welcome ‘consortium’ bids which put forward specific proposals for delivery of the three lots via structured partnerships of two or more providers, each contributing according to their areas of strength and expertise, led by a ‘lead tenderer’ (arrangements as outlined in the ITT documentation). It must be noted that in any bid – whatever the proposed delivery arrangements, single bidder or consortium – all outcomes across all three lots must be covered.

2.2.6. The contract will therefore be structured as follows:

- **Lot 1** – general support, information, signposting and advocacy services for VCS, based on existing service. Includes, critically, the ongoing management and maintenance – plus proactive work to optimise – existing VCS ‘directory’.
- **Lot 2** – support for VCS networks, including health and wellbeing focused network, as outlined in expanded scope above.
- **Lot 3** – supporting delivery of Social Value. Incorporates CSR brokerage function for VCS organisations.

2.2.7. The contract in its entirety can be broken down into 5 outcomes, which will distribute across the three lots of the contract in the following way:



2.2.8. In some of the newer areas of the service specification where we invite innovation from potential providers (this includes much of Lot 3), we recognise the degree to which we will be breaking new ground. The council's vision in these areas is ambitious and we look forward to the opportunity to work closely with the future contract provider and Westminster's wider VCS to put ourselves collectively at the cutting edge of emerging agendas, such as Corporate Social Responsibility brokerage, building VCS capacity for future sustainability, and maximising social value. At this stage we don't necessarily expect to see expertise on the part of tenderers in these new areas. Rather, we hope to see a clear demonstration of their intent and commitment to working in partnership with the council and the sector itself throughout the life of the contract, to shape and co-design those new functions in line with a shared vision.

3. Service requirements

Lot 1: General Support and Information Services

- **Contract Outcome 1 – Information provision (Knowledge Bank). The Contractor acts as a central source of information and knowledge for Voluntary and Community Sector organisations in Westminster. This is primarily achieved by way of the VCS 'Knowledge Bank' – a directory and information portal for VCS organisations.**
- **Contract Outcome 2 – Signposting and capacity building. To drive quality and sustainability within the sector, the Contractor provides tailored signposting for VCS organisations, connecting them to capacity building services, training and other resources to meet their various needs.**

- ***Contract Outcome 3 – Advocacy and influencing. The Contractor provides strong advocacy support to the VCS in Westminster, actively promoting the sector and its work and exerting influence across partner sectors to drive forward VCS priorities.***

3.1. Outcome 1 – Information provision (the VCS ‘Knowledge Bank’)

- 3.2. To fulfil this outcome the provider will need to develop and maintain a strong and comprehensive knowledge about the VCS ‘landscape’ in Westminster and the needs and expertise of the different types of VCS organisations within that landscape.
- 3.3. The contract provider will be responsible for the effective day to day management and maintenance of the existing VCS ‘directory’ database. The council wishes to increase the quality, value and usefulness of this directory, with the aspiration that it becomes a well-used and trusted, primary source of information for all VCS organisations in Westminster. To this end, in addition to regular management and maintenance duties in respect of the directory, the contractor will also be expected to undertake a number of actions to improve and refine this resource, developing it into a more sophisticated ‘Knowledge Bank’, during the course of the contract.

Day to day management / maintenance

- 3.4. The City Council will provide the Contractor with access to the existing VCS directory (sometimes known as the Westminster Community Network (WCN) database). For the avoidance of doubt the directory will remain in the City Council’s ownership but is maintained and updated by the Contractor.
- 3.5. The Contractor shall be responsible for the management of the directory in order to develop a strong knowledge of the sector. In order to do this, the Contractor shall:
- 3.6. Within the first 3 months of the commencement of the contract, undertake a thorough cleanse of the existing directory to ensure that all information is up-to-date, only relevant organisations (those that are currently operating and whose work connects in some way with council concerns / priorities) are included, and unnecessary duplication of information is eliminated. As part of this exercise the contractor will work with all relevant sections of the council to get all currently commissioned VCS organisations onto the directory.
- 3.7. Ensure that information about organisations on the directory includes as a minimum (but is not limited to) the following details:
- Organisation name, size (turnover & number of staff employed) , type, contact details, name of Chair or similar, name of Chief Executive or similar
 - The types of communities served by the organisations or groups receiving support by issue area such as children and families or older people;
 - The type of activity undertaken by the organisation, e.g. a short paragraph describing the aims, or the objectives, or the mission statement of the organisation. Any specific current connections with the council should also be noted, e.g. commissioning relationships or particular direct partnership arrangements.
- 3.8. Ensure that the directory is accessible to the City Council throughout the contract term and returned to the City Council at the end of the Term.

- 3.9. Ensure the directory is accessible to all those organisations and groups listed on the directory and encourage organisations and groups to use the directory to communicate with each other, so that it acts as an information portal resource to the local VCS.
- 3.10. Ensure that the directory is kept up-to-date and accurate. This will include adding new organisations and groups to the directory and deleting organisations and groups that no longer exist. Each quarter the Provider shall provide to the City Council the details of new organisations and groups that have been added to and the organisations and groups that have been deleted from the directory, so that the Council remains up-to-date on the make-up of the VCS in Westminster.
- 3.11. Conduct an annual survey of VCS organisations in Westminster to gather in-depth organisational information to supplement details already on the directory including, without limitation, where the organisation works, with whom, their main activities and aims, staffing, governance structures, main sources of income, use of volunteers, influence on and involvement in key services in Westminster, infrastructure support needs and perception of infrastructure support available at a pan-London or national level. The Contractor shall achieve a minimum response rate of 60% from VCS organisations registered on the directory to this annual survey/information request and ensure a representative sample.
- 3.12. In order to fulfil the requirements outlined above and to deliver outcome 1 effectively, the Contractor must utilise existing and continued daily contact with Westminster's VCS. The Contractor, particularly if external to Westminster, must demonstrate robustly how they will achieve this.

