

Nottingham Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Strategic Reference Group

Terms of Reference – Revised August 2017

1. Purpose

To identify and formulate responses to strategic issues in Nottingham.

To enable and strengthen the contribution of the VCS on strategic matters.

To promote collaboration amongst the VCS and other sectors, to improve outcomes for local people and the city.

2. Responsibilities

Horizon scan for emerging issues impacting the city and local people

Bring strategic issues and opportunities to One Nottingham (ON) partners

Formulate greater understanding and strategic responses from the sector, and act on, or encourage the delivery of these.

Recommend solutions and proposals to ON partners.

In doing so, promote fairness and aspiration.

3. Roles

Support ON Board and ONCOG members to fulfil their duties, by providing broader input into strategic issues.

Contribute strategic issues, opportunities and practical solutions.

Be prepared to lead thematic task groups where an issue requires development, and agree the use of ad hoc funding for these.

Agree to contact details being made available on the ON website, act as a route for the VCS to raise issues and address these as appropriate.

The Group is not responsible for wider VCS representation, but may work with NCVS at engagement events which enable smaller and niche VCS organisations to contribute.

4. Principles and Values

Learning - activities will improve the capacity of VCS organisations to engage and influence, individually and collectively.

Improve outcomes – e.g. more effective collaborations, better informed commissioning, policy design or corporate social responsibility.

Openness – activities will enable improved access to information and transparency.

Thematic – the Group cannot engage with every organisation on every matter; ON and the Group will identify strategic issues and build lines of communication around these.

Understanding and collaboration - the Group will articulate its contribution and ON will engage with intent.

5. Membership and Reporting

Membership size is not fixed, but ideally will be approximately 8-10.

Membership will comprise, as far as possible, of representatives of the following organisations and partnerships:

- At least one ON VCS Board representative
- NCVS, as the ONCOG representative and to offer the perspective of smaller organisations
- The ON team.

And, as a guide, representatives with networks and expertise relevant to ON thematic priorities. These priorities include fairness, aspiration, addressing poverty and the Strategic Priorities within the Nottingham Plan.

Members may represent more than one of the above, and may also be represented in other networks e.g. Area Based Grant Area Leads, Communities of Identity contract holders.

The Group is not part of the formal governance of ON, and as such is free to pursue other activities, providing they do not compromise the neutrality of ON.

Membership is voluntary, but comes with the expectation that members commit to and can resource the above roles for two years. If a member should leave the organisation, or role they were linked with when appointed, their membership should be reviewed by the SRG and a recommendation agreed.

ON will issue a call for Expressions of Interest biennially, or to best fit with timing of ON Board elections. In the event of over-subscription, a panel comprising the Chair of ON, the elected VCS ON Board representative and an independent business representative will select members based on their ability to fulfil the above responsibilities.

6. Chairing and Administration

A chair and vice chair will be elected annually, by simple majority.

The chair will take responsibility for ensuring agendas and action notes are produced in a timely manner, and shared with ON for publication.

7. Decision Making and Quoracy

Decisions will normally be made by consensus.

In the unlikely event that a decision requires a vote, the meeting must be quorate and a simple majority will be required. Members may request their abstention or opposition be recorded.

Quoracy requires a majority of current members to be present.

8. Frequency, Notice and Transparency

The Group will meet no less than four times a year, with additional meetings convened at the request of any member and supported by the majority.

A programme of dates for meetings will be drawn up annually, so far as possible, and published on the ON website.

Agendas, minutes and papers should normally be emailed five working days in advance.

Papers will be publicly available.