

Facing the Future



The state of the voluntary and community sector in
Kensington and Chelsea

2011

and beyond

FOREWORD

Since 2008, Kensington and Chelsea Social Council (KCSC) has worked on a series of 'state of the sector' reports. The aim was to review the size and scope of the voluntary and community sector (VCS) in Kensington and Chelsea and to help provide a deeper understanding of the environment in which the sector works. This is our third and final report in the 'state of the sector' series. We hope it does the local sector justice by creating a better understanding of the complexities that our voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) have to navigate in order to survive.

When we embarked on the first report we had no clear view of the challenges which our local sector face in 2011. We always knew that the environment was becoming more challenging in terms of funding and meeting the increasing demands placed upon us to prove our impact and to prepare for tendering and commissioning. However, the credit crunch in 2008, which led to the recession and the eventual public sector cuts has made the conditions in which we work much harsher.

The first report we published in 2008, *The State of the Sector*, was desk research to assess what VCOs in the borough do (their purpose), the size of income and sources of funding.

The second report, *This is Us*, was published in 2010 and provided a deeper analysis of the sector, taking into account the changes from grant funding to commissioning. This was especially relevant for organisations delivering services for children and families in the borough that had recently moved over from grant funding to contracts. It also looked in detail at the sector's ability to influence local decision making and to work in partnership. Out of the report came recommendations that we felt were important in moving forward and included:

- The need to keep local grant funding
- The need for the sector to feel able to participate in local decision making and in particular that Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) VCOs have a voice which is heard
- The need to strengthen governance and support the sector to work together in partnership.

This our final report, *Facing the Future*, it provides a look at a sample of organisations that responded to our two main surveys for 2011. In the 'Effect of the Cuts' we were looking at the impact public sector cuts have had on local VCOs in Kensington and Chelsea. This was followed by the 'KCSC Impact Survey' which was a review of the services KCSC provides.

Facing the Future is about how the local VCS continues to survive and sustain itself during this period of economic uncertainty and about how KCSC aims to continue providing the right support that will help sustain and shape the sector in the future.

**Mary Gardiner, Chief Executive
Kensington & Chelsea Social Council**

SECTION A - EFFECT OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR CUTS ON THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR IN KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA

Introduction

The voluntary and community sector in Kensington and Chelsea has historically been a vibrant one with a strong cultural and artistic base. However the current economic conditions have resulted in a harsher financial climate where the pressure on organisations to keep going and to meet the needs of service users is increasing.

Since the recession in 2008 there have been many reports published on the economic climate and the impact on the VCS. John Mohan and Karl Wilding published a paper on the History and Policy website¹ which reviewed British and American studies, and concluded that a recession does have a definite impact on the sector. They also state that organisations that receive public funding find an increased demand for *'accountability, partnership and rationalisation.'*

However the paper also goes on to say that, in times of recession and economic downturn, new voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) continue to be created and that the sector shows its ability to develop new sources of income.

In August this year, NCVO published *Counting the Cuts*². The research highlights the impact public sector cuts have had and will continue to have on the VCS. Key findings include the loss of around £911 million in public funding by the year 2015/16. Freedom of Information requests also revealed that half of all local authorities are making what NCVO calls disproportionate cuts to the VCS.

LVSC's 'Big Squeeze' survey 2011³ found that 81% of VCOs said that demand for their services increased in 2010/11 and that 54% expect some of their services to close during 2011/12. 77% expect public sector funding of their organisation to decrease in this financial year and 54% have made staff redundancies.

In terms of the impact on VCO service users, the Big Squeeze survey found that 97% of VCOs said that the economic climate has had a negative impact on their clients during 2010/11. 86% expect demand for their services to increase during 2011/12.

Whilst the evidence presented is both national and regional it is apparent from both the NCVO research and the Big Squeeze survey that the concerns of the VCS are very real and the impact is causing VCOs to question their future viability.

This study, carried out by KCSC was conducted at the local level with several important intentions:

- To gauge the impact of public sector cuts locally in Kensington and Chelsea
- To give the sector a voice in expressing their concerns/challenges and how they are meeting those challenges
- To compare the local findings to the national and regional picture.

Context

The survey focused on the current economic climate and the impact it is having on the local VCS in the borough of Kensington and Chelsea. It was carried out between March and June 2011 and had a particular emphasis on the effects of the recession and public sector spending cuts which have created the economic conditions that we see today.

The aim of this report is to encourage conversation with local statutory partners about what may be happening to local services. It also aims to show them, other funders and stakeholders, that the sector is still solution focused, working hard to respond to change and adapting within a rapidly changing environment.

Methodology

In our approach to the survey we felt it important that we gather information about the impact the public sector cuts has had on organisations (if any) and their capacity to deliver services. We also felt it important to know whether the impact was being felt at the level of the people who use their service and if so how.

The initial promotion of the survey was through KCSC e-bulletins and on the KCSC website. KCSC then contacted organisations randomly to conduct telephone surveys. A total of 43 VCOs completed the survey.

KCSC acknowledge that for some of the respondents in answering the questions, it was not always clear whether problems occurring within their organisation were a result of the economic climate or whether those problems existed before and the economic climate exacerbated them. However much of what was found has been reflected in the findings of LVSC's 'Big Squeeze' survey.