Development and Improvement – Evolving the Directory into a Knowledge Bank

- 3.13. As outlined above, the Contractor will be expected to enhance and improve the existing directory over the course of the contract, developing it over time into a more sophisticated and functional 'Knowledge Bank' for VCS organisations in Westminster. The Contractor will be required to build and develop the directory so that it reflects the council's vision for a resource which is:
- **Comprehensive.** Includes as much information as reasonably possible about VCS provision and activity within Westminster, including all VCS providers commissioned by the council. The contract provider will also look to develop and enrich the data set. As a priority this would include linking to any available information on performance or demonstrable impact of VCS organisations' work (evaluation reports / reviews etc.). Where possible organisations' logos or branding should be included to give visual recognisability alongside other details.
 - **Accurate.** The information is maintained, kept up to date and checked for accuracy on a regular basis. As outlined above, there should be a full review/data cleanse exercise within three months of commencement of the contract and as an enhanced version of the existing responsibility to report all additions or deletions on the directory on a quarterly basis, the Contractor will conduct a refresh and accuracy check with that same regularity throughout the life of the contract. The contract provider should establish clear mechanisms by which VCS organisations can inform them of any changes/updates to their own information, in order that the directory can be continually updated in an ad hoc way outside of the regular full review processes.
 - **Useful.** Holds the right information in sufficient detail to help businesses find charities they can work with and VCS bodies themselves make connections across their sector and areas of thematic interest. The directory will have adequate search functionality to enable users to

extract relevant information by theme (e.g. homelessness, or substance misuse) or by geographic area, and possibly other factors such as organisation size or level of resources. This should connect to a 'Get Involved' section, providing information on opportunities to support organisations with sponsorship or donations, as well how to get involved in volunteering.

- **Accessible.** The contractor actively promotes the directory and raises its profile among VCS organisations and any other interested parties, to increase its reach and usefulness. The directory is made available via the council website, where it is centrally hosted. It may additionally be linked / provided in other places as appropriate, so that it can be accessed by as wide a range of users as possible. Although the directory is ultimately owned and hosted by the council, it is fully managed by the contract provider and presented externally by the provider to support its credibility and accessibility to the VCS sector.

Insight

3.14. In addition to management and development of the Knowledge Bank for the benefit of VCS organisations in Westminster, the Contractor will have a role in generating insight into the views and priorities of those organisations, to increase understanding of what the key issues are for the sector at any given time. To this end the Contractor will use the Knowledge Bank directory and the annual survey of VCS organisations outlined in section 3.11 above, to achieve this. The existing annual survey must be 3 months of the contract developed / enhanced as necessary in order to support the monitoring of contract KPIs (see section 14 below). The City Council will work with the Contractor as required to design the surveys, the results of which will be reported back to the council so that they may feed into future policy development and decision making. The precise mechanism for this will be discussed and agreed between the Contractor and council in the early stages of the new contract implementation.

Outcome 2 - Signposting for Capacity Building

3.15. The Contractor shall actively seek out information on – and direct VCS organisations to – existing infrastructure support available locally, at a pan-London level and nationally, on topics including, without limitation:

- Governance
- Finance
- Fundraising, including:
 - corporate donations,
 - tendering for contracts; commissioning and procurement processes
 - social investment
 - demonstrating impact
- Management and Organisational Development, including marketing and communications
- HR, including, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and safeguarding training, signposting to shared payroll services and Disclosure and Barring (DBS) services
- IT & Telephony, including social media
- Energy efficiency, including low carbon foot print policies
- Premises, including signposting to websites which list available community premises such as the 'My Community Space' website
- Networking and partnerships, including consortia and merges

- 3.16. It is possible that the Contractor themselves may be in a position to act as direct provider of some of these services. If they have capacity and capability to offer organisational development support to VCS organisations, there will be scope for this within the contract, although it is not considered an essential contractual requirement.
- 3.17. In relation to the above areas of infrastructure support, the Contractor will have knowledge of this provision in a wide range of formats, such as one-to-one, group support and online resources. Different formats of support will suit different organisations, and organisations should be signposted in a way that recognises and responds to this.
- 3.18. The Contractor will direct organisations to existing online funding hub resources, and provide information on funding opportunities. Organisations could be signposted to (at a national level) NCVO Funding Central and funding advice websites such as KnowHowNonProfit.org. At a local level, organisations will be directed towards CapitalEsourcing and any other local resources/funding channels as appropriate.
- 3.19. The Contractor should use knowledge and understanding of organisations that is gained through managing the 'Knowledge Bank' to establish how to customise their support by signposting organisations more effectively within the network.
- 3.20. If the Contractor identifies gaps in the capacity building support available to signpost people to, or if gaps are highlighted by the sector through the VCS survey, the Contractor shall report this back to Westminster City Council.

Outcome 3 - Advocacy and Influencing

- 3.21. The council want to see a VCS that has strong capacity to network, advocate and influence. The Contractor will be central to furthering this aim by enabling:
- 3.22. Strong and coherent advocacy of the views of local voluntary and community sector organisations with which to engage other sectors;
- 3.23. Strong influence of local VCS over partner sectors' policies, decisions and services that affect the VCS and their interest groups or that could be improved through partners' collaboration and partnership working with the VCS

Advocacy

- 3.24. The advocacy outcome involves maintaining the VCS thorough understanding of national and local issues that affect them and the strategic environment in which they work, to improve their capacity to develop clear, coherent and shared views on these issues with which to engage other sectors.
- 3.25. The council would welcome ideas and innovation from the Contractor, on an ongoing basis through the life of the contract, on how the advocacy role could best be fulfilled. The Contractor's responsibilities in relation to this outcome are therefore considered to include, but by no means be limited to, the following.
- 3.26. The Contractor will work with the WCN advisory board and, where relevant, the City Council to identify local and national issues that will be relevant for discussion by the WCN. This will involve providing information regularly to the advisory board from a range of sources of information including, but not limited to:

- Key national or Pan-London funders and organisations:
- National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA)
- National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)
- Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations (ACEVO)
- Volunteering England
- Big Lottery Fund
- Social Investment Business
- London Councils
- London Voluntary Service Council (LVSC)
- Do-it Trust

3.27. Key local organisations, structures and partners:

- NHS commissioning
- WCC's Adult Social Care and Public Health services
- WCC's Children and Young People's services
- WCC's Community Safety services
- WCC's Corporate Policy and Strategy Unit and the Team Westminster services commissioned by this unit and delivered by external providers, such as Groundwork and Spice Innovations.
- HealthWatch and Hub Westminster

3.28. On an ad hoc basis, the Contractor will share local and national issues of interest to the sector and partners using the WCN website, the Contractor's website and social media, including blogs, or any other media that are appropriate and effective.

3.29. The Contractor will work with the Advisory Board to distil discussed information and issues into organised and useful content for a series of WCN events through the year. This may involve coordinating a series of planning meetings with advisory board members before and during the series of WCN events.

