



EVENT SUMMARY

BUILDING A FOUNDATION:

***WORKING WITH THE VOLUNTARY AND
COMMUNITY SECTORS***

Wednesday 26 September 2018
St Paul's Centre

INTRODUCTION

The Building a Foundation Workshop aimed to explore the key factors affecting the relationship between the voluntary and community sector and the States of Jersey. Participants were asked to vote on the broad range of issues that arose and were discussed through the four themes below. This report is a summary of the issues that participants felt to be particularly pressing and relevant.

1. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

What are the current strengths and weaknesses in the relationships between the voluntary and community sectors and the States? What does good look like?



2. OBSTACLES

What are the everyday obstacles that the voluntary and community sectors face? What would be your top three problems to solve?



3. SHARING EXPERTISE

What are the practical ways in which knowledge and expertise can be shared across the voluntary and community sectors and the States? What would it take for this to happen?



4. WORKING BETTER TOGETHER

Determine how the voluntary and community sectors and the States can build stronger relationships and work better together. What needs to 'stop', 'start' and 'continue'?



1. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Strengths can be found in the many opportunities to collaborate and generally in the open approach to partnership working. Living in a small Islands makes access to government and politicians easier, which helps to raise and spread awareness of issues. There are some good departments and some positive relationships between government and the third sector. Organised service level agreements are a good thing. The Charity Commissioner is accessible and the Commission website is clear.

Weaknesses are found in communication and the lack of consultation and coordination to deliver key projects. A perceived lack of trust, respect and 'being treated as equals' also undermines the current relationships. Too much time is taken to make decisions and respond to requests and too little time is taken to 'just listen'. The capability of the States to deliver (i.e. by taking ownership and making skills and resources available) is lacking in this area. Approaching projects in an efficient way, for example by identifying value for money and measuring success needs improving.

What are the strengths and weaknesses in the relationships between the third sector and the States?

What does good look like?



1.2 WHAT DOES GOOD LOOK LIKE?

Focussed Services for the End User

A person centered approach

End user properly informed and satisfied

Measures of success

A Strategic Approach

Champions for strategy and partnership working

Vision

A strategy for Volunteers

Evidence based solutions

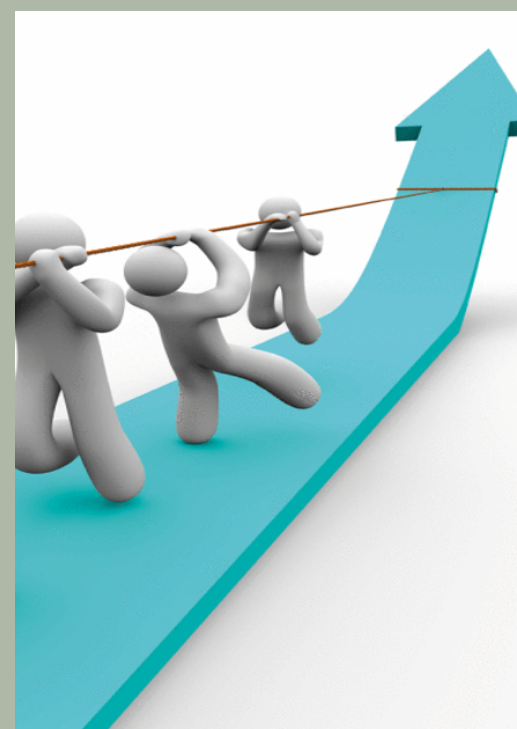
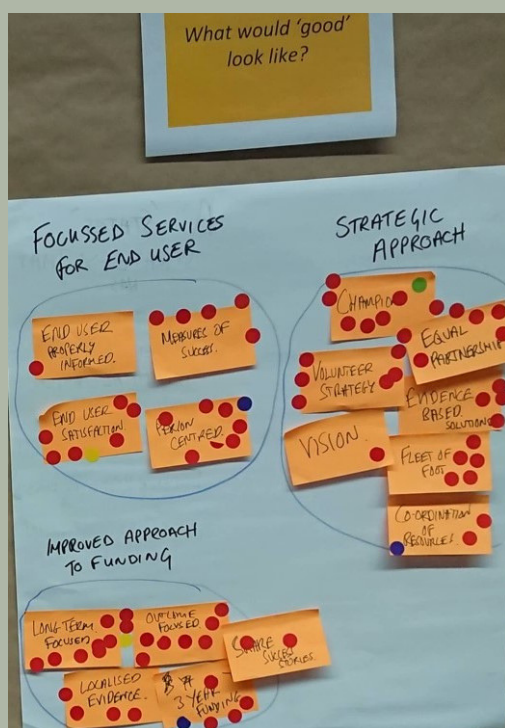
Co-ordination of resources and 'fleet of foot'

Improved Approach to Funding

Long term focus

Focus on outcomes

Share success stories



2. OBSTACLES

There is a general lack of communication, coordination and 'joined up thinking' resulting in confusion of what the third sector can and should deliver. Programme management and oversight of the third sector, does not seem to exist, leading to duplication of effort and poor understanding.