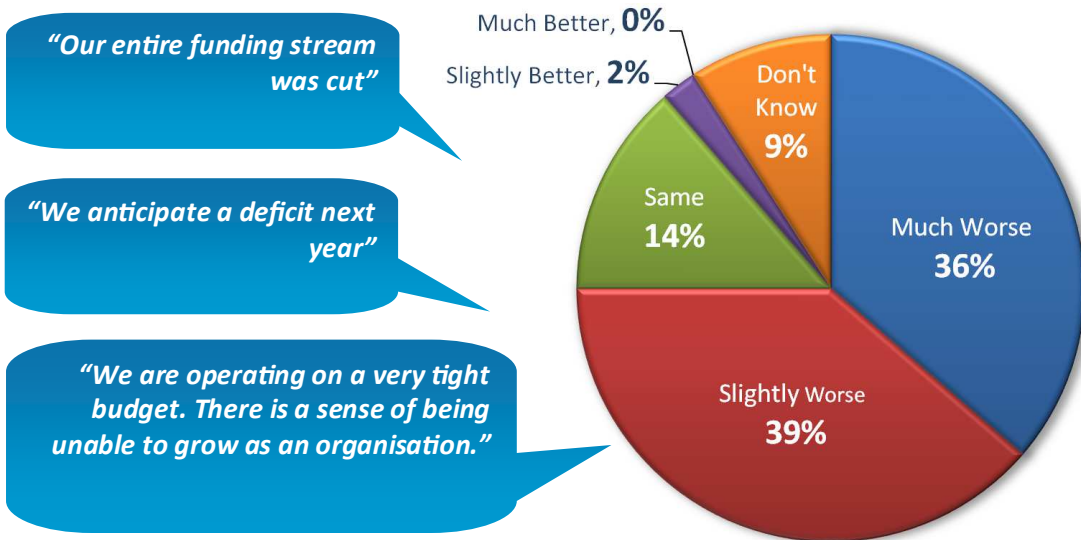
Case studies are also included in the appendix to demonstrate the real life impact at the grassroots. Comments made by respondents when asked to expand on answers during the interviews have also been included throughout the report. These comments also give more depth and context to the survey findings.

Profile of VCOs that completed the survey

| Purpose of the Organisation | Number |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| Health / Wellbeing | 9 |
| Children / Families | 9 |
| Black, Minority Ethnic | 12 |
| Guidance / Advice | 3 |
| Drugs / Alcohol | 2 |
| Faith based | 1 |
| Anonymous | 7 |

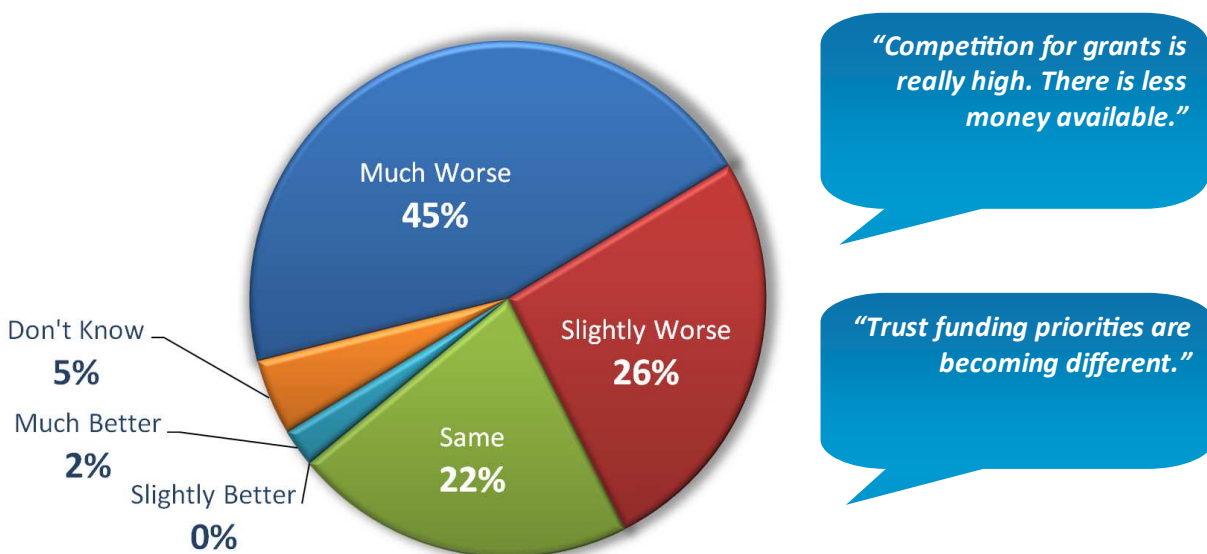
Impact on Income

When asked whether the public sector cuts have had an impact on the organisation’s level of income, three quarters of those surveyed said their level of income had been negatively impacted upon by the public sector cuts, with 36% saying their income was much worse, and 39% slightly worse.



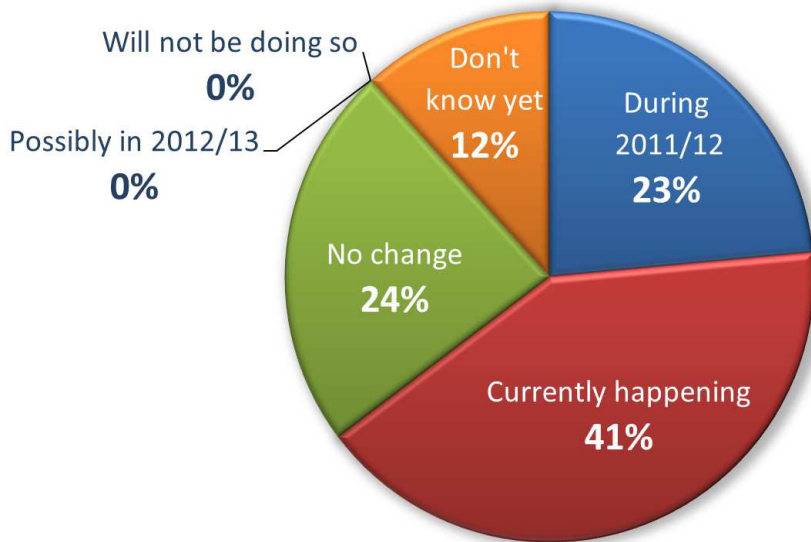
Impact on fundraising

When asked to what extent the cuts have impacted on the ability to gain funding, results revealed that, again almost three quarters of VCOs said their ability to get funding was worse as a result.



Keeping the organisation going

The survey went on to ask respondents if the cuts have impacted on their organisation's reserves, to the extent they were being used to cover core costs. Results showed that 41% are already using reserves, whilst 23% anticipate using reserves at some point during this financial year.



