

**Agenda for consultative meeting of the Poverty Working Panel
Monday, 22nd November, 2021, 11.00 am**



Members of Poverty Working Panel

Councillors M Allen, M Armstrong (Chair), M Chapman, B De Saram, S Hawkins, P Jarvis, M Rixson, J Whibley and T Woodward

East Devon District Council
Blackdown House
Border Road
Heathpark Industrial Estate
Honiton
EX14 1EJ

Venue: Online via the Zoom app

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(or group number 01395 517546)

Friday, 12th November 2021

**Important - this meeting will be conducted online and recorded by Zoom only.
Please do not attend Blackdown House.**

Members are asked to follow the [Protocol for Remote Meetings](#)

This meeting is being recorded by EDDC for subsequent publication on the Council's website and will be streamed live to the Council's Youtube Channel at

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmNHQruge3LV14hcgRnbwBw>

Public speakers are now required to register to speak – for more information please use the following link: <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/have-your-say-at-meetings/all-other-public-meetings/#article-content>

Between 27th July 2021 to 17th January 2022, the Council has delegated much of the decision making to officers. Any officer decisions arising from recommendations from this consultative meeting will be published on the webpage for this meeting in due course. All meetings held can be found via the [Browse Meetings](#) webpage.

- 1 Public speaking
- 2 Apologies
- 3 Declarations of interest
- 4 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 September 2021 (Pages 3 - 8)
- 5 Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector consultation - report from Jamie Buckley- Community Engagement & Funding Officer (Pages 9 - 23)
- 6 New Household Support Fund briefing paper from Libby Jarrett - Service Lead - Revenues, Benefits, Customer Services & Corporate Fraud
- 7 Food Poverty briefing report from Sue Bewes - Housing Services Manager

8 Poverty Strategy Action Plan updates from:

- Libby Jarrett – Finance
- Jamie Buckley – Community Engagement
- Andy Wood / Sally Raynes – Economy
- Jo Garfoot – Housing
- Helen Wharam – Environmental Health

9 Date of the next meeting

Decision making and equalities

For a copy of this agenda in large print, please contact the Democratic Services Team on 01395 517546

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the consultative meeting of Poverty Working Panel held Online via the Zoom app on 20 September 2021

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 11.00 am and ended at 2.00 pm

1 Public speaking

There were no members of the public registered to speak.

2 Declarations of interest

Minute 7. Update from Devon County Council on poverty-related issues, including food insecurity and Team Devon - Simon Kitchen - Head of Communities.

Councillor Ian Hall, Personal, Member is a Devon County Councillor and works with Officers on the FareShare scheme.

3 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 26 April 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 April 2021 were recommended for approval by Senior Officers.

4 Update on the Labour Market - Presentation by Sally Raynes - Economic Development Officer - Employment and Skills

Sally Raynes, Economic Development Officer, presented an update on the labour market which focussed on the employment and skills situation once furlough ends on 30th September. The presentation included the following points:

- There are high levels of vacancies for well paid jobs in East Devon across all sectors and wages are increasing in lower paid sectors.
- The ability to access well paid jobs is impacted by the need to drive to places of work.
- Regarding unemployment in East Devon, the largest out of work group is the 30-45 age group.
- Various schemes are in place to reduce unemployment and help the unemployed back in to work.
- It is still too early to understand the effects of the ending of the furlough scheme and which groups will be most affected.
- With regard to pay, East Devon residents are paid only 88.3% of the average weekly pay in the UK.
- Traditionally low paid sectors and largest employment sectors are raising wages from minimum wage due to shortage of applicants in sectors such as hospitality, construction, care sector and transportation.
- The most effective way to increase average pay is to encourage the workforce to improve skills to enable them to take up better paid jobs.
- There are many free schemes available to support people with up skilling or re-skilling and lots of apprenticeships available in all sector and at all levels.
- As the furlough scheme ends, residents will need assistance with signposting to re-skilling to enable them to take up better paid jobs.

Questions and comments from Members included the following points:

- It was noted that the removal of the £20 increase in Universal Credit is likely to impact low paid workers many of whom rely on the benefit, however, there is no way of ascertaining what the actual impact will be.
- It is vital to encourage and assist those in lower paid jobs to move into better paid work and women aged 45+ are of particular concern in this regard.
- EDDC Officers are in contact with the DWP and the various schemes available such as SkillUp and SmartSkills in order to be able to support residents with moving into better paid work.
- Access to transport is crucial for those seeking to change employment and this has a particular impact on younger people.
- There is a mismatch between the types of jobs available and the jobs which are being sought by residents in line with their current skills and job sectors, many of which are in hard to access rural locations.
- It was noted that the mismatch between vacancies and skills is a nationwide issue. There is DWP funding available to assist with retraining and reskilling to help people move into better paid employment.
- Those seeking to change their employment appear to be less willing to move to a different area.
- It was noted that Devon County Council is preparing a bus improvement plan which should be published by the end of October for implementation in March 2022 and that this should address issues with improving access to employment locations.
- A key challenge for recruitment and the movement of the workforce is the relationship between escalating prices in the housing market and the labour market.
- There is a need for employers to be more flexible with working hours which would also go some way to addressing issues with the timing of public transport for those travelling to work.

