

The Vale of Glamorgan Council

Voluntary Sector Joint Liaison Committee 25th October 2017

Report of the Voluntary Sector

Vale Third Sector Consortia Development Project – End of Project Report

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide the Committee with information on the work of the Vale Third Sector Consortia Development Project funded via the Vale Voluntary Action Scheme.

Recommendations

That the Committee receives the report for information and notes the return of £511,903 on the investment of £71,820 in the three year time span of the project.

This is over a seven fold return on the initial investment and highlights the financial benefit to the communities of the Vale of Glamorgan of providing this sort of funding to the Third Sector by the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

Reasons for the Recommendations

As required by the terms of the Vale Voluntary Action Scheme Grant.

Background

2. The development of consortia and other joint delivery models is becoming more and more important in the current economic climate.
3. Without support and co-ordination it can often be impossible for small, local organisations to individually bid to the larger funding providers or to tender for the delivery of public services. This project sought to support local organisations to develop consortia to bid for and deliver services to local people and communities. This was an opportunity for the Vale Voluntary Action Scheme to support a unique and innovative project that has provided a considerable financial return to the local third sector with minimal investment and has helped to alleviate demand on statutory services.
4. The project's targets as outlined in Appendix 1, were to hold 4 events ; develop 5 consortia and achieve 2-3 successful funding bids.

5. During the life of the project it was also deemed important to provide advice, information and training on for third sector groups to be “Tender Ready”.

Relevant Issues and Options

6. Throughout the life of the project over 160 meetings, seminars and events have been attended. The Consortium Development project has worked with over 40 local groups.
7. Three “Getting Ready to Tender” courses have been run with an additional course run for Vale of Glamorgan Council staff.
8. Over the life of the project 10 GVS led consortia were developed and these included:-

9. Connecting Lives (x 2)

In 2014 there was a broad based, informal consortium of 9 partners in existence within GVS. On starting the role the CDO worked with this group to develop a formal consortium to take the Connecting Lives project forward to the Big Lottery, People and Places, Fund (BLF). This involved seven partners:- GVS, British Red Cross; Parkinson's UK; Scope; Stroke Association; Vale People First and Cardiff & Vale Parents' Federation. (Epilepsy Wales and Royal Voluntary Service withdrew from the original group).

Connecting Lives aimed to reduce social isolation and loneliness; raise confidence levels; increase independence and social and community activity; and enhance, enrich and improve the quality of life of beneficiaries. A Stage 1 application was submitted which was unsuccessful but valuable feedback gained.

Despite addressing the issues raised by BLF the second Stage 1 application was also rejected.

10. Connected Carers

At this point many of the original Connecting Lives partners withdrew. A new project concentrating specifically on Carers of people with lifelong and / or life-limiting conditions was developed. The project was submitted to BLF's People and Places Grant Fund with GVS as lead partner, working with Cardiff & Vale Parents' Federation and Touch Trust. GVS was successful at Stage 1 and 2 and £259,202 has been awarded to run this project for 3 years beginning in September 2017. The project will provide valuable opportunities for the specific carers to access information and training and to participate in informal social gatherings and Time for me sessions.

11. “Virtual Museum” x 2

Originally a consortium was set up involving local primary schools, youth clubs, youth performers etc. to submit a bid to Heritage Lottery, Young Roots, Fund. This project aimed to place a series of *ibeacons* within the Barry area which would allow users to access historical information via a phone app. The use of this technology has been developed by staff from the People's Collection of Wales, based at Aberystwyth University, who were a member of the consortium. After much discussion it was felt that the maximum amount of the Young Roots fund of £50,000 would be insufficient to develop the project fully so a new consortium was

developed including Local History and Family History Societies etc. Sadly there was not enough support for the project to be submitted for funding.

12. Youth Project

Initial contact was made with the Vale Youth Forum, Vibe Creative, E-Motion Dance and Penarth Youth Matters. A consortium was developed with E-Motion dance and Penarth Youth Matters to develop a project which delivered training and opportunities to disadvantaged young people and their families. Sadly Penarth Youth Matters lost their core funding and were forced to close before a bid for funding could be submitted. Additional support was given to E-Motion Dance to access funding to meet their core activities.

13. Vibrant and Creative Vale Communities

A stage one application for £1,100,000 was made to the Big Lottery, Create Your Space, Fund, which was set up to enable communities to take the lead to make a positive and sustainable transformation of their local environment. A consortium was led by GVS and included Valeways, Penarth Town Council, Vale of Glamorgan Council (the Departments of Economic Development Rural Regeneration and Planning, Parks and Housing) and Barry Communities First. The application was unsuccessful.

14. Fireflies

Fireflies was developed for an ESF funding bid which was unsuccessful. (See below). However there was such a strong will to work together for a common aim from the original partners of GVS, Vale of Glamorgan Environment and Housing, Newydd and Hafod Housing Associations, that a really productive consortium was developed. Gwalia and Wales & West Housing Associations have recently joined the consortium. Fireflies works to provide volunteering opportunities and pathways into employment for local tenants. Each organisation pools limited resources to support the consortium and joint events and promotional material have been developed. It is hoped that with the knowledge and evidence gained through an initial trial period, that funding can be sought later in 2017 to employ a Project Co-ordinator to develop this work.

15. Police and Crime Commissioner

GVS was the lead organisation in a consortium bid to the South Wales Police and Crime Commissioners Fund for £3,000. Other partners were the Vale of Glamorgan Council (Youth Services) and Cadoxton Youth Project. The funding was to engage young people in the Communities First area of Barry to assist in the regeneration of open spaces. The funding was used to pay for materials to refurbish an open space to be used by the wider community.

