

NHS West Yorkshire ICB Strategic Commissioning Principles for VCSE Collaboration

Context

NHS West Yorkshire ICB is nationally recognised for its partnership with the VCSE sector. The ICB remains committed to supporting, partnering with, and commissioning local VCSE organisations as equal partners in delivering a progressive, integrated health and care system including in Place Provider Partnerships (PPP's) and in Integrated Neighbourhood Health (INH). As the health and care landscape evolves, we aim to strengthen this partnership and maximise opportunities presented by the 10 Year Health Plan building on our [Keep it Local approach](#) and [Memorandum of Understanding with the VCSE sector](#).

Principle 1: Parity in Governance and Strategic Influence

- Embed the VCSE sector as an equitable partner in decision-making and governance.
- Formalise and resource VCSE strategic leadership within the ICB, ensuring sector involvement throughout Strategic Commissioning and in commissioning intentions.
- Ensure meaningful, resourced VCSE leadership and involvement within Place Provider Partnerships and Neighbourhood Health models.
- Recognise the unique value of VCSE infrastructure organisations in convening the sector and acting as a catalyst for system transformation.
- Set clear expectations of Place Provider Partnerships around the meaningful, resourced involvement of the VCSE in strategic leadership; direct delivery of provision; as a source of community insight and engaging with communities.

Principle 2: Fair Resourcing and Sustainable Investment

- Implement commissioning which supports long-term stability, full cost recovery, and outcomes-driven funding ensuring parity with statutory models.
- Apply longer contracts (3–5 years) for VCSE providers as standard to align with NHS planning, maximise efficiency, support workforce retention and sector sustainability.
- Shift from transactional Payment by Results models to block or outcomes-based payments to support holistic impact.
- Explore funding mechanisms, such as top-slicing system growth funding, to directly invest in community-led and preventative services.

Principle 3: Data, Insight, and Digital Integration

- Base decision-making on community intelligence and lived experience alongside population health data and clinical metrics.
- Invest in the digital infrastructure and a simple and consistent approach to data-sharing agreements for the VCSE sector to better integrate into system intelligence.
- Create a proportionate Common Dataset for VCSE contracts to standardise reporting, prevent duplication and minimise administrative burden.

Principle 4: Risk Management and Market Management

- Proactively undertake market management of the VCSE sector and specify funding mechanisms which protect VCSE sector sustainability and diversity focusing on removing disadvantage for small and grassroots organisations and unintended service loss for marginalised communities.