The Chair thanked Sally Raynes for her very informative presentation. The presentation slides would be circulated after the meeting and further updates on the economy would be brought to future meetings.

5

Update on the financial/hardship & financial resilience support - Libby Jarrett - Service Lead - Revenues, Benefits, Customer Services and Corporate Fraud

Sharon Church, Benefits Manager, presented an update on the financial resilience team which highlighted the following:

- The Council Tax reduction caseload has increased overall, but there has been a drop in new applications in the past 5 month. The caseload shows an increase of 2% towards working age compared with January of this year.
- Referrals received continue to grow and more complex cases are now being referred by other agencies such as social workers, schools and mental health teams.
- The highest number of referrals came from internal departments with the highest reason for the referral being rent arrears. It was noted that 30% of residents referred are in work.
- Regarding payments from the Hardship Fund, the highest need remains for emergency food and fuel support.

- The presentation included a summary of issues which had been identified as contributing to financial hardship.
- There are now two dedicated Financial Resilience Officers in place, on 2 year fixed term contracts, and EDDC officers across departments are starting to identify residents who may need support and are referring them to the Financial Resilience team.
- Policies are being updated in line with the Poverty Strategy.
- A case study was presented which showed the complexity of the reasons for financial hardship and the help which the team had been able to offer to the resident.
- Partnership working across all sectors is key to addressing the underlying issues for those in financial hardship and poverty and EDDC's partners have been very positive and willing to continue to work together.
- Having a dedicated resource is now resulting in good outcomes in the longer term.

Comments and questions from Members included the following points:

- Early intervention is crucial when people are experiencing hardship.
- Helping people to help themselves is key when supporting people.
- Increasing the information available will assist with supporting people and a survey or questionnaire could be a way of gathering data and obtaining input from residents.
- Partners such as foodbanks and schools are starting to refer residents to EDDC which is assisting with identifying those needing support.
- There is concern that the imminent cut to Universal Credit, the increase in National Insurance Contributions and rapidly rising utility costs will have a serious impact on residents.
- Concern was expressed regarding housing associations not allowing tenants who are in arrears with their rent to downsize to more affordable properties. It was noted that this is a national issue.
- Appointing a digital exclusion champion could assist with increasing support available for residents.
- Regarding access to EDDC staff for Exmouth residents, it was noted that signage has been updated to assist with accessing services.

The Chair thanked Sharon Church and Libby Jarrett for their presentation and contributions. The presentation slides would be circulated after the meeting.

6 'A perfect storm - health inequalities and the impact of Covid-19' - LGA report introduced by Helen Wharam - Public Health Project Officer

Helen Wharam, Public Health Project Officer, gave a presentation on health inequalities and the impact of Covid-19 which included the following points:

- The LGA briefing "A Perfect Storm", which had been circulated to Members previously, looked at inequalities and aimed to examine the impact of Covid-19 and the resulting restrictions on inequalities and explore the steps some councils are taking to reduce inequalities.
- It was noted that the pandemic had made everyone more aware of health inequalities and their impact.

- Inequalities highlighted by Covid-19 included geographical, across different age ranges, digital exclusion, mental health, occupation, gender, ethnicity and learning disabilities.
- An outcome of Covid-19 has been the growth of access to online services and those with no access to the internet, for a variety of reasons, are excluded from not only online services, but they also experience barriers to home-working and home-schooling.
- The risks to mental health resulting from Covid-19 have been widely reported and may have the greatest long term effect on public health.
- A positive outcome of the pandemic has been an increase in partnership working between local authorities, other agencies and community sectors.

Comments and questions from Members included the following points:

- There was concern that younger people are not taking up the Covid-19 vaccination and it was noted that Devon County Council, the NHS and other agencies are working together to address this issue.
- There was concern that the message to 'stay at home' has contributed to an adverse impact on mental health; it was noted that local comms messages should reflect county and national advice.

The Chair thanked Helen Wharam for her presentation and the slides would be circulated after the meeting.