16. Friendly AdvantAGE

GVS was the lead partner for this successful £887,327 Big Lottery Funded Project which developed and ran five projects which provided numerous befriending opportunities and reduced social isolation for hundreds of people over the age of 50. The project ran from 2011 – 2015.

17. A further 4 consortia were assisted with GVS as a major partner:

18. Pave the Way

GVS was one of the main partners, along with Cardiff & Vale Action for Mental Health (CAVAMH) and Voluntary Community Services (VCS) which was successful in gaining £249,701 from the Big Lottery, People & Places, Fund. Pave the Way supports economically inactive and unemployed people with poor mental health by providing them with appropriate volunteering opportunities and a volunteer mentor and providing support to organisations that can develop such volunteering opportunities.

19. Active Inclusion Fund

A project was drafted to meet the requirements of the ESF Priority 1: Tackling Poverty through Sustainable Employment. An Eligibility Questionnaire was submitted and was successful, although this priority was superseded by European Social Fund bids.

20. European Social Fund (ESF) x 2

Initially the Community Voluntary Councils in the eastern area of Wales (Wrexham, Flintshire, Powys, Monmouth, Vale of Glamorgan, Cardiff and Newport) worked together, with the support of WCVA, and developed a proposal for a volunteering focussed project. An Operational Logic Table was submitted to the Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO). As a result of this WEFO asked whether this project could become part of a larger bid from a wider East Wales group of organisations including local authorities and housing associations etc.

A Vale of Glamorgan group was developed which included GVS, Vale of Glamorgan Environment and Housing and Newydd and Hafod Housing Associations and this fed into the larger consortium. After a great deal of work it became apparent that the requirements of ESF were so large and the numbers of people that the Vale group could actually work with were so small that the decision was made to withdraw from the wider group. However it was from this Vale group that the Fireflies consortium was developed which has been a great success.

21. Co-Creating Healthy Change

This project was funded under Community Voices by Big Lottery and is a portfolio of ten projects working across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan so that people are able to influence decisions about health and well-being services and co-create change in health and social care public service delivery.

22. Bethel Church Christmas Lunch, Llantwit Major

A partnership group was set up with GVS' help in 2015 and Christmas lunch was provided for 25 isolated people who enjoyed a really good meal, activities and entertainment. This was repeated in 2016 and plans are underway for 2017. This has been funded by donations from local businesses.

23. Support to organisations:

In addition to the above the project also worked with individual organisations to provide advice and support. These included:

- Pedal Power
- MESig (ME (Myalgic Encephalomyelitis) Support in Glamorgan)
- Valeways
- E-Motion Dance
- Creative Rural Communities – possible consortia explored
- Youth Forum

24. Exit strategy and Legacy of the Project:

This project has been a great success – financially and in terms of the outcomes met.

25. The grant awarded was £71,820 over three years. During this time £511,903 has been secured in funding as a direct result of this project. This is over a seven fold return on the initial investment.
26. The successful projects will run for a further two and three years.
27. Management costs included will give financial and managerial support to the partner organisations.
28. One full-time and six part-time posts have been created.
29. Over 160 meetings, seminars and events have been attended
30. Numerous people of all ages have been involved in projects and continue to meet the needs of their local communities, in line with the Community Strategy Action Plan.
31. Over 40 organisations have worked together on projects, developed valuable contacts and gained greater knowledge and understanding of each other's work.
32. In the current, difficult, financial climate, there is an increasing need, and often requirement by funders, for groups to work together in partnership in order to meet outcomes and objectives. To support this initiative and using what has been learned and evaluated throughout this project, a Consortium Development Toolkit has been developed to support organisations thinking about working as part of a consortium. This includes information about things to consider when applying for “large” amounts of funding. This will be launched at GVS's AGM on October 12th 2017. It will be available as a paper copy from GVS or via the GVS website.

Resource Implications (Financial and Employment)

33. The initial funding of £71,820 was provided by the Vale Voluntary Action Scheme and this investment has provided a seven fold return of £511,903 and provided employment for one full time and six part time posts.

Sustainability and Climate Change Implications

34. The project has enabled successful consortia participants to draw in additional resources to their organisation assisting with their sustainability.

Legal Implications (to Include Human Rights Implications)

- 35.

Crime and Disorder Implications

36.

Equal Opportunities Implications (to include Welsh Language issues)

37. The Council's position on equality of opportunity is put into daily practice through the funding of GVS's work with the voluntary and community groups operating in the Vale of Glamorgan

Corporate/Service Objectives

38. Partnership working is a Core Value within the Council's Corporate Plan Policy Framework as is co-production of services.

Policy Framework and Budget

39.

Consultation (including Ward Member Consultation)

40.

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

41.

Background Papers

Expected measurable outcomes table – Appendix 1
Third Sector Consortium Toolkit – Appendix 2

Contact Officer

Rachel Connor Chief Executive Officer GVS

Officers Consulted

Responsible Officer:

Rachel Connor Chief Executive Officer GVS

GVS Vale Third Sector Consortia Development Project

Expected measurable outcomes:

Year	Expected outcome	Measure	Actual numbers over the course of the project.
2014/2015	Project profile raised and local groups engaged	4 events held	Over 160 meetings, seminars and events have been attended. The Consortium Development project has worked with over 40 local groups.
2015/2016	Participants identified and project developed	5 consortia developed	<p>12 consortia developed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecting Lives x 2 • Connected Carers • Pave the Way • Youth Project • Young Roots / Heritage Grants, Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) x 2 • Create Your Space • Police and Crime Commissioner Project • Fireflies • ESF x 2 / Active Inclusion Fund <p>Of these six were submitted for funding, of which four were successful – see below.</p> <p>Additional Consortia supported by GVS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friendly AdvantAGE • Co-Creating Healthy Change • Bethel Church Christmas lunches
2016/2017	Service delivery maintained and expanded	2-3 successful bids / contracts	<p>4 successful bids / contracts achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connected Carers - £259,202 • Pave the Way - £249,701 • Police and Crime Commissioner - £3,000 • Fireflies Terms of Reference signed. Proposal for funding will be developed within the next 6 months.



