

Commissioning and procurement: putting service users first and respecting the sector

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Agenda

- Introduction
- A better way - John Tizard
- A sector perspective – Lesley Dixon
- Responses and discussion – all
- What is excellent and what is awful - all
 - sharing of experiences
- What do we want and what should VODG do
- Conclusion and next steps
- Close

Fundamental givens

- human rights and citizen entitlement
- quality services and support
 - personal
 - empowering
 - responsive
 - respectful
- quality costs money
- VCS is more than a contractor
 - advocate
 - collective voice
 - source of expertise and evidence
 - partner

What is not right

- strategic commissioning being little more than poor procurement
- ‘bargain basement’ shopping rather than quality focus
- over complex and disproportionate procurement
- expectation and pressure for providers to subsidise
- short term and spot contracting
- little or no differentiation between commercial and VCSE providers
- VCSE being denied its wider contribution
- and much more

Seems to be getting more challenging but

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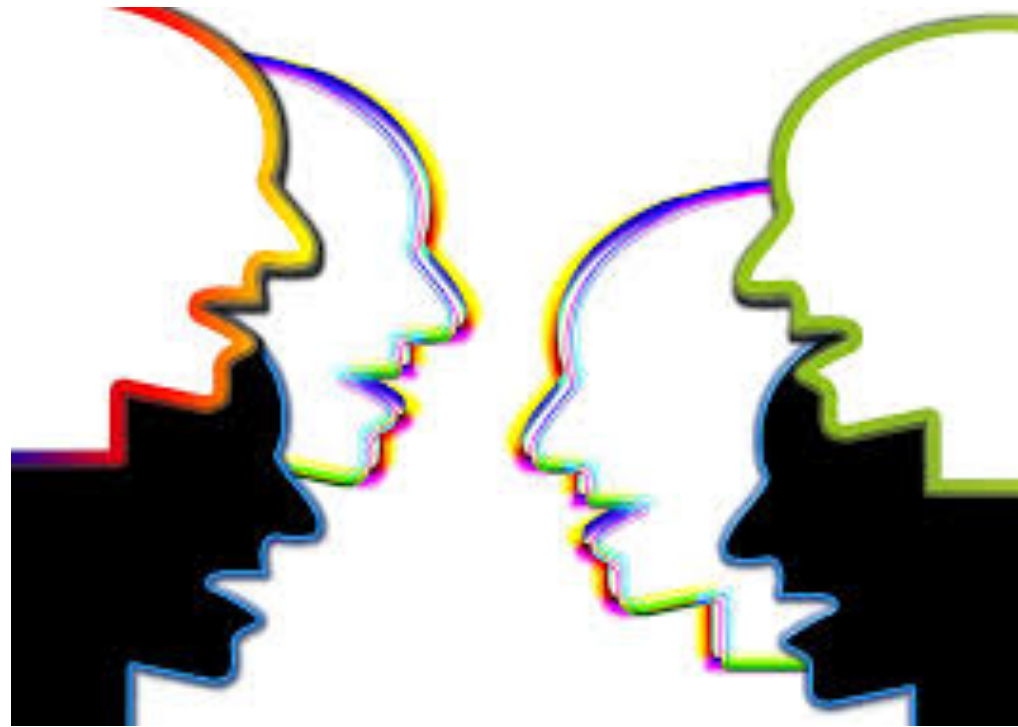
progress?

2019

Reasons for the problems

- austerity
- growing demand
- lack of public sector capacity
- withering of strategic commissioning
- ideological and practice fixation with markets and competition
 - mindset capture in both public sector and VCSE
 - but markets are inappropriate for most public services especially social care
- service rather than rights based focus

Discussion





What we need

- a citizen rights approach
- return to 'true' strategic commissioning
 - involving service users and advocates
 - VCSE
- relational partnerships rather than competitive tendering
 - and recognition that this is possible under regulations
- full cost plus fees
- security of funding and relationships
- to seize opportunity of move to 'insourcing' and local community wealth building
- rigorous quality standards and enforcement
- social care being integral to wider place shaping
- confidence of VCSE to say "no"

What can/should we do?

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G

Debate

- how radical should VODG be
 - *tweak the present system or argue for an end to competitive tendering and contracting to be replaced with relational partnerships?*
- what should role of VCS providers be in strategic commissioning?
- what should our response/opportunity be to a shift to more insourcing and in-house provision
 - and local community wealthbuilding
- can do we advocate when we are contracting?
- what immediate reforms would be helpful?