7

Update from Devon County Council on poverty-related issues, including food insecurity and Team Devon - Simon Kitchen - Head of Communities

Simon Kitchen, Head of Communities – Devon County Council – updated members on the Team Devon approach and work. The following points were included:

- The EDDC Poverty Strategy is helpful for the local government 'family' in Devon and DCC is taking on some of the points raised through the strategy.
- Team Devon comprises the Leaders and Chief Executive Officers of Devon councils who meet regularly and have requested Simon Kitchen to co-ordinate work around poverty and food insecurity on their behalf.
- The need to potentially feed the 60,000 people identified as shielding from March 2020 at the onset of the pandemic, had highlighted the need to understand local food organisations and their capacity and communication with each other.
- In November 2020, a report from the Social Market Foundation developed understanding of food insecurity and identified a league table of areas in the UK where residents experienced food insecurity which also included areas in Devon.
- DCC wished to use Government funding during the pandemic to create food sustainability and, with district council colleagues, set up food networks in each district to better understand food support locally. The food network project in East Devon ended at the start of the summer 2021.
- DCC research has shown that really vulnerable families are not accessing foodbanks for various reasons.
- DCC is looking to move forward with work to develop a series of food networks across Devon and to work collectively with other councils to promote welfare generally and support for clinically extremely vulnerable residents.

- A way forward in several areas had been agreed loosely and DCC is looking to commission further research to really understand what interventions vulnerable families and older people actually need. It has also been agreed to consider shared principles across district councils in Devon.
- It was noted that there is a lack of common offer of support across the County and Team Devon is looking to bring all of this work together in an agreed strategy.

Discussion and questions from Members and participants included the following points:

- It is vital to understand the root causes of poverty, rather than just address the consequences.
- Victoria Robinson, a Community Development Worker for the Housing Service, advised Members on how food had been distributed during lockdown to various providers including foodbanks, community fridges and larders. A list of food providers in East Devon had been compiled and was currently being updated. Detailed information from East Devon was available and could help to inform the DCC research work. Food providers are also referring clients to other EDDC services as appropriate.
- Victoria Robinson also outlined the process by which food is sourced from the FareShare hub in Bristol and distributed via Exeter Food Action.
- If all providers across Devon work to the same ethos, it may assist with overcoming barriers which prevent people from accessing support.
- It was noted that there is a difference between distributing food which would otherwise be wasted, arising from a duty not to waste food, and assisting those who are vulnerable and in need through foodbanks.
- Part of the solution to food sustainability could include allotments and growing food locally.

The Chair thanked Simon Kitchen for his presentation and looked forward to working with Simon and colleagues at Devon County Council in the future.

8 Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector consultation - report from John Golding - Strategic Lead - Housing, Health & Environment, on behalf of Jamie Buckley - Community Engagement & Funding Officer

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

9 Poverty Action Plan - Panel comments re. progress?

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

10 Date of the next meeting

The next meeting will be held on 22 November 2021. The Panel will continue to meet every two months during 2022 and proposed dates would be circulated following the meeting.

Attendance List

Councillors present:

M Armstrong (Chair)
M Chapman
B De Saram
M Rixson
T Woodward

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

I Hall
P Millar

Officers in attendance:

Sharon Church, Benefits Manager
Simon Davey, Strategic Lead Finance
John Golding, Strategic Lead Housing, Health and Environment
Susan Howl, Democratic Services Manager
Libby Jarrett, Service Lead Revenues and Benefits
Sarah Jenkins, Democratic Services Officer
Helen Wharam, Public Health Project Officer
Andrew Wood, Service Lead - Growth Development and Prosperity
Victoria Robinson, Community Development Worker – Housing Service
Sally Raynes – Economic Development Officer – Employment and Skills

Also in attendance:

Simon Kitchen – Head of Communities, Devon County Council

Councillor apologies:

S Hawkins
P Jarvis

Chair

Date:

East Devon District Council

Voluntary, community and social enterprise support

July / August 2021

Background

East Devon has a vibrant and diverse Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector that provides a wide range of services, activities and support to residents in the district. The Council and its partners also have a long-standing commitment to encouraging the local VCSE groups, including capacity building and partnership working.

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We witnessed an impressive effort by these groups during the pandemic and they clearly demonstrated the value of their work in communities.

Every area of Devon currently has a Council for Voluntary Service, with the exception of East Devon. There are some issues with this lack of provision, which became more evident during the first wave of the Coronavirus pandemic, when both existing and new voluntary and community groups came under pressure and struggled to find support. A temporary support arrangement was commissioned by Devon County Council to provide basic guidance and advice (via WestBank), but this was limited and this contract has now ended.

It's recognised that our community and voluntary groups would benefit from support enabling VCSE groups of all shapes and sizes to focus on what they do best, by helping them in ways that they want.

A commissioning brief or service specification is required to clarify the range of support and advice that voluntary, community and social enterprise groups in East Devon want and need. As a starter for this we drafted a discussion document and questionnaire to gather in the thoughts of the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector. This was a discussion document, at the very initial stage, everything in it was up for discussion. This was distributed to East Devon's voluntary, community and social enterprise groups along with a questionnaire. 28 groups responded.

