

Transparent Commissioning in Rochdale

A key area of focus for the VCSE Commissioning and Investment Group is to influence Greater Manchester and locality commissioners to include the VCSE sector as equal partners in decision-making, and to offer greater transparency around that decision making. This case study describes how one of our local areas, Rochdale, is working toward this goal.

A Full and Transparent Review of Commissioned Services

Rochdale has been undertaking a line-by-line review of all services commissioned in the borough, including not only larger 'prime' contract holders, but also those in receipt of sub contracts. The VCSE Local Infrastructure Organisation's (Action Together) Lead has been fully included in this review, which aims to understand the breadth of services being commissioned and in particular, their value and outcomes for the local population.

The outputs of this review will then feed the design of future commissioning intentions for Rochdale, which will be guided by the principles of:

- Understanding how things can be done differently with resources when taking a whole-system approach
- Avoiding making disproportionate cuts to VCSE organisations when making decisions on future services.



Whilst the borough of Rochdale is experiencing similar financial pressures to other areas of Greater Manchester, local leaders have committed to making future decisions as collaboratively, fairly and transparently as possible with their VCSE partners. By including their Local VCSE Infrastructure Organisation in key pieces of work and decision making spaces, and through exploration of Fair Funding opportunities, they have already started to put this commitment in place.

VCSE Representation in Decision Making Spaces

In Rochdale, the VCSE Local Infrastructure Organisation's (Action Together) Lead holds places on both the Strategic Planning and Improvement Group and the Financial Efficiency Group, where locality leaders make strategic and financial commissioning decisions for the borough.

Reviewing Strategy and Building in Principles of Fair Funding

Whilst refreshing their Commissioning Strategy, Rochdale Council are currently exploring how to build in the principles of GMCA's Fair Funding Protocol.

The Local Authority, Health Partners and the VCSE Local Infrastructure Organisation are also working collaboratively to develop a business case for the Local Care Organisation, to adopt Fair Funding principles across the system in Rochdale.