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THE THIRD SECTOR CONSORTIUM



*A guide to
Partnership Working*



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Introduction

In Autumn 2014 GVS was awarded a Vale of Glamorgan Voluntary Action Scheme Grant to look into the benefits to the Vale of Glamorgan of a Third Sector Consortia Development Project.

It was felt that the development of consortia and other joint delivery models was becoming more and more important in the current economic climate.

Without support and co-ordination it can often be impossible for small, local organisations to individually bid to the larger funding providers or to tender for the delivery of public services. The project sought to support local organisations to develop consortia to bid for and deliver services to local people and communities. It was an opportunity for the Vale of Glamorgan Voluntary Action Scheme to support a unique and innovative project that could provide considerable financial return to the local Third Sector with minimal investment and to alleviate demand on statutory services.

A grant of £71,820 was awarded. A Project Officer was appointed and over the course of the last three years, twelve consortia have been developed, three have been successful in gaining funding and a fourth has agreed Terms of Reference and will be bidding for funding to develop the project in the near future.

£511,903 of grant funding has been secured which represents a seven fold return on the initial grant funding investment.

A great deal of information, knowledge and experience has been gained throughout the project. It has worked with over 40 organisations over the three years, over 160 meetings and events have been held and seven new posts have been created.

We hope that you will find the following information useful in moving towards more partnership working.

Rhian Thomas
Consortium Development Officer, GVS

Questions to ask before you start:

- Is a consortium the best way forward for what you want to achieve? Will collaborating add value? If not, why are you doing it? If you can't do more with partners than you could do alone, why are you doing it?
- Are organisations who collaborate seen by funders as more worthy?
- Do you need to apply for a grant? Check and ask questions, especially “Why?” at every stage of the process.
- Determine whether there is space within the “market” for your proposed project and do you have the capacity to deliver it?
- Does your Board support the project?
- Is the project permissible in your governing document?

Establishing your Consortium:

- Be clear about what you want to achieve and decide if you are best placed to deliver it. Is the problem you are trying to solve your problem?
- Develop a clear and shared vision and project objectives.
- Concentrate on what you are good at. Don't diversify from your core ideals and values. If you do you could be working outside your organisation's objects as stated in your governing document.
- Who is in the consortium and why? Are they the right people / organisations to deliver the project? Decide what you need from each partner. Can they deliver this? Do they have the expertise you require? If not, they are the wrong partner!
- Are potential partners reputable, stable, solvent and compatible?
- Do you have the right balance of partners - big / small, local / regional / national?
- Do partners have egos and can you manage these?
- Acknowledge and embrace the difference between partners.
- Recognise that compromise is involved in collaboration.
- Undertake a SWOT analysis of partners:
 - ◇ Deploy people accordingly and share strengths and alleviate weaknesses.
 - ◇ Partners don't have to contribute equally, but proportionately.
 - ◇ Allocation of resources may reflect partner size.
- Be clear WHY you are doing this project and WHO is doing WHAT, by WHEN and HOW!
- Draw up a clear and concise Partnership Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding. These are normally an informal written agreement between all of the project partners, which sets out the duties, responsibilities, and obligations of the partners to each other and to the Partnership. A good Partnership Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding document will help to develop joint ownership of the project and be a reference document to assist any new staff member joining the project. Each of the partners MUST sign the document. Such agreements can be

tailor-made to suit an individual project but whichever written agreement you choose it would normally include:

- ◇ Details of all partners – names, addresses and responsible person of each organisation.
- ◇ The context of the project – and what it is trying to achieve.
- ◇ The period the project covers.
- ◇ The relationships of the partners.
- ◇ The principles that all should adhere to.
- ◇ The structure of the partnership.
- ◇ The membership of the partnership and roles and responsibilities.
- ◇ Communications – how they will be managed and by whom?
- ◇ The decision making process.
- ◇ How you will endeavour to resolve any problems or disputes which may arise?
- ◇ How you will manage any changes to the partnership or terms agreed?
- ◇ Policies and procedures.
- ◇ Financial and contractual arrangements.

Preparing a Funding Application:

- People can sign up to the project but then move to another, perhaps more attractive bid to them. The original project loses time and momentum and possibly even disappears.
- Your consortium has no track history. Is this an issue to Funders? This is why funders such as Big Lottery Fund require a “Lead Organisation” who has to submit their most recent financial records. Big Lottery Fund may also need your trading history for commissioning.
 - ◇ Advantages of having a Lead Organisation:
 - ⇒ Use their experience, expertise, office space, financial and management support.
 - ⇒ Relatively easy to set up.
 - ◇ Disadvantages:
 - ⇒ Inequality of knowledge and resources which may lead to a power imbalance.
 - ⇒ The Lead Organisation may be responsible for all liabilities.
 - ⇒ The Lead Organisation will have to manage all other partners.
- When filling in forms make sure you are compliant – even down to font size!
- Insurance can be put in place.
- Don’t over promise on delivery. By nature the Third Sector wants to help as many people as possible but can at times be unrealistic on what can be achieved.
- Give yourself enough time. Funding applications can take well over a year to complete, so start planning and discussions with potential partners early and discuss contributions and boundaries.
- If unsuccessful in gaining funding, ask for feedback e.g. your score and the score of successful bids if possible.

- If successful, also ask for feedback; what went well, what could have been improved?