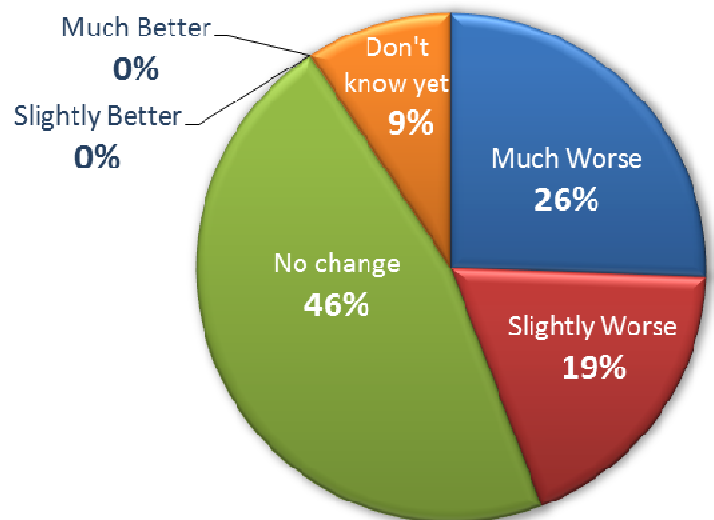
'We are using money that was saved for core costs. We had two monthly workshops on health issues, healthy eating, diabetes, mental health and had to cancel all because of no funding.'

Staffing

When asked whether the cuts have impacted on staffing levels, results show that whilst 46% say there is no change within their organisation, 45% say that it has got worse.

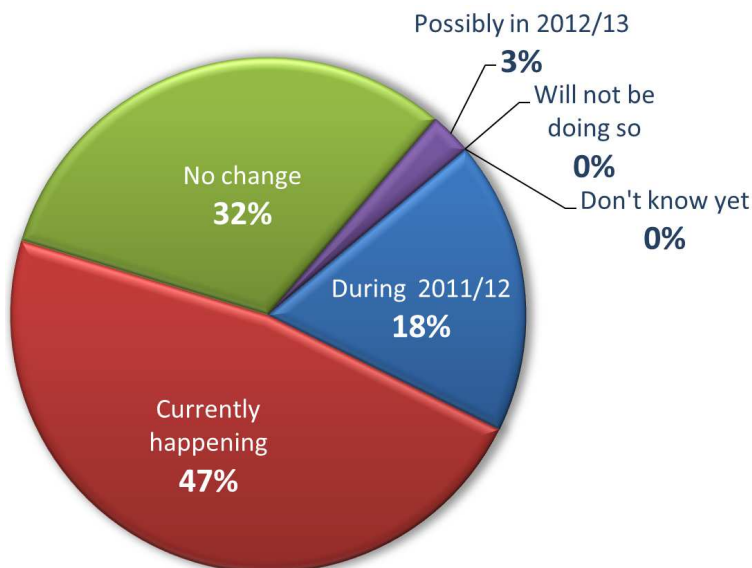
'We anticipate an inability to pay the current staff.'

'We are not laying off but freezing salaries.'



Effect on Services

When asked whether the cuts would lead to a reduction in services, nearly half of all those surveyed i.e. 45%, said that they had already begun reducing services. A further 18% said they anticipate reducing services during this financial year.



'One third of our services have been impacted negatively.'

'Two out of six family support projects have been cut.'

Additional findings and analysis

The statistical results are not the only findings collected by the survey. Further comments made by respondents also provided valuable insight into issues relating to the effects of the cuts.

Volunteering was one such issue raised by some of the respondents. A number commented that, with people losing their jobs, there are more people seeking work experience within the sector. The comments revealed the extent to which this is having a positive impact on organisations. However they also revealed some of the problems in being able to meet growing demand as well as lack of funding to provide volunteer support and co-ordination and to cover expenses.

The survey also highlighted how VCOs are reviewing current service provision and seeing where efficiencies could be created e.g. one VCO looked at where some full-time services could be delivered on a part-time basis with no obvious negative impact on clients. Another VCO said that the hope is to diversify their funding base to enable less reliance on local statutory funding.

Respondents were given the opportunity to expand on the effect of the cuts on their clients. Comments included the demand for help and to access services was growing and that anxiety levels were also on the increase due to the unsettling nature of the cuts. One VCO reported on the changing diversity of clients, seeing more people from middle class backgrounds, requiring support. The effect of the cuts on people within the community is an important aspect that we suggest could be studied further.

Conclusion

Important conclusions can be drawn from the results of the survey;

1. It shows, that from the sample of those surveyed, the large majority of VCOs are struggling in this difficult economic climate.
2. The current services provided are under increasing pressure to be maintained at the current levels.
3. Due the difficulties faced some VCOs face the challenge of not knowing what the future holds for them.
4. Whilst evidence is anecdotal, including understanding the impact on clients, there is some concern over the well-being of clients during this period of change and uncertainty.

The survey findings on the income of VCOs reveal to a greater extent the problem the sector faces in the future planning of services. In the face of reductions in income it is far harder to plan 3 or 5 years ahead. As results have also shown, fundraising is becoming more difficult, which adds to the issues of forward planning. This situation is a difficult one for VCOs that employ staff as the threat of redundancy is always there. Whilst the highest response reported no change to staffing levels at the current time, issues around falling income, and fundraising may well be storing up problems in maintaining current staff levels in the not too distant future.

Of course the biggest concern is how the sector can continue to support residents. Whilst this study does not cover in detail the impact of the cuts on clients, the comments made by some of the respondents clearly show the growing concerns for users of their services. Reports, such as the one by the Institute of Fiscal Studies in 2010⁴, state that tax and benefit cuts will have a greater impact on the poorer and more vulnerable members of society. It is these members of society that make up the large majority of VCS service users.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. In light of the findings of our survey and the ongoing changes that are taking place within the sector due to the current economic climate, we recommend that the issue of the effects on the sector must remain on the agenda of our statutory partners for the foreseeable future.
2. The Borough Voluntary Organisation Advisory Group and the Kensington and Chelsea Partnership which bring together the voluntary and statutory sector need to play a vital role in sharing intelligence on what is happening within our local community and plan a way forward together.

