



Briefing on the Budget Options 2015-2017 VCS information event on 1 December 2014

Over 100 voluntary and community sector groups (VCS) from across Manchester gathered on 1 December 2014 at Manchester Town Hall to find out more about what is going to be a devastating round of funding cuts. A diverse group of VCS organisations attended including local neighbourhood care groups, housing associations, cultural groups, youth groups and advice and advocacy organisations.

It's the first in a range of events the Council is organising, as they provide more information about the cuts options. This event focussed on the specific cuts that impact the VCS organisations directly, rather than the overall approach to cuts options across the Council.

Further information on future [Council Consultation Events is available here](#)

Several VCS groups asked for more information on the overall budget, in order to understand how proposed VCS cuts fit in to the bigger picture.

Hazel Summers presented the options [click here to view the presentation](#). Macc will be producing a briefing about the cuts shortly.

This was followed by table discussions and a panel question and answer session.

The questions raised during the table discussions by the VCS and the answers from the panel will be collated into a FAQ guide and will be published by the Council.

The Panel included: Geoff Little Deputy Chief Executive; Mike Houghton-Evans, Strategic Director of Adult Services; John Edwards, Director of Education and Skills and David Regan, Director of Public Health.

A comment was raised from an attendee about the lack of diversity of the panel of senior managers who were all white and male.

Questions and comments for the Panel from the VCS

Amongst other people who spoke were:

Claire Tomkinson from Ladybarn Community Association; Helen Gatenby, M13; Gail Hindley from Harpurhay Neighbourhood Project; Paul Martin from LGF; Atiha Choudry from GMBME Network; Tess Gregson from 42 Street; Peter Jackson from Breakthrough; Miranda Kaunang from Fairshare; Andy Brown from CAB; and John Ryan from Shelter.

Questions included:

- Have the decisions on spending been made already?
- Could the Council move towards a Core Funding model of supporting the VCS?
- There are lots of references to Hubs in the new proposals but the VCS would like more idea about what this would look like in practice.



- How will the Council assess the social value / social impact of cuts?
- Some options do not appear to have a strategic rationale with them where as others do.
- These options seem to be removing a significant amount from prevention and early help whilst at the same time the Council is saying it's a priority area for them.
- There doesn't seem to be a balance between a focus on economic growth and a focus on supporting communities and neighbourhoods.
- Concerns that there were options to remove funding for Infrastructure for the VCS at a time when groups are going to be needing help with business planning and volunteering and engaging with the Council.
- Why are cuts being proposed before the Council has conducted impact assessments?
- What are the Core Cities doing to challenge the unfairness of the Financial Settlement?

What do you need to do now?

- Take part in the [Consultation with the Council](#)
- Talk to elected members – [Read our guide on Lobbying Councillors in Manchester about Cuts](#)
- Encourage your service users to talk to / write to elected members about the impact cuts will have on them, their families and local communities
- Tell the Council about the impact that the cuts will have on your organisation and your service users.
- Speak at a scrutiny committee – [click here to find when the next scrutiny meetings are taking place](#)
- Attend the next Voluntary Sector Assembly on 11 December to discuss the impact of the proposed cuts on our organisations and on the people who use our services, construct a collective response to the cuts proposals, share lobbying strategies and approaches and debate the long-term future of the sector. [Click here to book a place](#)

Key contacts

If you wish to discuss how the cuts may impact your organisation then contact Nathan Atkinson at Manchester City Council by email at: n.atkinson@manchester.gov.uk or tweet [@MCC ComHub](#)

Contact us

Macc wants to know about how the cuts are going to impact you, email us at: info@macc.org.uk and we'd like to encourage all VCS Chief Execs to join the regular meeting for Chief Execs which Macc coordinates, for further information email us at: info@macc.org.uk