3.30. The Contractor will use discussions, opinions and resolutions resulting from the WCN events to develop shared and representative views of the local VCS to distribute amongst and engage the sector and other partners.

Influencing

3.31. The influencing outcome builds on the advocacy role, to forge meaningful cross-sector partnership working. It will enable the statutory sector to develop, at an early stage, targeted partnerships with the VCS sector regarding particular commissioning projects to enable the sector to bid effectively for the available funding. It will also encourage a relationship between the statutory sector and the VCS that goes beyond the commissioner/supplier relationship to enable the VCS to become a strategic partner in the design and delivery of public services and to look beyond the statutory sector to establish new sources of funding from the private sector. In this area, too, the City Council is keen to see innovation from the contact provider in the 'influencing' area of delivery. The Contractor's responsibilities in relation to influence shall therefore include, but not be limited to the following.

3.32. Acting as a conduit of information and collaboration between the statutory sector and VCS regarding specific commissioning activity and more strategic public service delivery planning. This could include:

- Organising statutory sector commissioners or other key representatives to attend WCN events to discuss key commissioning intentions or projects at an early, planned stage, and to discuss in a comprehensive manner how the sector could produce strong bids.
- Developing positive relationships with statutory sector commissioners and other key representatives to encourage them to engage the VCS thoroughly in commissioning decisions, policy development and service transformation plans on a broad, in-depth and continuous basis and outside of WCN events. This could be delivered by working with statutory sector organisations to identify VCS representatives to attend and represent VCS views at key partnership meetings, including without limitation, those created by the local organisations, structures and partners listed above.

3.33. For the avoidance of doubt, the cost of preparation for and attendance at such meetings is included in the Contract Price.

3.34. Distributing the representative views of local VCS amongst the sector and partners through the WCN website, the Contractor's website, blogs, twitter and other forms of social media and partner's communication channels where agreed with partners. The intelligent distribution of positive, representative views of the local VCS could be particularly effective in engaging corporate, private sector funders or members of the public to secure new sources of revenue for the local VCS.

Lot 2: Support for VCS Networks

Contract Outcome 4: Network Support. The Contractor provides comprehensive and effective support to VCS networks, specifically the Westminster Community Network (WCN) and the additional existing network which is specifically health and wellbeing focused.

3.35. The council recognises and wants to facilitate the strong networking capacity of the VCS. Creating structured and suitable opportunities for a wide range of VCS organisations to come together and discuss local and national issues and new ways of working, enabling them to form shared views, priorities and strategies, can yield major benefits for the sector and the council. So we want to see active, strong and well-coordinated VCS networks, run by the VCS for the VCS in Westminster.

3.36. A key part of the Contractor's role in this area is support for the existing Westminster Community Network (WCN). The WCN provides an invaluable 'route in' to the Voluntary and Community Sector in Westminster and this contract performs as the council's conduit into the sector. Two additional networks – currently operating locally with one based in the north and one in the south of the city – provide a similar function but with a specific health and wellbeing focus. Recognising the importance of these structures, it will be one of the core responsibilities of the Contractor under this contract to work to sustain and develop VCS networks as fora for information sharing, disseminating good practice and discussing shared priorities and strategies.

The Westminster Community Network (WCN)

3.37. In order to deliver the benefits of the WCN it is envisioned that the network will facilitate and, in collaboration with the WCN advisory board and the City Council, develop the content for:

- Quarterly WCN forums, which will be key for general networking and advocacy purposes.
- Thematic networks to strengthen the sector's targeted advocacy, influence of and collaboration with partner sectors on certain topical areas, e.g., Social Care, Housing, Children's and Health services. Thematic networks should include, but not be limited to:
 - Quarterly Meet the Commissioner events
 - Bi-annually Meet the Funder events
 - Quarterly targeted networking events

3.38. Facilitation of the network by the Contractor means delivery of tasks relating to event organisation and administration of the WCN including, but not limited to: hire of spaces and equipment, scheduling of events and event planning sessions, arranging speakers, distribution of invites and agendas etc.

3.39. Strong networking capacity will be an outcome of the WCN. The Contractor's contribution to delivery of this outcome are included but not limited to the following.

3.40. The Contractor is responsible for promoting the work of the WCN and WCN events to VCS organisations in Westminster. All organisations engaged with in the course of adding information to the VCS Knowledge Bank should be invited to join the WCN and the Contractor should highlight any relevant thematic networks to them.

3.41. The City Council will provide the Contractor with access to the WCN website. The Contractor shall maintain and update the website and maintain the WCN brand to encourage as wide a range of VCS organisations as possible engage with the WCN. For the avoidance of doubt the WCN website, like the Knowledge Bank, will remain in the City Council's ownership but will be maintained and updated by the Contractor. The Contractor shall link the WCN website to their own website, if they have one.

3.42. The Contractor will directly support the WCN to carry out its functions in a structured and effective way. This entails ensuring adherence with their manifesto, mission and values. Governance structures and mechanisms for the network will be clarified / confirmed at the start of the contract. Within the first 90 days of the contract term the Contractor will be expected to conduct a review of any existing Terms of Reference for the WCN and work with the City Council to develop and agree updated ToR as needed/appropriate.

3.43. It is envisaged that the network could have a central role in helping us understand how the social value strategy will be implemented on the ground. We also see significant scope for the network to support organisations within the sector to understand the social value they themselves deliver, and assist them in their endeavours to use this information to good effect in bidding and procurement processes. The City Council would welcome ideas on how the network could be supported to focus on this as a priority in the early stages of the new VCS Support Service contract, in order that it can contribute significantly and meaningfully to shaping future Social Value work, including how Lot 3 of this contract will be delivered.