Financial considerations:

- Is the project and consortium matched to the best possible funder?
- Many funders encourage a “partnership” bid, for some it is essential. A partnership / consortium does give genuine competitive opportunities that individuals could not achieve.
- Budget carefully. Include everything at the start. You can rarely ask for more money if you have forgotten something.
- Will there be any flexibility to move monies from one budget heading to another? Generally yes, within reason and with the funder’s agreement.
- Full Cost Recovery. Be realistic about what you need e.g. if you need 1.5 people to adequately run the project, then you must budget for 1.5. Don’t try to save money by doing it with one person. This is a recipe for disaster before you start. Include overhead costs that support your project e.g. a proportion of heating, lighting costs.
- Contingency and where do you put it in the budget profile? Funders e.g. Big Lottery Fund will not accept a contingency heading in the budget, so plan carefully.
- If you do not have all the expertise you require to run the project, you can buy it in but obviously at a cost which must be included in the budget at the outset.
- Be aware of the payment process of funders which can lead to cash flow issues. The Lead Organisation of a consortium may have lots of money in the bank at times, but be short of money at other times when funders pay a grant in arrears. Do they have enough money to cover this potential shortfall?
- Understand your own costs to deliver. Are they competitive?
- VAT can be a minefield!

If you are making a presentation to a funder:

- Be prepared, confident, informed and knowledgeable.
- What is your Unique Selling Point that sets you apart?
- Organise a pre-meeting to decide who is doing what. Be clear about each person’s role and stick to it.
- Decide who presents well.
- Who knows and understands the project detail? This will probably be the bid writer(s).
- Who knows the financial details?
- Do you need a senior member of staff?
- You don’t necessarily need every partner in attendance, but you do need a balance and you need to be able to demonstrate partner strengths.
- Do you have a service user / project beneficiary in attendance?
- Research your funder to make sure you understand what they’re looking for and that is what you are providing them with.
- Research and understand your audience (e.g. panel members) and deliver your

presentation accordingly.

- Who is passionate about the project objectives and outcomes?
- Introduce everyone and try to create a rapport from the start.
- Use the consortium name throughout – be careful of slipping into I / we.
- If you're using IT then make sure you know how to use it and fix it. If you use e.g. Powerpoint then it should be an aid, not your script. It can enhance a presentation but it can also get in the way of what you are trying to say. You can set it to move slides at a pre-determined time, but make sure this is what you want and that you can stop it if someone asks a question etc.
- Keep to your brief and your time.
- Try to best guess any questions you may be asked. You need to be well informed. BUT if you can't answer a question, commit to providing them with the answer within 24 hours and make sure you do!
- You could use role play e.g. flipcharts, demonstrations, videos etc.

Running your Project:

- You need an active Steering Group / Management Board which could / should include:
 - ◊ Partners.
 - ◊ Beneficiaries.
 - ◊ Stakeholders.
 - ◊ Evaluators.
 - ◊ And possibly funders.
- Set what information needs to be collected for **monitoring and evaluation** right from the start and be clear how you can and will collect this. This is a crucial element of any project. Be clear about what you have said you want to achieve and have mechanisms in place to be able to measure this accurately. Ensure that you can actually measure what you are promising to do. Also it is relatively easy to measure the quantitative elements of the project e.g. the things you can count such as the numbers who attend a training session, or those that say they have benefitted from the project. It is more difficult to measure the qualitative elements of the programme e.g. improvements to people's health and well-being, do they feel less socially isolated etc. However, beneficiaries comments need to be recorded somewhere as they may really help you understand and promote the success of your project and to secure additional funding.
 - ◊ Outputs are usually measured in numbers.
 - ◊ Outcomes are the benefits to the beneficiaries, e.g. confidence and skills gained.
- Be clear about your project aim and people's perception of what you do.
- If risk becomes a reality, what is in place to deal with the situation? Risk management should be included in your Partnership Agreement:
 - ◊ Individual risks.
 - ◊ Shared risks.
 - ◊ Organisational risks

Ten Top tips for creating and working within a consortium / partnership



1. What do you want to achieve? Can you achieve more by being part of a consortium? If not, then you are better off going it alone!
2. If you choose to continue with the development of a consortium then be clear about your project, its aims, objectives and outcomes:
 - What do you want to achieve?
 - Who will benefit? Make sure you ask potential beneficiaries throughout the process what they want and need.
 - Who is best placed to support the project e.g. staff, organisations, funders?
3. Choose your partners carefully. There is no perfect size to a consortium. Some funders only ask for two members but you may need more than this to deliver your project. Don't just choose a partner because you know them, like them or you have worked with them before. Only choose to work with a partner if they bring something you need to the project.

This may be:

- Expertise.
- Knowledge.
- Skills.
- Volunteers.
- Space.
- Specialist equipment.
- Finances.
- Other resources etc.

It is good to get a range of partners involved but be aware of the differing sizes and resources of each partner. Some may be national charities who have dedicated Fundraising, HR, Finance, IT Officers etc. Others are virtually one-person-bands. This can lead to great imbalances on who delivers what by when. Each partner may receive an equivalent share of the final budget but some may undertake a lot more work to achieve this.

The more partners you have the more potential differences you will have to deal with e.g. levels of knowledge, skills, expertise, resources, values, principles, ways of working etc.

4. At an early stage draw up a Partnership Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding. This should outline the responsibilities of each partner and describe what the project will achieve, who will be doing what and how “disputes” will be managed. All partners must sign the Agreement and abide by it.
5. If you require funding then which funder(s) is / are more likely to support your project? This may depend on what the project is, where it and the beneficiaries are based, or how much money you need. Remember some funders require match

funding, but this can sometimes be in kind, e.g. management support costs, use of rooms, volunteers etc.