Identifying 'how' to interact with the States and 'who' are the key gate-keepers is a common obstacle. Funding issues, ranging from a lack of investment, to longer funding cycles, red tape and chasing decisions and responses, hinder progress and frustrate.

Volunteers are key to this sector, however there are barriers that prevent people from volunteering, a lack of volunteer managers and support in general from the States.

There is a tendency for the States to treat the third sector as customers, which leads to a very transactional response. In order to create genuine partnership working each party needs to know what the other is trying to achieve and why it is important.

The third sector needs skills and resources however there is a lack of specialist training. Increasing regulation and administration costs consume time and hinder progress.

What are the everyday obstacles that the third sector faces?
What are the top three problems to solve?



2.1 WHAT ARE THE THINGS TO SOLVE FIRST?

Workshop participants were asked to vote for the top 5 issues the voluntary and community sector and the States of Jersey should aim to solve first. The results were as follows:

1. Partnership working
2. Improved communication
3. Share resources
4. Improve funding and investment
5. Reduce bureaucracy



3. SHARING EXPERTISE

This can be done by bringing sectors together to discuss common problems and needs, e.g. a moderated discussion forum. Let's stop 'reinventing the wheel' on common issues, such as GDPR.

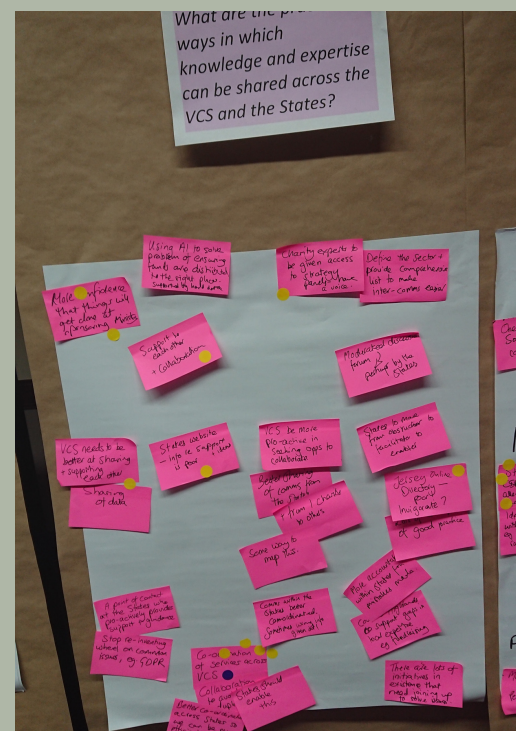
There are opportunities to improve existing platforms for communication and information e.g. The States website is poor and the Jersey Online Directory needs invigorating. Producing and sharing key data across the sectors would be helpful, as would using new technologies such as to share data and solve problems

As a sector we should aim to be more proactive in seeking opportunities. Similarly, the States could shift from being the 'obstructor' to the 'facilitator' e.g. by providing a States of Jersey point of contact, relationship manager or 'go to' person.

Better co-ordination and communication is needed, from the States (sometimes the wrong information goes out) and across the third sector. Mapping this out so all are clear would be helpful.

What are the practical ways in which knowledge and expertise can be shared across the third sector and SOJ?

What would it take to make this happen?



3.1 WHAT WOULD IT TAKE TO MAKE THIS HAPPEN?

Clear dedicated support services within SOJ:

- Relationship managers / Champions / set up a backbone organisation to support data, provide information and enable action.
- Support the public register of charities and adopt a CSR policy allowing employees to volunteer during work time.

Help from the States to improve business functions:

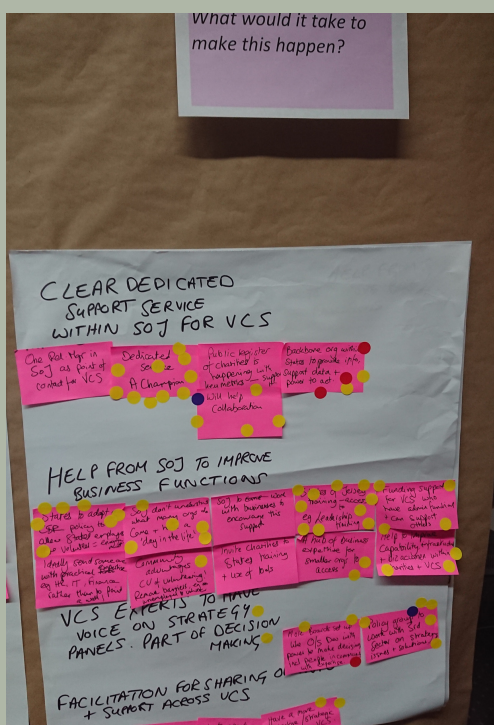
- Encourage sharing skills/ expertise (HR, IT etc) as part of CSR.
- Invite charities to States training, e.g. leadership training.
- Create a hub of business expertise for small organisation to access.
- Provide funding for VCS organisations who can support others.
- Help to improve third sector capability, infrastructure and business acumen

VCS experts to have voice on strategy panels / decision making

- More boards with oversight and power to make decisions.