To see the discussion document they were commenting on: <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/community-engagement/voluntary-community-and-social-enterprise-sector-support-consultation/>

Summary

- The majority of respondents were charities and unincorporated organisations.

A - Vision

- 89% of respondents agreed with the proposed vision, 7% disagreed.
- Suggestions for adding to / changing the vision include:
 - Being more involved in decision-making bodies.
 - Explanation of how it fits with the new East Devon Community Network Coordinator role.
 - More about VCSE groups networking / working together.
 - Needs clear succinct goals.

B - Benefits

- 96% agreed with the listed benefits proposed, none disagreed.
- 5 respondents gave different suggestions for improving the list of benefits including; to reduce competition between voluntary, community and social enterprise groups / brokering partnerships between them.

C – Partnership approach

- 100% of respondents agreed with the partnership approach proposed.
- 100% respondents agreed with us working with the VCSE sector to develop the role and outcomes for this support.
- 17 respondents said they would want to be involved in developing the role and outcomes for a voluntary, community and social enterprise sector support service within East Devon.

D – A proposal for what this support could look like

- 92% agreed with our proposal for what the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector support could initially look like, none disagreed.
- 7 respondents gave different suggestions for improving our proposal for what the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector support could initially look like.

E – Common requests for particular support

Support	Percentage of respondents that say this would be very/ fairly helpful
A helpline and email address where you can send a wide variety of requests for support.	96
Provision of networking opportunities. Events / spaces where VCSE organisations can get together and communicate, building relationships between and with the voluntary sector and statutory agencies. This would include a cohesive approach (possibly digital) to enable communication within the VCSE sector, sharing expertise and best practice.	93
Support and guidance around accessing funding, finding and applying for it, including help to find longer term funding and finding funding for core costs, not just for projects, so you can plan for the future.	90
Advice and guidance on building resilience and sustainability within VCSE groups, volunteers and coordinators.	89
Advice, guidance and support around recruiting, managing and supporting volunteers.	86
Advice and guidance on publicity, and how to reach your target audience.	85
Advice and guidance around legal requirements, for example equalities legislation, safeguarding and data protection.	81
Provide or signpost to training for volunteers and coordinators, including awareness training of relevant aspects such as dementia for volunteers and coordinators.	79
Help to reach those who are most isolated and disengaged, including guidance on how to encourage people who need help from the VCSE sector to come forward. How to engage with residents inbetween towns and villages who aren't sure where to get help.	75
Advice and guidance on digital services and IT support for the VCSE organisation itself and the people you are helping. This would include support with helping communities become more digitally included, so more people can access online services.	72
Signposting VCSE groups to other guidance and support, and establishing pathways for onward referral of residents where necessary.	69
Support with applying for contracts and commissions.	59
Advice and guidance on whether and how to set up as a Community Interest Company, charity etc.	53

- 7 respondents each added other, different things they would want a Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) support organisation to do.

Full Results

Methodology

East Devon's voluntary, community and social enterprise sector groups were asked to have their say on our discussion document before 8 September 2021. They could do this by filling on a questionnaire, with paper copies and copies in other formats available on request.

To advertise the consultation:

- Press releases were sent out.
- Our social media accounts were used.
- Registered charities and registered social enterprises from within East Devon were sent an email.
- Town and parish councils, and East Devon District Councillors received the information and were asked to pass it on.

28 voluntary, community and social enterprise groups responded.

About you

1. Does your not for private profit group mainly operate to benefit residents, communities and / or other groups within East Devon?

All 28 respondents answered yes to this question.

2. Please tell us what type of not for private profit organisation you are:

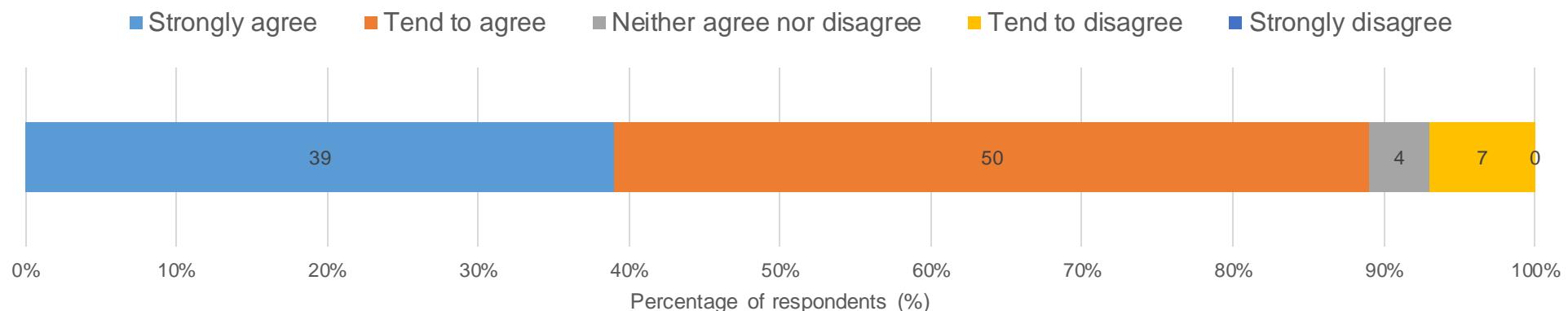
All 28 respondents answered this question.