SECTION B - KCSC IMPACT REPORT 2011

Introduction

KCSC is pleased to report on the results of our 2011 Impact Survey - a survey about what the local voluntary and community sector in Kensington and Chelsea think about the services we provide. As part of our commitment to the sector it is important that we remain responsive to the needs of the organisations we support. In doing so, through asking the views of the VCOs in Kensington and Chelsea, it allows us to analyse our services and to respond appropriately.

KCSC has been one of the main sources of support for the local voluntary and community sector in Kensington and Chelsea for many years. At this current time infrastructure support provided to the sector is itself under scrutiny and there is growing competition from providers from across the private and statutory sector. It is therefore of crucial importance that the support we continue to provide remains relevant and meets the need of local VCOs.

The recent transforming infrastructure fund from central government is to be the last high level infrastructure funding available. There is an expectation that organisations such as KCSC will have to find ways of sustaining themselves through chargeable services, merging or pooling resources or relying on local authority funding.

It is therefore at this juncture, that the organisation must review itself, so this year we conducted an impact survey to find out what the local VCS think about the services we provide. The results of this survey allow us to analyse what we do and address how we move forward into the future.

Methodology

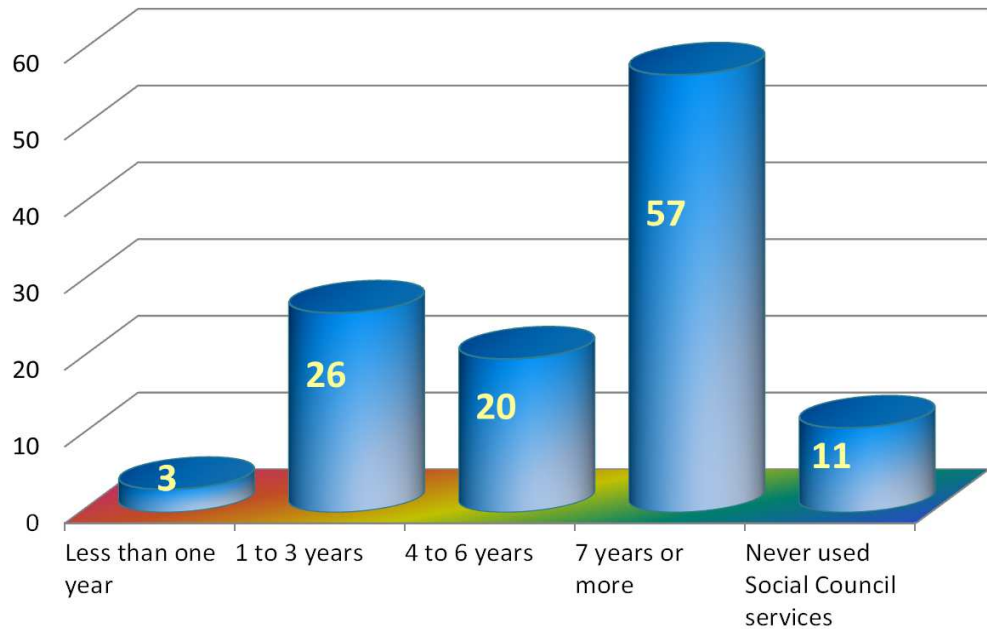
This was a survey that was both designed and implemented by KCSC. With restricted resources ruling out the use of an external agency, it was felt that KCSC would still be able to efficiently conduct the survey, using online means.

An online survey was designed and a link sent out via email to a network of 430 VCOs, based in Kensington and Chelsea, with contact details taken from the KCSC database. The survey ran from 1st July to 30th September. Telephone interviews were also conducted to encourage completion.

In total there were 120 responses, which gave us a response rate of 28%.

Analysis

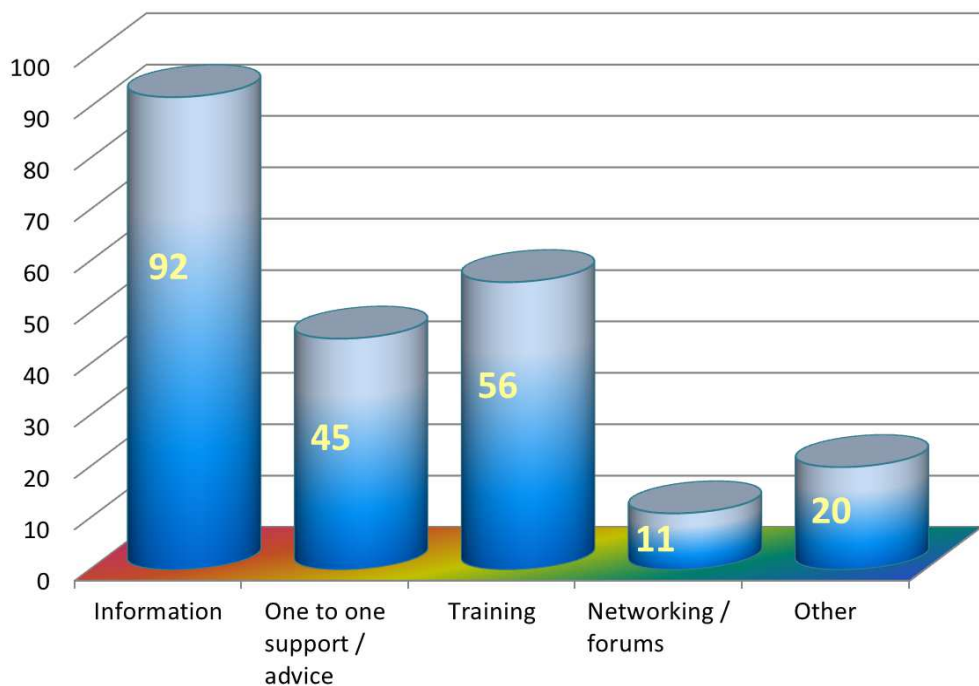
Length of time organisations have used Social Council services?



The results show that the majority of VCOs (57) that responded have been with us for 7 years or more revealing the extent to which local VCOs have continued to maintain a relationship with KCSC year on year.