6. Be aware of how long funding applications can take. Firstly in actually writing them and secondly in how long funders can take to make a decision. Also don't underestimate how long partners can take to provide or check information. Obviously there is a huge variety of funders and in their processes and requirements, but be aware that the average amount of time is about 12 months from starting the process to getting the money. The Big Lottery Fund may be much longer.
7. It may be a requirement that a Lead Partner or Organisation submits the bid on behalf of the consortium. Choose the Lead Partner carefully. Some funders will ask for audited accounts. Some funders pay some of the grant in arrears. Does the Lead Partner have the financial capacity to cover payments whilst waiting for the grant to be paid to them?
8. Ensure you have good levels of communication, between partners and also between partners and funders, stakeholders and beneficiaries. Make sure everyone knows what they need to know. This will strengthen working relationships and ownership of the project.
9. The consortium will probably benefit from the establishment of a:
 - Project Management Board which may take more of a strategic role and include partners, beneficiaries, and possibly an external evaluator and funder representative.
 - A Steering Group which may support activities on a more day to day basis with more beneficiaries as members.
10. Develop a timeline from the creation of the project idea to submission of the bid. Include key points and dates where consortium members will be expected to take part in meetings, submit information and get agreement and sign off from their Board or Managers etc. This will encourage everyone to block out sufficient time to ensure all deadlines are met and no time is lost.

Good Luck.

Possible barriers to consortium working:

- Resource imbalance: “Large” versus “small” partners. Resource and capacity differences can be an issue. Most large organisations have dedicated Funding, Finance, Human Resources and IT Officers. Smaller organisations may be one-person-bands. Therefore there can be different approaches, knowledge, experiences, pressures etc. This possible imbalance can affect the project in several ways:
 - ⇒ Time allocation to the project and staff availability.
 - ⇒ Different priorities can cause difficulties.
 - ⇒ Length of contracts – many staff are on short term contracts and so the support of the partnership can change. Also the length of project may result in changes in personnel and new people may have different skills, knowledge, expertise, agendas etc. and since the new members were not part of the original team they may have a different level of ownership of, or commitment to the project.
 - ⇒ Partner availability can be an issue and this is linked to the points above.
 - ⇒ Financial inequality between partners.
 - ⇒ IT expertise / dependency / knowledge / access.
- The partnership is only as strong as the weakest link within it. The “weakest” link can cause delays and difficulties. Some partners may miss deadlines which affects the overall running of the project.
- Communication can cause difficulties with partners with different levels of expertise, knowledge and skills and understanding of the project, or those from different cultural or even language backgrounds.
- Are partners also competitors? Partnership working may be a new approach to some and can cause difficulties in a competitive environment. Some partners can be resistant to change.
- No clarity of purpose or roles of each partner.
- Partner’s circumstances, hidden agendas, personalities and / or egos will have to be understood and managed.
- Differences in culture and working practices.
- Delivery methods of partners may differ significantly. You may think that your consortium is the most important thing you’re doing, but do others agree? “Their” workload can get in the way of “your” agenda and “your” timescale.
- Geographical location of partners can cause difficulties e.g. for travel and attendance at meetings and events.
- Key drivers changing at a local, regional or national level.

Overcoming such barriers

- Be aware of, and maximise the advantages of, collaborative working:
 - ◊ Share workload, skills, knowledge, experience, expertise and resources (human, financial, equipment, space etc.).
 - ◊ Share the “risk” of a new and untested project.
 - ◊ Meet new people / partners.
 - ◊ Extend / develop networks.
 - ◊ Develop more mutual support between organisations.
 - ◊ Learn from and gain information about others work.
 - ◊ Establish new and / or improved services.
 - ◊ Have better co-ordinated activities.
 - ◊ Reach a broader, bigger, possibly more diverse community.
 - ◊ Reach a wider geographical community.
 - ◊ Joint events, promotion and marketing – can reduce individual costs and may reach more people.
 - ◊ Influence policy and procedure.
 - ◊ Develop a stronger, more united voice.
 - ◊ Funders are increasingly encouraging partnership working and will often require a Lead Organisation to manage the project. Use the knowledge and expertise of the Lead Organisation to the full. Each partner should then concentrate on what they need to do.
- Invest in developing good working relationships:
 - ◊ Communicate openly and clearly. All partners will need to develop appropriate ways of communicating with different people and organisations, taking into consideration knowledge and experience.
 - ◊ Develop good working practices from the outset.
 - ◊ Keep everyone up to date with how the project is developing.
 - ◊ Circulate minutes of meetings and action points to all so that all are clear on what they need to do and by when.
 - ◊ Work with organisations with compatible cultures if possible.
- Focus on the overall aim of the project. Keep reminding yourselves what it is you are trying to achieve.
- Establish an effective Project Management Board and / or Steering Group to support the project.
- Produce a written Partnership Agreement which all partners sign up to. This will outline partners purpose and roles and can be referred to if “difficulties” arise.
- Use a proven system e.g. BS11000 (see Supporting Information section).
- Try to be well informed of any potential changes to legislation, policy or strategy at local, regional or national levels. Often there are consultation documents prior to changes being made. There may be coverage in the press, highlighting issues.

Guidance on consortia working with large funders



This document has been written with the experience gained from working with the Big Lottery Fund but, many of the points will be relevant to other large funders.

Application stage

Be clear at the application stage about the terms and conditions of Big Lottery funding, i.e. open and fair recruitment processes, collecting data, monitoring and evaluation, producing reports to deadlines, use of logo, Welsh Language requirements etc. Arrange a session on this for potential partners, or produce a briefing note for them which outlines the main terms and conditions. Emphasise that there are no exceptions to the terms and conditions of the Big Lottery Fund so partners need to understand their responsibilities from an early stage.

Big Lottery Fund

Keep in touch with your Big Lottery Fund contact. Let them know if there are any issues or problems with which you need support. They appreciate being kept informed.