Type of not for profit organisation	Number of respondents
Charitable Incorporated Organisation - registered with and reporting to the Charities Commission.	12
Charitable Trust - with a trust deed these are organisations run by a small group of trustees. Will be registered with the Charities Commission if income is over £5,000 a year.	2
Charitable Company - registered with and reporting to the Charities Commission and Companies House.	1
Community Interest Company - registered with and reporting to Companies House. CICs commit their assets and profits permanently to the community by means of an "asset lock".	0
Company Limited by Guarantee - registered with Companies House, with a Memorandum and Articles of Association. Any / all profits are re-invested back into the company.	1
Unincorporated Association - unregistered but has a written constitution setting out the rules of how it will be run. It can be whatever its members want it to be, and carry out whatever activity the members choose. It is the easiest, quickest and cheapest way for a group to set itself up.	6
Community Benefit Society - owned by its members, who hold shares and control the society democratically. The society must exist primarily for the benefit of the wider community.	0
A not for profit organisation with no legal structure and no written rules for how the group will be run / what its aims are (no constitution).	0
Other	6

A - Vision

3. Overall, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed vision?

28 respondents answered this question.



If you disagree, please tell us how you would improve it:

One person that disagreed said how they would improve it:

- Any over seeing body could be better accepted by grass roots organisations if it provided a service. One which would help small groups like ours would be an umbrella DBS checking service, similar to the one provide by Thirtyone eight (previously CCPAS).

4. Please tell us about anything you have not already mentioned that you would add to, change or remove from the proposed vision to improve it?

14 respondents commented:

- As part of the XXXX, we have received funding for a part time VCSE coordinator to work with the voluntary groups based in the WEB area and the WAKLEY area. The job description is currently being advertised.
- I love this vision, one thought i have is something around a need for community groups to work together to provide a holistic approach to supporting the communities, the more we can be a network of people who genuinely stand alongside each other the better, and support

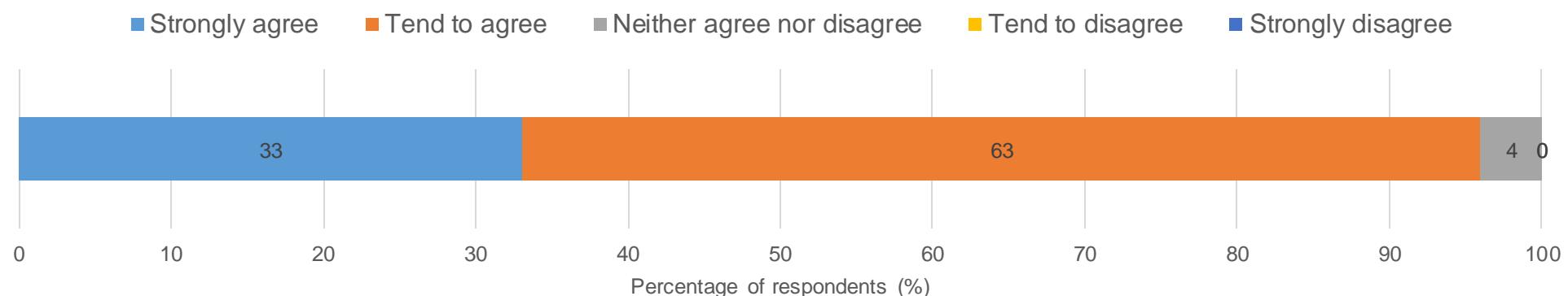
each other, complimenting the other groups the better in my opinion. This has been put in the Benefits section of the proposal, however for me this needs to be a clear vision from the start to make it a reality.