However there are a small minority of VCOs that have never used our services.

Services received from the Social Council



The results show that way out in the lead is information with 92 VCOs saying they use our service of providing information. This tells us that a total of 41% of VCOs that use our services rely on the information we provide whether it be electronically, through the post or through attendance at events.

Remarkably, 5% of VCOs say they use networking events and forums.

Included in the 'other' category were responses such as 'joining the new health consortium initiative', 'attending conferences' and 'supporting the Golborne Forum and festival'.

Thoughts on support received in other areas

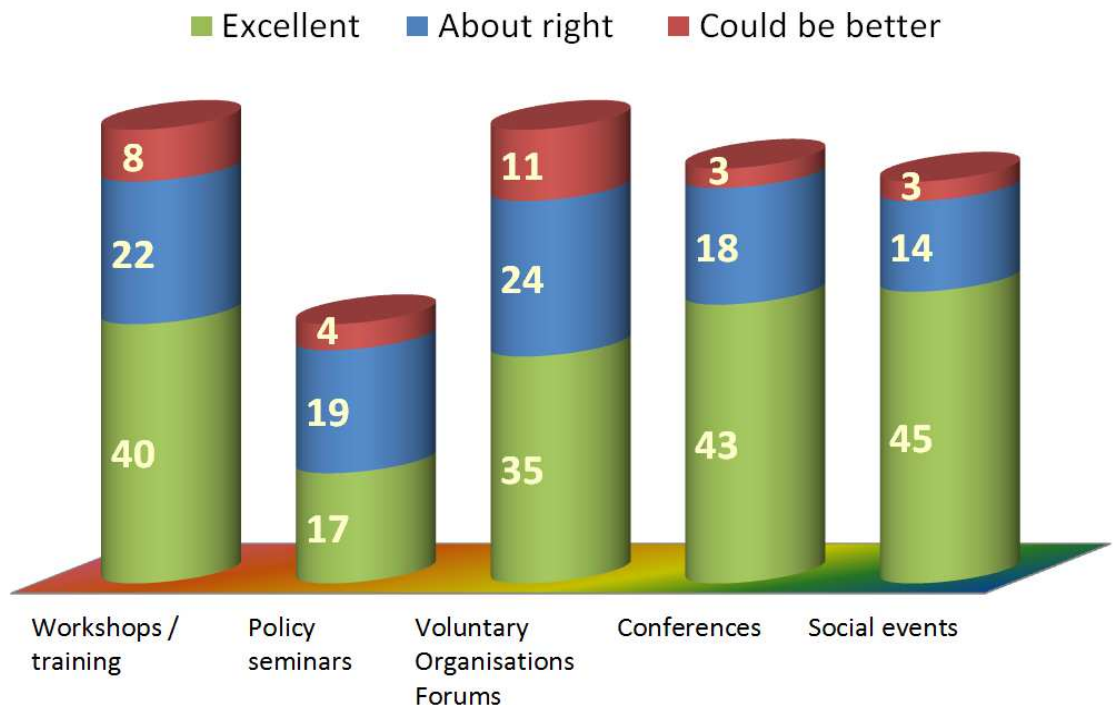


From the bar chart it is clear that those VCOs that have received support from KCSC believe the support given to develop and/or work in partnerships is valued the most. However, all areas covered have the response to do better. The highest response in this area was in fundraising, revealing the extent of the difficulty in ensuring that our fundraising support meets the needs of all VCOs. It is always difficult to ensure that all services meet the needs of such a diverse sector but KCSC recognise the importance of improving where we can.

When asked what other services VCOs would like to receive that are not being offered by KCSC, we received a wide range of responses which included help in planning what training to provide so that the sector gets the training it needs:

| | |
|---|--------------------------|
| ▪ More accredited training | ▪ Payroll support scheme |
| ▪ Health and Safety workshops | ▪ Business Planning |
| ▪ More networking and peer support opportunities for BME groups | ▪ Employment Advice |
| ▪ Provide monthly KCSC Impact Reports of our work | |

Quality of Social Council events



On the quality of events, KCSC scored highest for delivering excellent social events, with conferences and workshops/training not far behind.

Policy seminars received the lowest number of responses although they still received a positive response in proportion to the other events delivered. The VOFs received the highest response for being able to do better.

KCSC has aimed to reach out to as many VCOs as possible in the borough, but also recognises, that not every VCO is aware of our services and even if they are aware they do not attend any of the events or training which we run throughout the year.

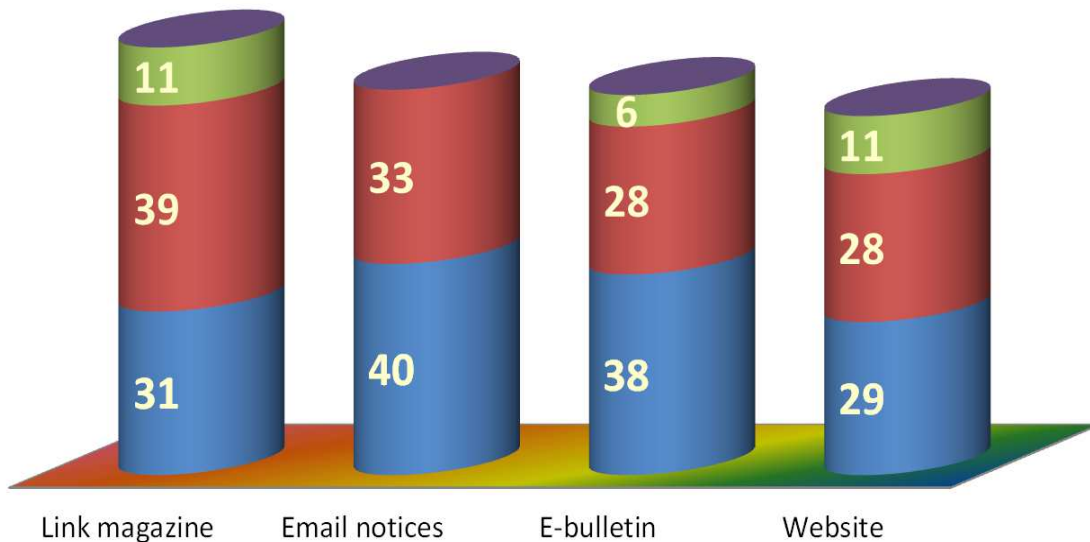
When asked why the VCO does not attend any of our events, the number one reason was time. Another reason which came through the responses was not enough specialised training which meets the needs of that particular VCO working in a particular field.