Facilitation for sharing of resources and support across the VCS

- More events / forums to discuss issues and work on specific solutions.
- Develop a more strategic view across VCS, merge or pool resources.



4. WORKING BETTER TOGETHER

There are many ways to do this. At a basic level, a shared, long term vision, to clearly set out how the sectors can work together would be a good start. Similarly engaging sectors at the policy development stage would help us to work better together.

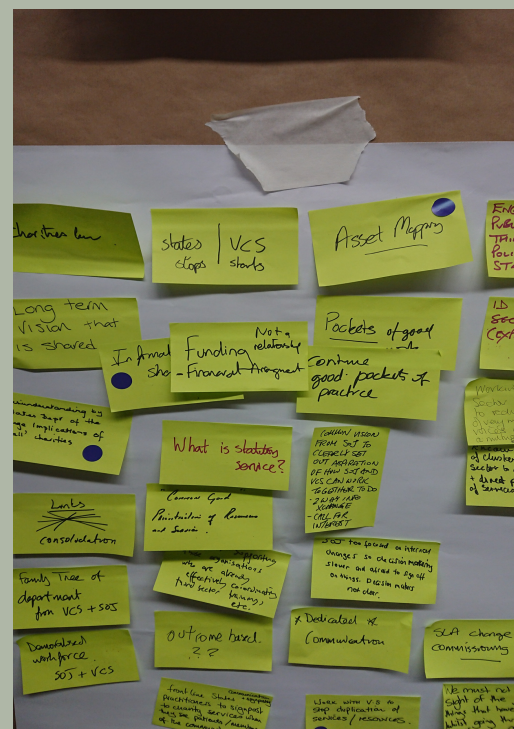
Identifying what the third sector can deliver (its capacity and expertise) and where support is needed is key to enabling better partnership working.

Good relationships happen as a result of good communication. Communication channels need to improve. Better signposting to charity services from front line States practitioners is a good example of partnership working.

There is duplication of effort, linking and consolidating services will simplify things and make prioritisation easier. Work with sector representatives to bring about change, instead of trying to engage everyone.

There are pockets of good practice, we must not lose sight of these.

How can the VCS and the States build stronger relationships and work better together? What needs to 'stop' 'start' and 'continue'?



4.1 WHAT NEEDS TO 'STOP' 'START' AND 'CONTINUE'?

Stop:

We need to stop bashing each other!

Start:

Acknowledging where there are problems

Agreeing to work together

Quicker decision making

Empathising!

Agreeing common goals

3rd party facilitation of relationship

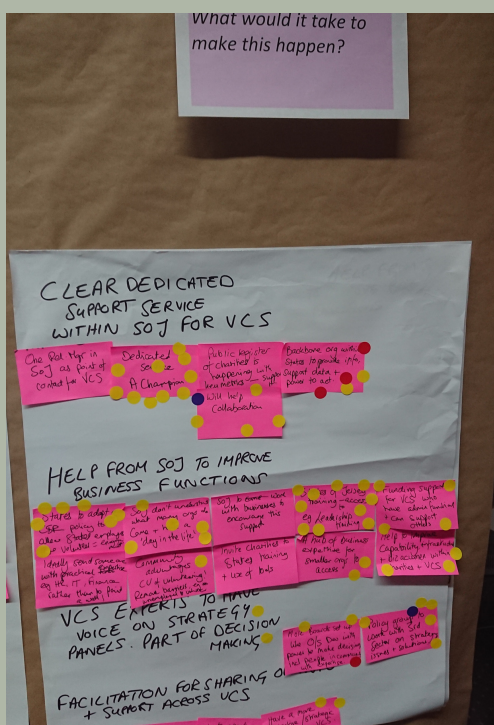
Better coordination between third sector and States services

Building a one stop shop for all needs

Removing silos

Greater clarity as to political responsibility

Continue: The good work and to trust in each other



NEXT STEPS

Following a meeting earlier in the year between VCS organisations and the Chief Executive of the States of Jersey and Head of the Public Service, Charlie Parker, representatives from the voluntary sector were invited to come together with officers from the States of Jersey to form a working party.

The working party includes representatives from Brighter Futures, Durrell, Family Nursing and Home Care, Jersey Community Partnership, Jersey Disability Partnership, Jersey Employment Trust, Jersey Hospice, The Association of Jersey Charities, and The Rotary Club of Jersey.

This group aims to continue the work started in the Building a Foundation Workshop, addressing the issues necessary to strengthen the relationship between the voluntary and community sector and the States of Jersey.

The working party will prepare a draft action plan, drawing on the outcomes identified in this report, which it will then present for consultation to the voluntary and community sector.



**TO EVERYONE
WHO GAVE
THEIR TIME AND
EFFORT TO
PARTICIPATE IN
THIS
WORKSHOP,
THANK YOU!**



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CONTACT US



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