Health and Wellbeing Network

- 3.44. The voluntary sector plays a key role in delivering the council's objectives and outcomes in respect of health and wellbeing, particularly addressing the factors which contribute to people's health its widest sense. As outlined above, the City Council has historically commissioned support for two local community networks, one in the north and one in the south of the city, which bring together VCS organisations engaged in a wide range of health and wellbeing issues. This has until now been managed separately by the council's Public Health teams.
- 3.45. As part of bringing support for the health and wellbeing networks in under this contract (as outlined in the Service Scope' section of this specification) the existing division between the two local networks will be dissolved. Instead there will be one health and wellbeing network, with a city-wide reach, but which will meet alternately at venues in the north and the south of the city and which will retain scope within meeting agendas and resources to dedicate to locally specific issues as needed. This arrangement aims to reap the benefits of better coordination, reduced duplication, a more strategic approach and the strength of numbers across the two existing networks, while at the same time retaining the degree of nuance and local specialism required to provide an effective response to particular priorities.
- 3.46. The Contractor will have a key role in helping to embed this new structure and we would welcome suggestions on how this could be incorporated as part of the Contractor's implementation plan for the early stages of the new contract. In general terms, in respect of supporting the health and wellbeing VCS network in Westminster throughout the life of the contract, the Contractor will be expected to:
- Support and enable the sector to be proactive in embracing the Public Health agenda. This will involve skilling up organisations and better evidencing impact on identified priority outcomes, and additionally may entail the Contractor directly commissioning / funding of services by VCS organisations to feed into Public Health priorities.
 - Facilitate and take a direct, active role in sharing of information and good practice specifically relevant to local and national Health & Wellbeing issues across the sector.
 - Provide a link between the Health & Wellbeing network and the wider WCN, ensuring they can benefit from each other's expertise, membership, influence and 'reach'.

Lot 3: Supporting and Driving Forward the Social Value Approach in Westminster

Contract Outcome 5: Social Value and CSR. The Contractor will take a key role in delivering the objectives of the council's Social Value strategy, 'Get Involved: CSR', by providing a Corporate Social Responsibility 'brokerage' function.

- 3.47. The City Council is looking to increase its focus on leveraging the benefits of Corporate Social Responsibility and private sector involvement in working with the VCS to deliver on priority outcomes. The council's 'Get Involved: CSR' strategy envisages a brokerage process which would assist businesses to get involved in the responsibility agenda and offer help to businesses to participate in new opportunities in areas such as cleaner air, tackling inequality and support for our most vulnerable residents. The overall aim is to make community investment easier, more effective and more rewarding for business members by:

- Making it easy for all businesses to get involved (know where to go to ask questions, know what issues to tackle, who to partner with)
- Ensuring investment into the community has the biggest impact by promoting the Council's priorities framework as set out in City for All – this further ensures that efforts are focused where they can make a meaningful difference.
- Giving the VCS a channel to promote their work to business and find partners to support them/develop projects with.

3.48. The private sector can provide support to VCS organisations in a wide variety of ways. In some cases businesses can offer assistance or expertise around governance, marketing and PR, funding and finance, business planning, commissioning, measuring and evaluating impact, demonstrating social value. Often there are opportunities to provide direct training and skills development. In other cases businesses are in a position to offer support with fundraising and income generation, or 'in kind' support such as provision of space for events or donations of goods/equipment.

3.49. To help unlock this range of benefits for Westminster's Voluntary and Community Sector, the council's 'Get Involved: CSR' strategy envisages a brokerage service which would assist businesses to get involved in the responsibility agenda, offering them structured opportunities to play a part in supporting our most vulnerable residents. This will help businesses to contribute as fully as possible to VCS aims and operations, better aligning the 'private sector contribution' with strategic council outcomes and meeting local needs by connecting businesses and local VCS organisations more effectively. It is intended that strengthening the business/VCS relationship will, as an additional benefit, promote sustainability within the VCS, by diversifying approaches to sources of funding beyond grants and commissioning.

3.50. In its brokerage role, therefore, the Contractor will be responsible for promoting and facilitating CSR and business support for the VCS in a wide range of forms. The council would welcome suggestions and innovation from prospective contract providers as part of the tender process on precisely how this service could look, and we would look to work in partnership with the Contractor, once appointed, to further develop, shape and refine the offer. However, the council would at this stage expect that the basic service would consist of at least – but not limited to – the following service aspects:

3.51. Being the go-to organisation for businesses who want to get involved with small local charities. Helping businesses to understand where and how they can contribute to make the greatest impact, know what issues to tackle, and find out who it would be best for them to partner with.

3.52. Ensuring investment into the community has the biggest impact by promoting the Council's priorities framework as set out in City for All – this further ensures that efforts are focused where they can make a meaningful difference. Keeping in mind three social value priorities specifically identified by the council:

- i. Opportunity (ensuring Westminster's residents benefit from the prosperity of the city);
- ii. Neighbourhood (providing a visible commitment to the local area); and
- iii. Environment (directly tackling issues like air quality/emissions).

3.53. To take this further, developing and delivering a bespoke matching service for business to local projects and organisations that need support both on an ad hoc basis and for longer

term strategic relationship. This should give the VCS a channel to promote their work to business and actively support them to find partners to support them and develop projects. The VCS Knowledge Bank may provide a critical resource to support this work.

- 3.54. Supporting and reinforcing the matching service with active follow-up to help VCS/business partnerships get off the ground will also be important. This is likely to involve direct support by the Contractor for newly formed partnerships in the early stages.
- 3.55. In addition, supporting businesses to develop their own community projects in a guided way.
- 3.56. Providing learning and networking opportunities for partners on both sides of the equation (within the Voluntary and Community Sector and the business sector), separately or together as appropriate, to help them understand how to work in partnership to best effect.
- 3.57. Provide networking opportunities specifically aimed at making strong links between the two sectors. The Contractor may choose to make use of the WCN and/or health and wellbeing VCS network as part of this.
- 3.58. The council's intention is that the CSR brokerage/support function would be available at zero or low cost to businesses who are based in or have an office in Westminster and are keen to work with Westminster VCS, but who have limited or no experience of working with the VCS or on community initiatives and are not able to dedicate any resource specifically to do this. However, there could certainly be a chargeable model for other businesses, possibly membership based in its nature.
- 3.59. The City Council would suggest that there may be significant benefit in the creation of a board or forum which is made up of representatives from WCC, the Contractor, VCS organisations (perhaps from the Charity Leaders Forum) and representatives from businesses in Westminster (whether individual business or possibly via the BIDs).
- 3.60. It is intended that the CSR brokerage/support services provided under Lot 3 of this contract would connect with and complement the City Council's objectives around Responsible Procurement (focusing on Social Value through our own contracted services). The Contractor will support this by acting as the critical connection between the council's contracted suppliers/providers and VCS organisations locally. In this way the Contractor will support the City Council's other contracted suppliers/providers to deliver on the contractual requirements we routinely apply, in respect of delivering social value. This will enable the council to maximise its own social value impact through those contracting and procurement relationships.
- 3.61. It should be noted that this contract is itself subject to the council's standard requirements in respect of demonstrating social value through the tender process, as all our procured services are. Obviously social value forms an inherent part of this contract and runs through its core objectives and deliverables. Nonetheless, in line with the City Council's commitment to responsible procurement and the standard requirements that gives rise to, a demonstration of the specific social value offered by the Contractor will be asked for and scored as one of the specific award criteria. This will require completion of the council's standard Responsible Procurement Delivery Plan, as detailed in the tender scoring information.