When asked what other events people would like to see the Social Council provide, the responses included:

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| ▪ More interactive workshops | ▪ Seminars on mental health |
| ▪ Networking parties for funding | ▪ More trustees training evening/weekends |
| ▪ Twice yearly open forums | |

How **INFORMATIVE** are our communication tools?

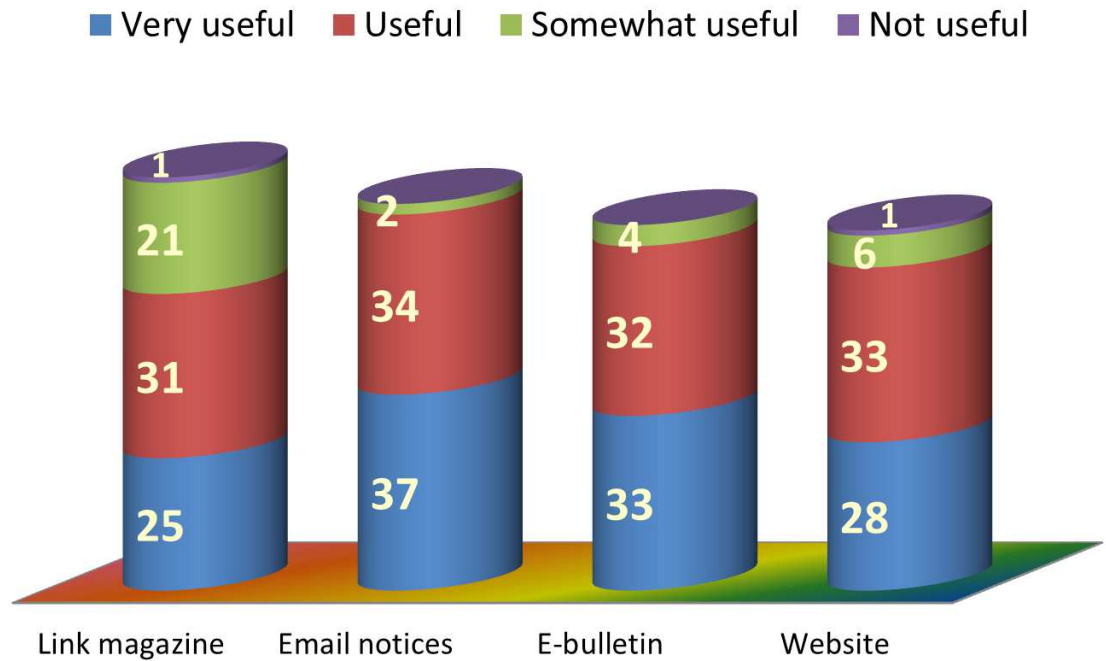
■ Very informative ■ Informative ■ Somewhat informative ■ Not informative



KCSC works hard to keep the sector up to date with current information locally, regionally and nationally, from what is taking place within the policy field to up-to-date event and funding notices. The aim is that VCOs are able to use the information provided to help them develop, plan or simply keep up-to date with what is going on within the external environment.

From the results both the email notices and e-bulletins stood out as being the most informative. Positively no responses said that our communication was not informative.

How USEFUL are our communication tools?



Again, KCSC’s e-communication scored highest at being the most useful. It is positive to note that overall the majority of respondents found all of our communication tools useful. However the Link magazine had the highest response for only being somewhat useful.

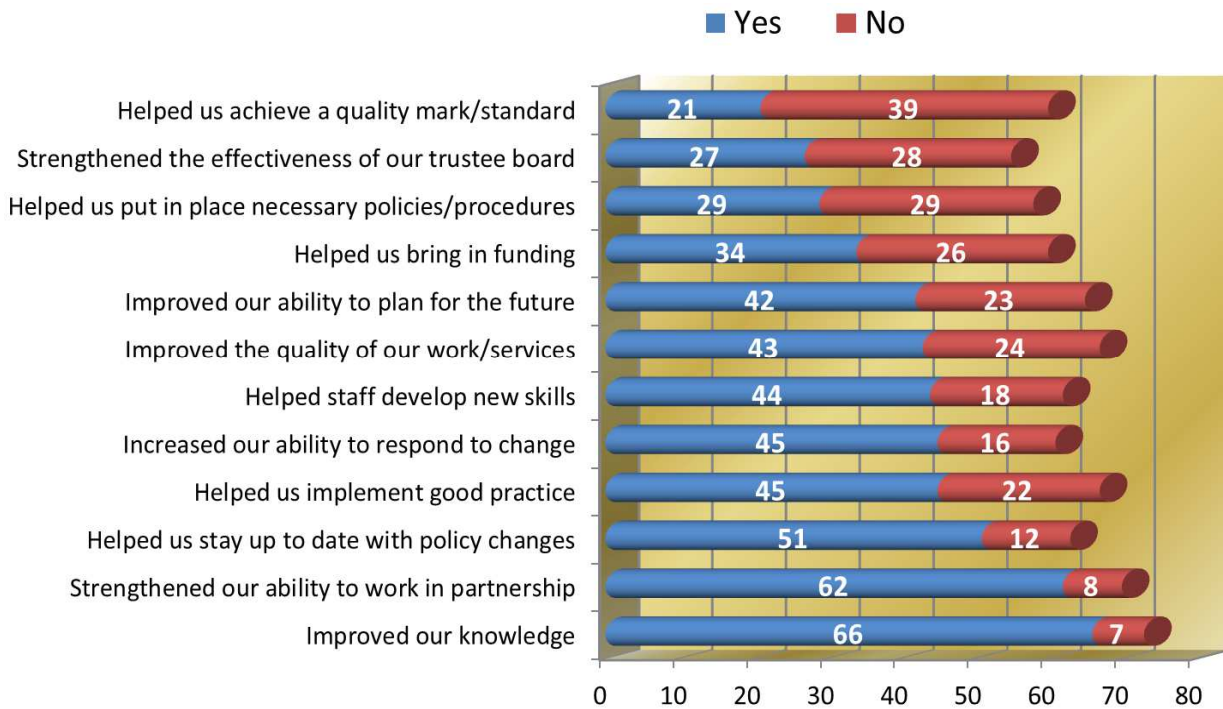
When asked for suggestions on how we could improve the way we communicate with the sector, responses included:

| | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Delivering a text mobile service | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improve the KCSC website |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A more personal telephone approach | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Check we are not sending the same emails at the same time |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide the most up to the minute funding information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Avoid putting too much information in one e-bulletin |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide monthly KCSC Impact Reports of our work | |