- - I would like to see it more explicit that the support should be "universal" ie: all VCEs can access all services equally, rather than, as can sometimes happen, it becoming additional support for those with the highest profile/ in certain sectors/ areas
- I feel the shared spaces in churches are not mentioned and may be crucial, for instance we operate our groups in these spaces and many churches operate support programmes in Exmouth. I.E Brixington Family Support.
- How to improve infrastructure and support to do so. Advice only goes so far, active working groups to help identify and provide facilities. Facilities, and funding to develop them, are the main barriers limiting participation, resulting in waiting lists as demand is so high
- We need support for our group as I am seeing a lot of mums with babies born in lockdown who have had no face to face support.
- How does this correlate with the new VCSE Role that's recently been advertised and being interviewed for?
- 6 monthly meetings with relevant portfolio holder. Lunch get together for networking.
- Look at more social prescribing affected by poor mental health
- Very comprehensive - is it too extensive ?? Clear succinct goals are easier to plan
- As long as clear remit, rather than just a 'signposting' or 'layer of bureaucracy '
- What we would be seeking would be some funding or volunteering support to help provide grants and activities provided they fell within the charitable objectives mentioned before.
- I think it's important to not have a one-size-fits-all approach. The VCSE sector is very diverse, ranging from small grassroots groups with very little overheads to larger, complex charities that have complex infrastructures and overheads to cover.
- The Voluntary and Community Sector needs to be granted formal representation on decision-making bodies.

B - Benefits

5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed list of benefits?

27 respondents answered this question.



If you disagree, please tell us how you would improve it:

As no one disagreed, there are no comments from those that disagreed.

6. Please tell us about anything you haven't already mentioned that you would add to, change or remove from the proposed list of benefits:

5 respondents commented:

- The main benefit for all voluntary groups would be access to funding. Funding is the lifeblood of every organisation.
- Ideally, there would be reduced competition between VCSOs, and so increase the efficiency of the sector
- Again too extensive
- A collective presence at social care level
- We would like to see the VCSE support that is set up acting as an umbrella organisation advising small groups and individuals on how to set up as a group, avoiding any potential local duplication. We also see the benefit of such an organisation in brokering partnership opportunities with other established groups.

C – Partnership approach

7. Do you agree or disagree with the proposal of a partnership approach?

All 27 respondents agreed with a partnership approach.

If you disagree, please tell us why:

As no one disagreed, there are no comments from those that disagreed.

8. We would want to work with representatives of the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector to develop the role and outcomes for a VCSE support service within East Devon. Do you agree or disagree with this idea?

All 26 respondents agreed with us working with the VCSE sector to develop the role and outcomes for this support.

If you disagree, please tell us why, and how you would improve it?

As no one disagreed, there are no comments from those that disagreed.

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9. Would you want to sign up to be involved in developing the role and outcomes for a voluntary, community and social enterprise sector support service within East Devon?

17 respondents stated that they would like to be involved, and left their contact details.

D – A proposal for what this support could look like

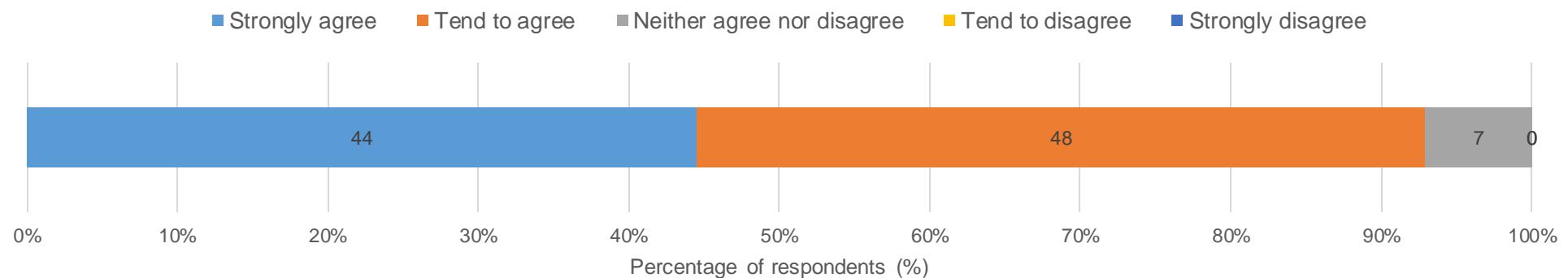
10. We propose that the voluntary, community and social enterprise support service in East Devon would initially:

- provide the grassroots level support the VCSE sector ask for (to be decided by the VCSE sector) to a variety of groups throughout the whole of East Devon, such as groups focused on wellbeing, health, sports, social isolation, community transport, children and young people, older people, heritage, arts & culture.
- provide other support the VCSE sector ask for, which could include things like representing East Devon's VCSE sector on the regional and national stage.
- work with the district's Coronavirus community support groups, to see if these can be developed to provide resilience and community support longer term.
- develop user friendly resources that list VCSE groups and what they can provide to East Devon's communities. Accessible to all and regularly updated. Identify & help to address any gaps in support.
- help secure future funding for this support service.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

27 respondents answered this question.

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If you disagree, please tell us how you would improve it:

As no one disagreed, there are no comments from those that disagreed.