3.62. The Contractor will also have a critical role in helping Westminster's VCS organisations to demonstrate the social value they deliver. This has been identified as a key area of development currently so the council would be very keen to see how the Contractor would contribute to addressing this knowledge/skills gap.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Ongoing Service Review and Development

3.63. The Contractor will be expected to take an approach of continual improvement to the VCS Support service during the course of the contract. In practice this will mean keeping abreast of all significant changes and developments in the Voluntary and Community Sector environment, at both a national and a local level. This will specifically include but by no means be limited to:

- A clear and ongoing awareness of developments surrounding the 'Look Ahead' project and work with the Heart of the City around Corporate Social Responsibility, ensuring strong networking with all relevant partners to ensure duplication is minimised and roles and remits are clear.
- Strong joint working with the new Young Westminster Foundation and the Simon Milton Foundation to make the best use of collective resources and capability to meet the needs of Westminster's communities.
- A strong awareness of ongoing technological developments relevant to the VCS - ideas such as crowd funding, webinars and other online systems and resources.

3.64. A suitable degree of flexibility is to be retained within the contract terms to enable the VCS Support Service and the contracted provider to respond to developments in the wider context within which it operates. This is in line with the broadening of the scope of the VCS support service and the general approach of innovation and ongoing service development referenced throughout this specification.

Advertising the Services, including the WCN

3.65. All services provided by any organisation on behalf of Westminster City Council must be delivered using the council's corporate identity. At the outset of the contract Westminster City Council will approve templates for any marketing materials and designs for any written publications, vehicle, livery or uniforms required for the operation of the contract to ensure Westminster City Council's identity is represented appropriately and in accordance with the City Council's policies on corporate identity, marketing and advertising.

3.66. The Contractor shall:

- Proactively promote the Services, including the WCN, to the diverse range of VCS organisations in Westminster, using a variety of methods and media to ensure a wide distribution of information to maximise awareness and take-up of the Services;
- Ensure that all promotional material and the Website are clearly branded with the City Council's full logo or 'supported by' logo and other City Council corporate branding. Such branding is to be previously agreed by the City Council and subject to the City Council's policies on corporate identity, advertising and marketing.

Other Contractual Obligations

3.67. The contractor shall:

- promptly and accurately distribute information on behalf of Westminster City Council, the local NHS and other statutory sector partners via email, social media, newsletter or other regular publications for the VCS in Westminster; where reasonable the Contractor may, with the prior agreement of the contributor, edit copy;
- provide all services in this Specification free of cost to Service Users;
- deliver a professional and courteous service that is welcoming and respectful to all VCS organisations in Westminster and consider the needs of VCS organisations;
- promote cohesion and collaboration between VCS organisations and groups;
- network, collaborate and work jointly with other third sector organisations at local, regional and national level, including without limitation to HealthWatch, Hub Westminster and the providers of the Team Westminster services, such as the Volunteer Outreach and Development Service and the Time Credits Programme;
- work in close partnership with the City Council and be open to new ideas for development throughout the Term;
- be flexible as the needs of Service Users may change over the Term;
- ensure that all communities are able to engage in the Services and proactively seek to include hard-to reach groups and communities.

Access to Information

3.68. The Contractor shall:

- Ensure that information held in relation to Service Users is made available to the City Council or their representatives in the form of a database and in accordance with Legislation including without limitation:
- Organisation name, size, type, name, contact details, name of Chair or similar, name of Chief Executive or similar.
- The types of communities served by the organisations or groups receiving support by issue area such as children and families and older people.
- The type of activity undertaken by the organisation, e.g., a short paragraph describing the aims, or the objectives, or the mission statement of the organisation.
- Be accessible to the Authorised Officer and other relevant City Council staff between the hours of 9am and 5pm on working days (52 weeks per year).
- Respond within 48 hours to ad-hoc requests for information and updates on progress from the City Council in between quarterly monitoring meetings.

Confidentiality

3.69. The Contractor shall recognise the need for confidentiality within the content of a clear operational policy having regard to the Data Protection Act 1998, the Human Rights Act 1998 and any information sharing agreements that the City Council may expect the Contractor to enter into from time to time.

Contractor's Policies

3.70. The Contractor shall have a clear policy on the following topics at a minimum, but without limitation:

- Complaints
- Confidentiality
- Equality and Diversity
- Health and Safety
- Supervision of staff
- Training of staff
- Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures
- Recruitment Procedures
- Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults policy
- Raising Issues of Concern/Whistleblowing.

Service Availability

- 3.71. The Contractor shall provide the Services and be contactable by Service Users between the hours of 10am to 4pm on working days (Monday to Friday excluding Public and Bank Holidays) including without limitation having email, the Website, WCN website and telephone presence for the Services and provide some services in the evenings or at weekends if required to meet the Service Users' needs, bearing in mind that many VCS organisations are run by volunteers.
- 3.72. The Contractor shall acknowledge within 48 hours and respond to all requests for support in a reasonable timeframe and provide on-going support to organisations where it contributes to meeting the outcomes specified.

4. Mobilisation and timing

- 4.1 As part of mobilisation we expect the incoming provider(s) to work with the outgoing provider(s) as relevant to ensure the transfer of all data and necessary resources for the provision of the service. This will include, of course, the existing directory/database which form the basis of the VCS 'Knowledge Bank'. We acknowledge that some aspects of the service will be developed and phased in over time, during the life of the contract. This will be particularly applicable in newer areas of service such as many elements of Lot 3. However, as part of mobilisation all aspects of the contract we have identified as essential must be in place from day 1.
- 4.2 Recognising this spec represents a significant change to existing services the successful provider will be expected to provide an implementation plan for the first 90 days demonstrating how they will deliver priority action in the early stages of the contract to ensure all requirements of all 3 lots of this new specification will be met.