Has Social Council support contributed to any outcomes?

The most important aspect of KCSC’s work is the ability to measure the difference we have made to the organisations we support and to be able to demonstrate our impact through case work examples. It is encouraging to see that all areas except three scored higher in helping organisations achieve their outcomes than not. Only in helping to achieve a quality mark/standard and in strengthening the effectiveness

of trustees did the no responses score higher than the yes responses. When looking at the highest response in helping organisations meet their outcomes, Improving knowledge came first with partnership working second.



When asked to name specific examples of where we have helped to achieve outcomes, responses included:

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| ▪ Completing PQQ applications | ▪ Improving approach to community |
| ▪ Improving in-house policies | ▪ Increasing knowledge on governance |
| ▪ In receiving funding from Adult Social Care | ▪ Improved chairing of forum |

Finally, when asked about making further suggestions or comments on the future direction of KCSC, responses included:

| | |
|---|---|
| ▪ Greater engagement with General Practitioners | ▪ Supporting BME groups to provide services locally |
| ▪ Continued support to help the sector meet with Council officers | ▪ More partnership working with social enterprise |

Reflections

- From the analysis of the responses we can conclude that the majority of VCOs that have used the services of KCSC in the past continue to do so. There is a small minority of VCOs that responded that have never used our services. It is therefore important that KCSC seeks to work more closely with organisations who are not aware of us or if they are do not believe that the services we provide will meet their needs.
- Whilst the majority of VCOs say that they use the information services we provide, there is much more to be gained from coming together and networking through the forums and other networking events and conferences. KCSC believes that more can be done to reach out to VCOs to attend KCSC events where they are able to benefit from networking opportunities.
- KCSC is encouraged by the positive response on the quality of the support received however, in all areas, we were told by some organisations we could do better. Governance and trustee support was one such area which received one of the lowest responses for providing an excellent or good service. We have recently received funding to work in partnership with the Volunteer Centre in Kensington and Chelsea to deliver a governance support project. This will help improve our approach and quality of support to trustees. In response to the findings from this question KCSC will also review all of its support work with a view to looking at where we can improve.
- Again we received a mostly positive response for the quality of the events which we deliver. Whilst the forums received the highest response in the area to do better, since the review of forums in 2010, KCSC has been working hard to improve the forums and has recently developed an outcomes framework by which we will measure the success of the forums. It is recognised that not all events will suit everyone but we welcome feedback and suggestions on how to improve our events.
- The informative and useful nature of our communication tools appears to be mostly appreciated and we received no responses which told us they were neither informative nor useful. Whilst the website received the lowest response, we have also gone to great lengths to improve the website, making it easier to navigate and providing more up to date information and interactive tools so that stakeholders can respond to debates, upload information and use the on-line database. We are particularly pleased with the new developments but recognise that there is still some way to go to make it completely user friendly.
- Whilst the Link Magazine received the second lowest responses, we recognise that it is produced on a quarterly basis as opposed to our constant e-

communication. However it may be time to review the Link magazine with a view to deciding whether to continue to publish it in hard copy or to make it an on-line resource.

- Finally, in response to how our services have helped to improve outcomes, KCSC feel it important to have a renewed conversation with the sector about ways in which we can continue to help VCOs achieve their outcomes and ways in which our services can respond appropriately. Areas such as bringing in funding are particularly difficult during a period of cuts and there are ways in which the sector can work together in partnership to bring in new funding or bid for contracts and we have been working to develop our services in this area.



Attendees taking part in an energiser session at the Health Conference - October 2010

What does the future hold for local voluntary and community organisations?

At a time when efficiencies need to be made there is concern over the future shape of grant funding at the local level. It is hoped that grant funding at its current level will always be maintained which will help ensure that in particular small and medium size VCOs continue to deliver local activities, this is even more pertinent as tri-borough commissioning takes form. Whilst the commissioning of services may present some opportunities for local VCOs such as the potential of clinical commissioning, there is much concern about the number of challenges which also arise for the sector.

Evidence from discussions with VCOs that attended the funding fair in July 2011, delivered jointly by KCSC and Hammersmith and Fulham's Community and Voluntary Sector Association (CaVSA), highlighted the growing competitive market, the lack of capacity to enter tendering and joint bidding processes and to compete with national and regional organisations all as challenges. There is also concern over the ability of some organisations to survive the current climate in the immediate future.

In discussions that KCSC has had with some VCOs that deliver family and children's services, there is concern that where grant funding has been reduced or ended, the continuation of services will be dependent upon the VCOs being able to find alternative funding to continue delivering services at the same level or, if necessary, at a reduced level. The sense is that failure to find replacement funding will probably result in support and prevention services being lost within the borough. Former service users will need to be signposted to appropriate alternative service providers if available. Failure to provide services may result in families presenting to statutory services at a later date with more complex needs and entrenched problems which are usually more costly to address.

Looking into the future it is clear that the VCS plays an essential role in preventative services. However it is when investment is cut in this area that what appears to be cash savings often have considerable real costs in social and economic terms. It seems almost obvious that cuts to preventative services now will store up considerable challenges for the future.

What does the future hold for KCSC?