Budget

Be clear at the outset that anything not included in the application budget, cannot be funded. There may be opportunities to transfer across budget lines, but it's better for the project to be properly costed at the outset. There may also be opportunities to transfer funding if there is an underspend, but this has to be with the agreement of the Grant Holder and the Big Lottery Fund.

Include redundancy costings in the application if appropriate. Full Cost Recovery must be applied by all partners to ensure that the costings are realistic.

Changes to the project

Sometimes, as the project is developed and delivered, it becomes clear that the initial plans outlined on the application form might need amending. It may be possible to make these changes, but only after discussing them with the Big Lottery Fund contact and having confirmation from them that this is acceptable.

Explain clearly why you think the proposed changes are necessary and why they will make the project more effective and enable the outcomes to be achieved.

Communication

This is a vital area. Everyone needs to be kept informed of relevant decisions, developments etc. Notes of any meetings held and agreements made must be circulated to all partners for information and they should have an opportunity to comment.

Consortia working

Arrange a session for partners on working as a consortia. It will be a new way of working for some partners and their levels of autonomy may change. Link this to the expectations and responsibilities attached to Big Lottery funding and the role of the Lead Organisation (if appropriate) and their expectations. Address any issues early on.



Encourage partners to see this as a whole project with distinct services which they are delivering, rather than simply another service they are offering in isolation. It is understandable that partners will focus on their own service, but they may forget they are part of a bigger project. Focussing on the project as one, will help with sharing information, resources and experiences, once the project starts.

Keeping that focus will also help with marketing and publicity. Encourage partners to promote the consortia as a whole when they are also promoting their own particular service. This should lead to greater ownership of the project by all and so there is far more chance of success.

Continuation funding

It is difficult to obtain continuation funding, even if a project has been very successful. However, if partners wish to try for continuation funding it is important to start planning for this early on, as funding applications take time to develop and submit. Don't leave it until the last year of the project.

Deadlines for reports etc.

If you are the Lead Organisation you must set clear deadlines as early as possible, so that partners have plenty of notice of the dates by which they need to provide you with information. Give some leeway between partners providing you with information and the deadline by which you need to provide the funder with a report. Outline the importance of deadlines when you are working with partners in the application stage and put this in the Partnership Agreement with a consideration as to what action you would take if a partner consistently misses deadlines for information. This may be the with-holding of funding.

Governance

There will be several standard policies, which partners will have to have in place from the outset of the project. Some will be included at the application stage e.g. Equality and Diversity, Welsh Language, Health & Safety, Recruitment etc. If partners do not have these policies, they will need to be developed throughout the application process, rather than once the funding has been awarded and the project starts. It may be possible for partners to agree to work to the Lead Organisation's policies and procedures for ease and consistency, but this would have to be agreed by their respective Boards. Even if funding is not awarded, it will be beneficial for partners to have in place standard policies. These will be relevant for future funding bids.

Induction of new project staff

Project staff will take part in their own organisation's induction programme, but it is important to have a joint induction session for all new staff. Project staff are part of a team, employed to meet the project requirements and so it is good for all to understand the overall project, to have information about monitoring and reporting and Big Lottery Fund expectations and also information about mandatory training. It will also be a chance for staff to meet each other and to develop professional and effective ways of working together.

Lead contact within each partner

Find out who will be the operational lead person in each of the partner organisations and if possible involve them in the application stage. It is possible that the lead person in the partner organisations may change as you move from bid, to business plan, to delivery. This means that new staff who became involved along the way won't have as much understanding of, and buy into, the project as they might have had if they had been involved in the development stage.

Lead Organisation

The Big Lottery Fund is happy to accept consortium bids but it will expect the bid to be submitted by a Lead Organisation, on behalf of the consortium. The Big Lottery Fund will only deal directly with the Lead Organisation. Therefore all partners need to be clear about their roles and the role of the Lead Organisation, its responsibilities and its expectations of partners, e.g. submitting information on time, meeting the requirements of the project etc.

It is imperative that the Lead Organisation is completely comfortable with the choice of partner(s). The Lead Organisation must have complete confidence that the partner(s) can work together, add value to the consortium, deliver their part of the project etc. Reputation can be helpful but if the Lead Organisation has any doubts and / or concerns about a potential partner then working with them could be problematic. It can be difficult, if you are a Lead Organisation, to get the balance right between ensuring that the project is

delivered as agreed and accepting that each partner is an autonomous organisation with its own processes and procedures. The overriding considerations in a consortia are the expectations of the funders and the agreed actions and outcomes. Communication here is important, so that partners do not feel over controlled, but understand the expectations of them and the Lead Organisation project staff respect the autonomy of partners.

The Lead Organisation may need to undertake a health check on the partners (or potential partners). This could involve what policies and procedures they have in place, or looking at their financial accounts. This might seem intrusive, but if there are any concerns about whether a partner can deliver the project they can be discussed at the application stage and support offered. This may also ensure that organisations are better placed to obtain funding in the future.

The Lead Organisation must ensure that all partners who are involved in the application confirm that they have proof-read the application form, so that any discrepancies are noticed before the application is submitted. They should ask for e-mail / written confirmation of this. The Lead Organisation must decide the timetable for the project not the partner(s). Discuss opportunities and challenges throughout the project.

Be clear at all stages, about the responsibility of the Lead Organisation as the grant holder. The Lead Organisation may sometimes need to take decisions which are not supported by all of the project partners. Also the Lead Organisation has leverage e.g. if one partner is not submitting required information on time e.g. for Big Lottery Fund reports, the Lead Organisation may need to with-hold financial payments until the information is received.

Logos

Be clear with partners about the use of funders' logos and any logo designed for the consortium. Provide partners with guidance about their use and any design which should be used on project literature.