5. Exit Provisions

- 5.1. At the end of this contract we will expect the outgoing provider(s) to fully cooperate and work with any incoming provider(s) to ensure a smooth and effective handover. This will include but not be limited to ensuring effective data transfer, satisfaction of any TUPE obligations and reasonable support of any other aspects of mobilisation as necessary.

6. Management information and governance

- 6.1. The Contractor's provision of the Services shall be monitored on a quarterly basis, with an additional annual review.
- 6.2. The Contract Manager shall attend quarterly and annual monitoring meetings as required by the City Council.

Annual Service Review

- 6.3. The annual review will look not only as contract performance over the preceding 12 months but also development opportunities and potential amendments to service scope for the future. This review will bring into consideration the wider VCS context within which the service operates to maximise impact and reduce potential duplication. Adequate flexibility will be retained in the contract to enable the City Council, working with the Contractor, to make adjustments to meet with the results of the annual service review.

Quarterly report

- 6.4. The Contractor shall prepare a quarterly report for each quarterly monitoring meeting which shall include the following:
 - Quarterly statistical report on the signposting support services provided by the Contractor under this Specification broken down by:
 - Number of Service User contacts
 - Name and Type of each organisation
 - Purpose of each organisation/key client group(s)
 - Nature of each organisation's contact
 - Outcome achieved for each organisation's contact;
 - Findings from Service User satisfaction surveys which can be used to assess the quality and effectiveness of the Services in achieving the KPIs and service outcomes. Service User satisfaction surveys should be created to align to the KPIs listed in Section 14, so that data captured through the survey can highlight achievement of KPI targets and service outcomes.
- 6.5. The Contractor shall send the reports to the City Council for each quarterly meeting within 30 days after the end of the relevant quarter.
- 6.6. The City Council may request the Contractor to submit the original user survey returns referred to above and the Contractor shall provide the original survey returns as requested.
- 6.7. The City Council may audit the Contractor's financial systems and procedures and the Contractor shall implement any changes to its financial systems and procedures that the City Council may reasonably require.
- 6.8. Key performance indicators which will provide the basis for performance monitoring of this contract are outlined below under the Performance and Management section.

7. Constraints and dependencies

- 7.1. It should be noted that Lot 2 of this contract represents the incorporation of an existing commissioned service, currently managed separately, into this broader overall service. That existing commissioning arrangement will therefore expire at the point of mobilisation of this contract.

8. Premises and assets

- 8.1. The Contractor shall be responsible for arranging for their own building accommodation. For the avoidance of doubt these premises do not necessarily have to be in Westminster. However, all face to face services, relating to any aspect of the requirements outlined in this Specification, including, but not limited to WCN events, shall be provided at a location or locations in Westminster and in such premises or locations that are accessible for Service Users. The Contractor must be able to demonstrate how this would be achieved.

9. Staff

- 9.1. **The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (SI 2006/246) (TUPE) will not apply in respect of the procurement of this contract.**

10. Performance and measurement

- 10.1. As outlined throughout this specification, the City Council is looking for significant innovation and service development through this contract, to continually strengthen and improve the support provided to Westminster's VCS. In addition to a general approach of continual improvement which will gradually enhance some aspects of service (such as the Knowledge Bank), there are some elements (most notably Lot 3 around Social Value and CSR), which are 'new', going substantially beyond the scope of the existing contract.
- 10.2. With this in mind it is expected that the metrics by which we measure success will develop over time. This will enable the way in which we evaluate delivery against the contract specification to evolve and grow alongside the service itself.
- 10.3. It is expected that the Contractor will work together with the council to develop appropriate and meaningful measures and KPIs for the newer aspects of service delivery under the contract as they develop and come into effect. The council does not wish to attempt to pre-empt the future shape of these service elements by being overly prescriptive at this time, although it is anticipated that specific metrics would probably be developed within the following broad framework to cover the three key aspects of Lot 3:
- 10.4. CSR brokerage function - Measure or measures to demonstrate success of the brokerage / 'matching' function, likely to include but by no means limited to: Number of VCS organisations matched/connected with a local business via the CSR Brokerage mechanism. Suggest this could be measured quarterly, to provide a baseline and show trend over time as the service develops and embeds.
- 10.5. Supporting council suppliers to deliver on their contractual requirements in respect of Social Value. Measure or measures to evaluate Contractor's actions to improve the connection between the council's contracted suppliers/providers and VCS organisations in Westminster.
- 10.6. Demonstrating social value. Measure or measures to evaluate Contractor's actions to improve VCS organisations' ability to demonstrate their own social value.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Outcome	What we want to measure	KPIs	Target
LOT 1			
Outcome 1 – Information provision (Knowledge Bank). <i>The Contractor acts as a central source of information and knowledge for Voluntary and Community Sector organisations in Westminster. This is primarily achieved by way of the VCS ‘Knowledge Bank’ – a directory and information portal for VCS organisations.</i>	‘Reach’ of the Knowledge Bank database	1. Percentage of ‘new’ groups / organisations added to the database	5%
	Use of the annual survey for insight	2. Percentage of Westminster VCS completing the annual survey to gather in-depth organisational information	60%
	Value added by the Knowledge Bank	3. Percentage of service users stating they have used the Knowledge Bank to find out about other VCS organisations in Westminster	40%
	Positive impact of work to improve and enhance the Knowledge Bank	4. Percentage of service users stating that they find the Knowledge Bank ‘more useful’ than previously (measured from first annual survey after commencement of the contract, onwards)	25%
Outcome 2 – Signposting and capacity building. <i>To drive quality and sustainability within the sector, the Contractor provides tailored signposting for VCS organisations, connecting them to capacity building services, training and other resources to meet their various needs.</i>	Benefits of signposting in terms of service quality	5. Percentage of service users stating they have improved the quality of the service they provide as a result of effective signposting to capacity building services	80%
	Benefits of signposting in terms of operations	6. Percentage of service users who state that their organisation is more sustainable (e.g. they are better prepared for changes in the market place or have been enabled to proactively attain new sources of revenue) as a result of effective signposting to capacity building services	80%