The future of KCSC and the way in which we continue to support local organisations is a matter of valued importance. If we are to support local organisations to understand the context in which they are working, and to fight the challenges ahead due to economic pressures, then we must continue to provide the support demanded of us.

We acknowledge that our support needs to be quicker in response to a rapidly changing external environment. In dealing with opportunities as they arise such as seeking contracts and partnership opportunities, tendering for contracts, governance support and providing a much more personalised, one to one approach in organisational development. We also need to continue to negotiate the sector through the maze of policy changes and practices.

Most importantly KCSC needs to continue the strong role of ensuring the sector has a voice. This voice becomes even more necessary in a time of change and uncertainty, not only for the sector but for the users of their services.

Finally

It is important to point out that, for many local organisations in the borough, the effects of local spending cuts have been less severe than for other organisations across London. KCSC acknowledge that the shape of our local sector has been maintained well, despite external factors, but we also need to point out that raising funds from sources other than the state has become more difficult.

The White Paper published this year⁵ highlights the increasingly important role of the VCS in delivering services on behalf of statutory partners. However VCOs have to live the reality of surviving the next few years, and riding out the difficult economic climate, whilst overcoming the challenges raised in this report.

The importance of the VCS and in particular small and volunteer led organisations offering nurturing as well as promoting effective ways to address deprivation cannot be over emphasised after the latest unrest this summer. The sector has a key role to play, as a balancing agent in a world that has wide differences in life chances, to help build resilience in what can often be a harsh world.

RECOMMENDATIONS

KCSC will:

1. Actively seek to work with VCOs that do not use our services to assess needs and provide appropriate support and links to existing support.
2. Continue to promote the forums with the aim of reaching VCOs that do not attend. We will implement the outcomes framework in order to measure the success of the forums.
3. Promote the new governance project amongst the sector and encourage sign up to the programme of support.
4. Review all areas of support with a view to improving on all areas where we were told we 'could do better'.
5. Continue to improve the new website and to actively promote it amongst local stakeholders.
6. Conduct an internal review of the Link magazine with a view to agreeing its future and the way we communicate topical news which encourage debate and campaigns.
7. Engage with our members on an individual basis to understand how our work can help contribute to meeting their organisation's outcomes.

Appendix

CASE STUDY ONE

Action Disability Kensington and Chelsea (ADKC)

ADKC is a voluntary organisation which supports people living with disability in Kensington and Chelsea. The organisation is user led, ensuring that disabled people play an active role in the planning and management of the organisation.

Jamie Renton, Chief Executive of ADKC and **Marian O'Donoghue**, ADKC Information and Advice Officer talk about the impact of the public sector cuts on the disabled members of society.

Whilst the organisation has remained relatively secure, the Chief Executive believes there is a sense of being unable to grow as an organisation. The Chief Executive states

“There are things I’d like to do, that I can’t even consider at the moment because we’re just trying to sustain services.”

Both Jamie and Marion believe the current climate and the focus on welfare benefits and getting people back into work has led to an atmosphere of fear and guilt amongst those they support. More and more individuals applying for disability packages are being denied.

“People are getting less and the criteria is shifting and narrowing.” states Jamie.

A case example Marion prepared for the discussion was about a man who had been denied benefits and was currently going through the appeal process with the help of ADKC. The man had suffered a stroke and now had mobility difficulties and communication problems and was practically housebound as a result. Marion states

*“How is he **not** getting disability living allowance,” she insisted, “**why** is he not getting disability allowance?!”*

CASE STUDY TWO

Age Concern / Sixty Plus Kensington and Chelsea

Apprehension about the ability of local VCOs to compete successfully for contracts was one of the main concerns of Cynthia Dize, Chief Executive of Age Concern/Sixty Plus.

Age Concern K&C is an example of an organisation that has not felt a substantial impact as a result of cuts in local authority funding. A relatively large local organisation, it was able to absorb the flat 5% cut RBKC applied to all of its spending. It was not comfortable, Cynthia observed, but they had been warned of the reduction and were able to plan in advance to meet it. With some core services secured through 2:1 funding contracts from the council, Age Concern K&C is relatively stable for the immediate future.

Cynthia observed that they still faced risk from the future. At the end of March 2012, Age Concern K&C's SLA for dementia services comes to an end and the service will be put out to competitive tender. This currently represents about 15% of the organisation's turnover and an area of work that has become integral to the organisation's offer. *"I haven't got a problem with having to compete,"* Cynthia repeated, *"because we want people to have the best Dementia services possible."* In fact Cynthia is looking forward to the challenges. She intends to bid *"really hard"* but knows that the larger providers will have certain advantages. The real anxiety is that with an eye to tight finances the council may be inclined to emphasise price rather than the benefits that a smaller local provider can bring. Organisations that may not offer the same breadth of service, may be able to reduce overheads and work on a smaller margin than a local organisation.

Cynthia also talked about focusing on redesigning services as a way of meeting what is expected to be a long-term reduction in public funding combined with increased demand from an ageing population. That's something the whole staff team are involved in. She is also looking to see what opportunities arise from personalisation. They've converted a home bathing contract into a broader 'charged for' homecare service, marketing this to self-funders and to people with Personal Budgets. She says that the organisation needs to develop a greater mix of funding streams so that it has some ability to innovate and try out new ideas as well as deliver public services.

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We are still gathering evidence on the impact of the cuts on the voluntary and community sector in Kensington and Chelsea and will continue to do so.

Please let us know what is happening by completing the survey found on our website at - www.kcsc.org.uk/impact-cuts-survey

Throughout 2011, KCSC has produced a number of briefings on the voluntary and community sector with recommendations to be taken forward.

These include:

- Impact of the spending cuts and the tri-borough proposals
- The funding fair tri-borough debate and the views of the voluntary and community sector across Kensington and Chelsea and Hammersmith and Fulham
- Analysis of the Localism Bill
- Reducing Health Inequality in Kensington and Chelsea
- Child Poverty Update 2011

For copies of these reports please contact Angela Spence, Policy Development Manager, KCSC, at angela@kcsc.org.uk or call 020 7243 9800.

working to support locally focused voluntary and community organisations serving local residents.



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