Monitoring and evaluation

If you have an allocation of funding to allow for external monitoring and evaluation, and you need to tender to appoint an evaluator, ensure that all partners have a say in the developments of the tender document, but don't forget that the Lead Organisation has the overall responsibility for monitoring and evaluation.

Involve partners in the development of any criteria for monitoring and evaluation and in relevant meetings with the appointed evaluator, making sure their views are taken into account. This will ensure greater buy-in to providing the information needed by the evaluator. Keep notes of any meetings and circulate to all partners, inviting comment. Keep evaluation in mind when you are setting your outcomes. Outcomes need to be measured!

Partnership Agreements

Ensure that any Partnership Agreements drawn up include an option for the Lead Organisation, as well as partner organisations, to withdraw from the project or terminate their involvement. Use the terminology 'all parties have the right to withdraw or terminate' rather than 'all partners'.

Consider whether the Partnership Agreement should include an option to with-hold funding from partners if they do not submit monitoring and evaluation information for the funders on time or that they are not meeting their agreed requirements.

Promotion

The Project Manager (or other staff member) will need to do the overall promotion of the project and, although essential, this can be time consuming. You could create a presentation which any partner could deliver. Organise a training session to familiarise partners with the work.

Consider carefully the messages you will want to use to promote the project and develop templates which partners could use, e.g. for e-mail promotion or for flyers, so that messages are consistent. Develop these with partners so they have an input from the beginning of the project.

Recruitment

The Big Lottery Fund's open recruitment criteria must be followed by all partners. This is non-negotiable. Partners cannot just appoint someone they know. The correct procedures MUST be followed at all times.

Try to have a standardised recruitment process across all partners, e.g. all partners agree to use application forms and not CVs. Agree this from the start. The Lead Organisation could look at whether they can co-ordinate recruitment for partners. This should take some of the load off them, and should help to ensure consistency. Be aware though that some organisations have specific HR / Personnel Departments, specific recruitment forms and processes which they may not be able to change to suit the consortium.

If possible, try to have partners involved in each other's recruitment process, e.g. agreeing job descriptions, interview arrangements and questions and by sitting on interview panels. Agree what will happen if the recruitment panel does not agree on which applicant to recruit; should it be a majority decision or should the final decision rest with the employing partner?

Partner staff, who are recruited to their particular area of the project, will be employed by the partners, but have a responsibility to the consortium as a whole. They will be required to provide information to the overall Project Manager and take part in consortium events.

Emphasise this at the recruitment and induction stage, so they see that they are part of the bigger consortium and have responsibilities to it.

Staff roles e.g. Project Manager, Co-ordinator, Assistant of the Lead Organisation

Be clear about staff roles so that partners can understand what these staff are employed to do and what they are not employed to do! Even if partners have been involved in putting together job descriptions, there is a danger that e.g. the Project Manager, may be seen as a central resource for all sorts of work. If there is time, these staff should be prepared to support the consortium by taking on some centrally facilitated work if the project progress requires it.

Emphasise the things that the Lead Organisation staff will be doing that partners will not need to do, e.g. providing detailed reports to the Big Lottery Fund, (although partners will be expected to supply information for these reports), promotion, support with policies, managing the overall project finances etc.

Steering Group

The project will benefit from a Steering Group and / or Management Board. These will take on a strategic overview of the project and support all partners. It may be that each partner has a representative on the group which should also include beneficiaries and possibly stakeholders and external evaluators. Any decisions made by the Steering Group must be communicated to operational leads in the partner organisations, if those staff are not on the Steering Group.

Sustainability

Project sustainability is hard to achieve but is a real issue once the initial funding has come to an end. Some of the ways that this could be covered include getting the partner(s) to take on the work as “core” once the project has ended; finding another organisation to take it on as “core work” e.g. Local Authority, University Health Board; setting up a new organisation or social enterprise to deliver the work and charge for it; find another funder that is willing to continue funding the whole or part(s) of the project.

Target setting

Setting targets is very difficult and care must be taken to ensure that they are achievable and measurable. It is easy to overestimate figures to “beef up” the application but this can cause problems later on. However, it is noted that the Big Lottery Fund is open to changing targets and therefore keeping them fully informed is essential.

Training of new staff

Agree early on if mandatory training will be required for project staff and volunteers, e.g. Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA) and ensure that this is provided.

Consortium success with Big Lottery Fund



Connected Carers is a Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Consortium Project led by Glamorgan Voluntary Services (GVS) in partnership with Cardiff & the Vale Parents' Federation and Touch Trust. The consortium has successfully secured £259,202 from the Big Lottery Fund.

GVS has been awarded £259,202 by the Big Lottery Fund to lead an exciting project across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan, in partnership with Cardiff & the Vale Parents' Federation and Touch Trust.

The Connected Carers project will work with family carers of people with lifelong and / or life limiting conditions. It will provide advice and information, training and support, opportunities for self-development and the chance to meet other carers in a variety of social networking settings.

The grant from the Big Lottery Fund will enable GVS to co-ordinate Connected Carers by providing the overall management of the project.

Cardiff & the Vale Parents' Federation will co-ordinate regular social gatherings which will be held at appropriate times and venues to meet the needs of family carers. These gatherings will enable family carers to meet other people in similar situations and to learn from them and to share relevant experiences. Information that is of interest to families will be collected and shared using these gatherings and a variety of other means.

Touch Trust will provide *Time For Me* sessions. These have been trialled previously and have been a huge success. They provide opportunities for the carer to have some time for themselves while the disabled person they support attends a session at Touch Trust.



Pictured left to right, the happy partners are: John Cushen (Cardiff & the Vale Parents' Federation), Rhian Thomas (GVS) and Adele Gilmour (formerly of Touch Trust).