Outcome 3 – Advocacy and influencing. The Contractor provides strong advocacy support to the VCS in Westminster, actively promoting the sector and its work and exerting influence across partner sectors to drive forward VCS priorities.	Benefits of advocacy work to enable an aware and informed VCS	7. Percentage of attendees stating they have increased awareness of the local and national issues affecting them and the strategic environment in which they work	80%
	Benefits of advocacy work in developing and representing shared views for the VCS	8. Percentage of attendees that state that the WCN develops shared and representative views of the local VCS	80%
	Enabling VCS influence in commissioning processes	9. Percentage of attendees that state that, at WCN meetings, they were involved, at an early stage, in commissioning projects that are of relevance to their organisation, and that discussions with commissioners make them more able to submit robust bids	70%
	Benefits of WCN to connect organisations with each other	10. VCS representatives attending key partnership meetings with statutory sector.	8 annually
	Effective use of communication channels	11. Use of new communication channels through which to distribute the representative messages relating to the local VCS, particularly to corporate funders	5 annually
LOT 2			
Outcome 4: Network Support. The Contractor provides comprehensive and effective support to VCS networks, specifically the Westminster Community Network (WCN) and the additional existing network which is specifically health and wellbeing focused.	Quality of WCN events	12. Percentage of attendees rating the quality of WCN events as good or excellent	90%
	Benefits of WCN events in raising awareness	13. Percentage of WCN attendees stating they are more aware of other VCS organisations and more able to start partnerships and undertake new ways of working with other VCS organisations	80%
	Effective support for the health and wellbeing network	<i>To be developed:</i> 14. <i>Suitable measure of effective support for health & wellbeing network</i>	TBC
LOT 3			
<i>Measures of efficacy of the Social Value/CSR functions will be developed jointly with the council. Likely to include the following at a minimum:</i>			
Outcome 5: Social Value and CSR. The Contractor will take a key role in delivering the objectives of the council's Social Value strategy, 'Get Involved: CSR', by providing a Corporate Social Responsibility 'brokerage' function.	Effectiveness of CSR brokerage function	15. <i>Number of VCS organisations connected with a local business via the CSR Brokerage mechanism</i>	TBC
	Support for WCC's responsible procurement priority	16. <i>Measure or measures to evaluate Contractor's actions to improve the connection between the council's contracted suppliers/providers and VCS organisations in Westminster</i>	TBC
	Effectiveness of work to help organisations demonstrate their social value	17. <i>Measure or measures to evaluate Contractor's actions to improve VCS organisations' ability to demonstrate their own social value</i>	TBC

11.Flexibility and additional services or transformation

- 11.1. As outlined in this Specification the council's intention is, through this new contract, to drive innovation and excellence in relation to the way the VCS is supported in Westminster. This is an ambitious specification which additionally incorporates an emphasis on continuous improvement throughout the life of the contract, to help deliver the empowered, sustainable and increasingly resilient Voluntary and Community Sector that we wish to see in Westminster. In line with this we anticipate a degree of service transformation and change during the life of the contract.
- 11.2. Under the council's procurement code we have the flexibility to amend the total contract value during the life of the contract. We can increase total contract value by up to 50% of the original value without re-procurement. This would always be done as per our standard clauses in our terms and conditions.
- 11.3. To support the innovative approach and continuous service improvement referred to throughout this specification, we would look to work together with the provider(s) to develop and agree a structured change mechanism for agreeing service developments within the terms of this contract. We expect that working with us to develop this mechanism may feature within the provider(s) implementation plan for the first 90 days.

APPENDIX 2

Local Authority Approaches to working with the Voluntary Sector

What Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Support is commissioned by Local Authorities?

Over the past five years the relationship between local authorities and the local voluntary sector has changed radically. Whereas traditionally local authorities often held a close direct relationship with a few local Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations, providing them with set grant funding every year, today almost all of these grant funding schemes for the VCS have been replaced by commissioning for the services which were provided by the local VCS. This change affects the type of support services local VCS organisations need (such as fundraising support, HR and IT support, brokerage and funding application advice), as organisations respond to the fact they are required to go through the commissioning cycle.

The purpose of these types of 'infrastructure' support services for the VCS is to empower the sector locally, to collectively represent them to the local authority, and to provide them with the practical support and advice they need to manage their finances, support the work they do and achieve maximum impact.

The number of local authorities procuring externally provided contracts to provide infrastructure support for the VCS is large, having grown significantly over the last few years. Examples include Cambridgeshire County Council, Kingston Borough Council, Staffordshire County Council, North Yorkshire County Council and Cheshire East Council. This reflects the highly specialised nature of these services and the value of securing specific expertise and resources to provide them, as a strengthened VCS can pay dividends for public service provision in the local authority area overall.

Detailed Example 1: Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames

Kingston has long had a diverse and thriving VCS, but the sector has suffered from being fragmented. Traditionally the VCS was provided with infrastructure support services by the organisation Kingston Voluntary Action (KVA), which provided services ranging from floating IT and engineering support, through to financial and fundraising advice, support securing premises, and managing a secondary organisation which maintained a database of all volunteering opportunities in the borough, called Go Kingston Volunteering. In turn KVA was supported by the Council through an annual grant fund. However, following internal changes in the Council as well as changes to the commissioning landscape, the council moved to phasing out all grant funding programmes and commissioning the services out instead. Consequently, in May 2017 the Council went out to tender for a 5 year contract to provide the key infrastructure support previously offered by KVA, but with that added scope for a second organisation to provide volunteering support and volunteering brokerage services. This represents a more sophisticated and comprehensive range of services overall, with a growing emphasis on cross-sector working and better coordination.

Detailed Example 2: Cheshire East Council

Similarly to the above example, in Cheshire East support services for the VCS have historically been provided by a grant funded (by the council) organisation, Community and Voluntary Services Cheshire East (CVS). The range of services they provide emphasises helping the local VCS diversify their funding streams, helping them to achieve Quality Assurance certificates, giving them access to peer support networks, and representing the VCS sector at the local and national level. There is also an element of promoting volunteering and volunteer brokerage. Again, the council recently made the decision to contract these services out by going through a formal tender process. A three year

contract was let in 2017 – in the event the existing provider, CVS, won that contract and is now working to develop its service offer further.

Both of these examples demonstrate the clear overall trend away from direct grant funding and towards formal, external commissioning of specialist VCS support services, with the aim of supporting the increasing role of the sector in local service provision in partnership with local authorities.

What are Local Authorities doing around Corporate Social Responsibility and Social Value?

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a broad term covering a range of actions which an (private sector) organisation can carry out to promote long-term benefits to the community in which it is based. The particular interest of local authorities in CSR tends to focus on connecting local private businesses with VCS organisations in the area, enabling them to participate in the process of commissioning and carrying out their work in the community.