11. Please tell us about anything you have not already mentioned that you would add to, change or remove from the list in question 10 to improve it?

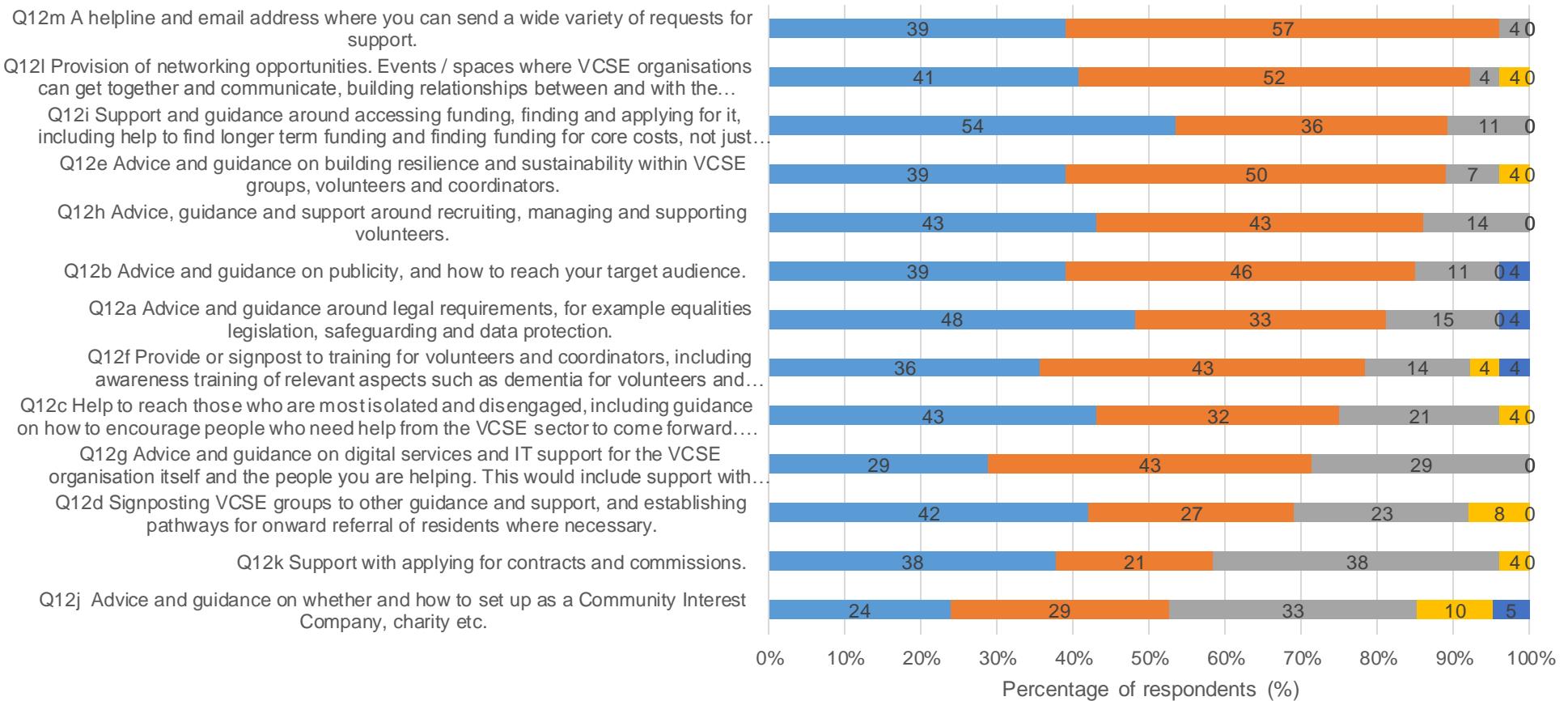
7 respondents commented:

- I would be concerned if asked to provide support as a small organisation with a Christian ethos we have limited resources.
- Support for easy to access funding is vital for all community groups
- Increased opportunities for training
- Is there a sub group or separate department of East Devon Council which researches, identifies and prioritises the needs of the East Devon residents/communities?
- Over all the concepts/aims/outcome seem to met the gap and would reduce repetitiveness of task in many areas. However, I consider is important we do not dismiss the outcomes from COVID response. Where some contracts were given where there was no 'seen' on the ground level benefits in some areas.
- The VCSE support service will need to have an early and proactive Communication strategy to ensure that the wider community understands the aims and potential benefits of having such a centralised umbrella service. This will help to reduce any unnecessary concerns from established community groups of such a service interfering with their work/activities. Engage with community groups to ensure there is a clear understanding that the VCSE support service will act as an equal partner with community groups citing examples of ways that EDDC have already worked collaboratively with groups in this space e.g. EDDC COVID response and support
- We suggest that the Support includes provision of a secretariat, a joint approach for insurance, and a formal role in EDDC decision-making

E – Common requests for particular support

12. For each of the following proposed functions of Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector support, please tell us how useful your organisation would find them: The results are shown below, starting with the function that respondents would find most helpful at the top.