They can choose from a range of activities which include hand and head massage, Reiki, reflexology, back massage, facial, hair-cut or can have their nails painted. Lunch is provided which again gives carers the opportunity to meet other carers and to share experiences.

Cardiff & the Vale Parents' Federation - www.parentsfed.org - has over 1500 carers as members across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. They provide support directly to the family carers in the form of carers information guides, newsletters, mail-outs and e-mails. They have an active social media presence with over 800 followers or friends and maintain an extensive information resource on their website.

Touch Trust - www.touchtrust.co.uk - works with 160 disabled people each week from their base in Cardiff Bay and an additional 800 children and adults each week through their Provider Membership. Each person who attends a Touch Trust session is supported by their carer and Touch Trust works with 62 parent carers each week.

All of the partners are extremely grateful to the Big Lottery Fund for this grant. GVS had submitted two previous applications which were unsuccessful before funding for this third application was agreed. So remember the old adage, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again."

Rhian Thomas
Consortium Development Officer



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Tendering is the process of bidding for the supply of goods or services. You may be required to do this to run your project.

Is tendering for you?

Before considering tendering for the first time, you must have confidence in your organisation's ability to:

- Compete with others on the open market.
- Deliver services on time and to required standards.
- Maintain a sound financial and commercial reputation.
- Offer value for money.

You should also consider the following points when deciding if delivering services under contract is appropriate for your organisation:

- Core mission – Does what you are proposing to deliver fit with your core mission and aims? Delivering services outside this remit may have implications for your organisation. You should find the balance between being driven by your mission and being driven by a financial incentive.
- Current activities – The services that you may decide to deliver will be dependent on your organisation's current activity, experiences and reputation. Are you able to deliver this service better or more efficiently than the competition?
- Capacity – The amount of work it can take to put together a successful tender and manage a contract once awarded should not be underestimated. Do you have the capacity to deliver?
- Organisational change – Is your organisation ready to adopt new ways of working?
- Tendering involves a high level of scrutiny. Does your organisation have the policies and procedures in place to meet these demands?
- Financial impact – If the delivery of a particular service under contract does not contribute to an organisation's primary purpose, thus preserving tax exemption, it may result in the organisation having to register for and charge VAT where appropriate. Do you understand these regulations?
- Legal framework – Does your governing document allow you to trade or deliver services? There are also many rules and regulations relating to charities delivering public services and trading. It is important to be aware of the legal frameworks and the extent to which they impact on your organisation.

The tender process

There is sometimes variation in a purchasers' approach when putting the supply of goods or services out to competitive tender. Many purchasers develop their own

procedures, standards and protocols however you will typically follow a process similar to that below:

1. Advert / Invitation to tender (ITT) - A purchasing body advertises its tender notice in the appropriate media.
2. Expression of interest - Interested parties request further information or offer an 'expression of interest' by the required date, as stated within the advert. Some online tender notices will allow you to download tender documents directly from the advert.
3. Tender documents - The purchaser sends all interested parties a complete set of tender documents. Suppliers are asked to complete this paperwork and return all documents by the required date. In some cases suppliers have to pre-qualify before being invited to tender. They do this by completing a pre-qualification questionnaire (PQQ), supplying information about their financial status, previous experience, references etc.
4. Opportunity to discuss the tender - Where appropriate, purchasers offer an opportunity to discuss the tender at a clarification meeting to allow interested parties to understand the requirements in full and assess their own suitability before bidding. However nothing will be done at this stage which would give a particular supplier an unfair advantage in competing for a specific contract.
5. Submit tender - Suppliers then complete the tender documentation and return all paperwork by the required date.
6. Evaluation - At this stage the purchaser evaluates all submissions. Further clarification is often sought through competitive interviews before awarding the contract to the successful supplier.
7. Contract award - The purchaser then awards the contract to the supplier whose bid represents best value for money or best meets the contract criteria. Everyone involved works together to put operations in place for the forthcoming contract.

Key tips for tendering:

- Plan and prepare thoroughly.
- Structure your tender well.
- Know the award criteria.
- Answer all questions fully.
- The tender needs to be well presented.
- And well costed.
- Be compliant e.g. in font size, word and / or character count. Anything over and above the amount stated may be discounted.
- Submit your tender on time. If you do not it probably won't even be considered.
- Check your resources to bid – question at each stage, “Is it worth your while?”

Big Lottery Fund:

Partnership Working - <https://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/research/making-the-most-of-funding/partnership-working>

Supporting collaboration and partnerships in a changing context report - https://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/-/media/Files/Research%20Documents/er_supporting_collaboration.pdf

Working in Partnership: A sourcebook - https://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/-/media/Files/Research%20Documents/er_eval_working_in_partnership_sourcebook.pdf

Working in Partnership: A good practice guide - https://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/-/media/Files/Publication%20Documents/pub_good_practice_guide.pdf

Collaborative Business Relationships BS11000:

<https://www.bsigroup.com/en-GB/bs-11000-collaborative-business-relationships/>

Welsh Government Joint Bidding Guide. This is very in-depth and has been written for buyers and suppliers in 18 chapters covering the planning, preparation and bidding cycle:

<http://gov.wales/topics/improvingservices/better/vfm/publications/jointbidding/?lang=en>

Others:

[Charity Commissions guide to a Partnership Agreement](#)

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550699/Tool_10.pdf

[Charity Commission – Choosing to Collaborate: helping you succeed](#)

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/409625/Choosing_to_collaborate.pdf

Your local County Voluntary Council may be able to provide you with some help, support or advice on establishing Consortia and working in partnership.

This document has been prepared by Glamorgan Voluntary Services (GVS), the County Voluntary Council for the Vale of Glamorgan.

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Empowering people.

Inspiring excellence.

Strengthening communities.

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