Social Value, meanwhile, can be defined as the wider financial and non-financial impacts of programmes, organisations or interventions on the wellbeing of individuals and communities, social capital and the environment. The local authority interest in this tends to be around looking – and striving to demonstrate in a tangible way – the specific, positive impacts of the work being done by all sectors in the local area to benefit the place and its people. Like many councils, Westminster is very interested in how it can maximise the Social Value it delivers in its own work (either directly or from commissioned services), but also the work of the many VCS organisations that operate locally.

One major key to this can be bringing in the private sector, helping businesses to link with charities, support them and work together to increase the potential Social Value that can be delivered overall. In practice this can mean brokering volunteering arrangements so that staff at local businesses can offer their time to help out local charitable work. However, it can also involve businesses offering VCS organisations a range of other types of assistance, from free training or straightforward funding support, to practical help in the form of providing building space, equipment or staff time in specialist skill areas (e.g. financial management) which they might otherwise lack.

The legislative background to all of this is the Social Value Act 2012, which requires procurement officers at councils to take into account the social and environmental impacts of their approach to procurement and impact that bidder's proposals may have upon the wider community (this also underpins our Responsible Procurement approach – please see Appendix 3).

Detailed Example: London Borough of Croydon

Croydon Council was one of the first local authorities to develop a comprehensive social value toolkit and to give careful thought to how social value could be integrated into the commissioning cycle. The council developed a Corporate Social Responsibility programme and launched the toolkit in 2012, to enable commissioners to find more creative ways of integrating social benefit into the procurement process. As well as providing a variety of ideas for beneficial projects which (private sector) bidders could incorporate into their offer, such as providing work experience opportunities or integrating social enterprises into the supply chain, the toolkit also explains how to make the Council's commitment to social value clear throughout procurement. Officers are encouraged in the toolkit both to make social issues part of the award criteria for bidders, and also to make it part of the performance obligations for the provider throughout the life of the contract. There is also support for council officers to use the Competitive Dialogue procurement process in order to maintain a

dialogue open with bidders and push them to develop more creative offers of social benefit. This drives innovation and fresh ideas in terms of how all sectors can work together to deliver maximum social benefit to the local community through their operations.

This is just one example (there are many more across the London and nationally) to demonstrate the growing emphasis on increasing the Social Value being delivered within local areas. As we begin to think more creatively about how the public, private voluntary/community sectors can all work together in a coordinated way, we are carving out what the local authority's role in facilitating this can be.

APPENDIX 3

Westminster City Council Responsible Procurement Approach

Introduction

Westminster City Council spends approximately £460 million on goods, services and works per annum and therefore has a significant opportunity to leverage its supply chain to deliver additional benefits to residents, businesses and communities.

The opportunity is realised by paying careful attention to how goods, services or works will be delivered, who may be delivering it and what else they can do to deliver added value where it will make the biggest impact for Westminster. This document sets our ambition to work proactively and collaboratively with our supply chain partners in order to achieve this.

At Westminster the process of identifying the added value through our purchasing activities is termed Responsible Procurement.

Responsible Procurement forms part of our overall social value strategy which sets out the priority areas that the Council has developed.

Westminster is committed to delivering Responsible Procurement in order to:

- Help the Council deliver its key strategic documents such as [City for All](#), [Enterprise Programme 2015-19](#), [Employment Programme 2015-19](#), [Air Quality Action Plan 2013-18](#), [Greener City Action Plan 2015-25](#)
- More effectively target the existing CSR programmes of its supply chain to support the Council's priority areas
- Comply with legislative obligations such as the [Public Services \(Social Value\) Act 2012 \(Appendix 7\)](#), Equality Act 2010 and the Public Contract Regulations 2015
- Meet the expectations of internal and external Council stakeholders including local businesses, the Third Sector and residents

Public Sector organisations like Westminster City Council have an obligation under the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 (SVA) to consider how a proposed procurement might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the relevant area. This supports the Council's ambitions to proactively work with its suppliers to ensure that every pound spent can be maximised to bring wider benefit to the local community.

Responsible Procurement Implementation

When considering economic, social and environmental well-being the Council will strive to work with suppliers who can help us to achieve benefits in the following areas. The examples below do not form an exhaustive list but are given to provide a steer.

- Employment & Skills:
 - Identify opportunities for residents and school leavers who are seeking training and skills with the aim of securing permanent employment. This will include apprenticeships, traineeships, work placements and internships.
 - Identify skills and employment opportunities for individuals in under-represented groups including those with a history of homelessness, mental

health issues, mental & physical disabilities and ex-offenders who are looking to re-enter the jobs market.

- Encourage our supply chain to consider how they can engage with schools to empower and encourage young people through mentoring, career talks and work experience opportunities
- Local Economic Development & Growth:
 - Identify and communicate procurement opportunities within their supply chains that would be suitable for small, local suppliers and VCS groups
 - Identify enterprise space for individuals starting a new business in the Borough
 - Provide skilled support through volunteering activities to small local businesses/start-ups and VCS groups on topics including finance, management and leadership skills, HR, legal, procurement
- Environmental & Ethical:
 - Identify innovative practices that can help minimise the environmental impact of the suppliers operations, reduce overall waste produced and increase reuse and recycling
 - Adopt practices that will lead to an increase in air quality within the Borough for example by using the least polluting vehicles, investigating the use of consolidation centres, optimising times and routes for vehicles when operating in the Borough
 - Adopt the 9 principles of the Ethical Trading Initiative's Base Code as the minimum we expect from our supply chain

In practice this will mean:

- Westminster City Council will investigate every opportunity to add Responsible Procurement outcomes to all tenders that it runs with a total contract value over £100k. Our KPI is 90% of contracts awarded to include social value outcomes
- Category Managers will have specialist training, guidance and support from the Responsible Procurement Lead in order to facilitate this process
- The Responsible Procurement Lead will form part of the Procurement governance board
- Tenders where social value asks are included will have a minimum 5% weighting applied as part of the overall quality evaluation. Suppliers will be asked to complete a Responsible Procurement Delivery Plan as part of the tender submission to facilitate the capture of outcomes
- Suppliers will be able to request guidance and support from Council officers and teams in order to help them achieve the social value outcomes and will be provided with information and links to external organisations that can provide additional support.