■ Very helpful ■ Fairly helpful ■ Neither helpful nor unhelpful ■ Fairly unhelpful ■ Very unhelpful



Full wording of each question:

- Q12j Advice and guidance on whether and how to set up as a Community Interest Company, charity etc.
- Q12k Support with applying for contracts and commissions.
- Q12d Signposting VCSE groups to other guidance and support, and establishing pathways for onward referral of residents where necessary.
- Q12g Advice and guidance on digital services and IT support for the VCSE organisation itself and the people you are helping. This would include support with helping communities become more digitally included, so more people can access online services.
- Q12c Help to reach those who are most isolated and disengaged, including guidance on how to encourage people who need help from the VCSE sector to come forward. How to engage with residents inbetween towns and villages who aren't sure where to get help.
- Q12f Provide or signpost to training for volunteers and coordinators, including awareness training of relevant aspects such as dementia for volunteers and coordinators.
- Q12a Advice and guidance around legal requirements, for example equalities legislation, safeguarding and data protection.
- Q12b Advice and guidance on publicity, and how to reach your target audience.
- Q12h Advice, guidance and support around recruiting, managing and supporting volunteers.
- Q12e Advice and guidance on building resilience and sustainability within VCSE groups, volunteers and coordinators.
- Q12i Support and guidance around accessing funding, finding and applying for it, including help to find longer term funding and finding funding for core costs, not just for projects, so you can plan for the future.
- Q12l Provision of networking opportunities. Events / spaces where VCSE organisations can get together and communicate, building relationships between and with the voluntary sector and statutory agencies. This would include a cohesive approach (possibly digital) to enable communication within the VCSE sector, sharing expertise and best practice.
- Q12m A helpline and email address where you can send a wide variety of requests for support.

13. Are there any other things you would want a Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) support organisation to do, or offer, that haven't already been mentioned?

25% of the 28 respondents answered yes to this question.

If yes, please tell us what other things you would want them to do, or offer:

7 respondents commented:

- Not just to provide advice and guidance - arguably that is already available in various places online eg NCVO - but actual training sessions/courses held in East Devon. We usually have to travel long distances for good quality training.
- Provide a useful service DBS checks reduced fee parking tickets for workers having to use cars
- Encouragement to keep going
- Support to identify and fund facilities - severely lacking currently and on approaching EDDC no support was offered
- Direct support with funding bids and opportunities to facilitate partnerships with other organisations
- Provide specialist advice to different VCSE sectors enabling them to access expert knowledge held within EDDC and other partner organisations e.g Health and Safety, access to community profile data, employment law Provide a vehicle through which the work of VCSE organisations and volunteers can be celebrated and disseminated
- We suggest that the Support includes provision of a secretariat, a joint approach for insurance, and play a formal role in EDDC decision-making

14. Do you have any other comments? If so please state below:

10 respondents commented:

- What we need is a focused VCSE support and linked to the new Local Care Partnership and Integrated Care System. We need everything to be 'joined up' and not be two or three different approaches. Communication is key to this.
- At XXXX we are endeavouring to work collaboratively with our community and have set up an information centre in the town. The vision for this centre is that community members can come in for any wellbeing advice, whether they are patients of ours or not. If we are not specifically able to help, then we signpost them on to the relevant organisation who can help. such as The Memory cafe/ Sid Valley Help/ Sidmouth Voluntary services. We are already striving towards some of the ideas that you set out in your discussion document.
- Thank you for co-ordinating this
- Please try to avoid over committingLess can be more in the end.
- XXXX an advisor, as Teignbridge works effectively
- Thank you for this idea.
- As a wildlife conservation body using science, not sure if we can be of help in your project.

- Only as mentioned, build on the community positives over last 20 months. Would be great to be 'on par' with other areas as long as its real term support lead from ground up.
- Any commissioned VCSE support service will need to have a clear understanding of the very different community profiles of the towns and villages across East Devon. Post COVID the support service will need to have a clear focus on rebuilding many of the local community links and clubs that have been broken (e.g. lunch clubs, informal social clubs and activities)
- Over the last few years, it seems that a lot of time/funding has been spent on 'mapping', 'needs assessment' etc. which then doesn't necessarily result in any extra support for the organisations who are already working very hard delivering services on the ground. It would be great if any future support from EDDC could focus on the long-term support of VCSE service delivery through funding/commissioning opportunities, in particular core funding, as well as infrastructure support, training etc.