**IP8(CC1)(LA), Local authority commissioner(M)**

Speaker Key:

CM Interviewer

IE Interviewee

CM What is your job role and your experience with commissioning for social value?

IE So, my role, as a commissioner, is primarily with children and family services, so, in the past has included both - early intervention services as well statutory children social care type services, essentially anything associated with children and families. My current role is changing little bit because we have been restructured in the local authority, so, my work role broaden out a bit to include adult’s services as well. So, I will essentially, be responsible for commissioning particularly pieces of work that the Council decides is better to be delivered externally rather than from the internal resources, or because the council has been obliged to deliver some services externally, then some services are delivered by independent organizations.

CM You are working with the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012?

IE All our services, now for a number of years, (…) I think was 2015, something like that, so, all of our services has to take into account of weather there is a social value element to the services to be provided. So, typically, and forgive me on this, cause it does change from time to time, the local policy and so forth, so far as I’m aware, still continues to be the case, so in broad terms, any contracts worth over 100 thousand pounds usually we need to consider whether there is a social value element that wants to secure that service. There may be occasions when deciding that in certain service is not appropriate but we all have to give some considerations to whether we include social value in the services or not. Under 100 thousand pounds, (…?), we are not compelled to look for social value, however it is over 100 thousands then we have to consider if there is a social value element to the service that we want to procure and we have to explain as well why not. If there is not social value attached to this so we have to be clear to the reasons we there isn’t social value.

CM Are these big contracts, with large charities organizations?

IE It can vary, because we don’t specifically ever limit the bidders to voluntary sector organizations, certainly not to case C. So whenever we commission the service externally and we invite people to tender for the services, we don’t restrict who can apply. It will always be any organization that deliver such services, and we always hope, you know, local voluntary sector organizations that’s appropriate, also bid into those services, but we don’t make any particular arrangements for voluntary sector organizations.

CM So, the policy is not prescriptive and allows any organizations to bid for contracts?

IE Yes, certainly. It is always the organization that is bids to deliver the services and demonstrate that they can deliver the services and meet the specification of those services. And that’s includes the services with social value attached to it and their prices reasonable. If they are evaluated alongside the other providers, as being the best organizations to deliver the services then we will award the contract to them, unless they isn’t a good reason that we shouldn’t, if there are some issues around their financial stability and things like that. So if there are some issues around like Carilion bidding to do research today, we might say no, we are going do not be bid by Carillion because we know there are financial concerns. Surely we will check the financial health, if you like, to make sure they can deliver the services they said they want to. So, as long there are not concerns about that, we will always award the contract to an organization which demonstrates the highest quality level and the best price.

CM Based on your overall experience, how you articulate and define social value?

IE It varies really, by and large, most of the services that I commissioned, where is been decided, where we decided that social value does apply to contracts, we want to see some elements of social value delivered through that particular contract. So far, by and large, I haven’t specified what social value I wanted, I tended to ask the provider to demonstrate what social value their contract will win. I know some of my colleagues will be more specific and ask for specific elements of social value to be delivered, but, by and large, I think most of us are, basically, on the same line, we ask the provider to demonstrate to us what the social value is of their service provision. And I found that it can be quite helpful, because most providers have a better idea of what they can actually bring to the service, into the social value, that we might have. And in fact, what we might have specified would be quite limited. So one of the things that we might ask for are jobs for local people, to boost the local economy so forth and the employment market, so there is a clear elements of social value in terms of social context. So we usually ask for that. Most providers will say, yes, we will try to employ local people, but what I found is that can be quite restrictive to do that, because a lots of providers, particularly voluntary sector are a lot more than just to employ local people and they can bring a lot more in terms of social value, than just employ some of those locals. So, my preference is to leave that over for the provider to demonstrate to us …some can bring quite considerable amount of social value, particularly voluntary sector organizations, because they already got a mission that are committed to.

CM It is about encouraging innovativeness from the VSOs?

IE Yes, rather than specifying something. So if we are specifying something tend to be restrictive by our own thinking and our own understanding what the organizations can bring. Sometimes that’s ok. But I think, by and large, it is good to see what an organization has to offer, rather than us limiting in terms of social value by putting a specification.

CM These contracts are usually done by your local council commissioning with single organization or alliances of organizations?

IE It varies, it depending on the nature of the service. So typically what will happened is that it will be determined by the head of the service, the person responsible for that area of work in the local authority. So in the children and family, we have a number of…children and family is made up of different sections who are responsible for different things, we have sections that are responsible for corporate parenting, so young people are in the care of the local authority, or we might, we have sections are responsible for children with special needs, we have sections responsible for children in need of social care, so some social local intervention (..) or we have educational departments. So it quite vary, yes…Any one of those services may have a requirement to buy a service externally and that could be because we cannot provide ourselves. And for example, let’s take an example, ehm, ok…One of the services we provide externally is children with special needs. Ya, by and large, we will try to place young people special needs in proper schools, that could care of particular needs and hopefully that will be a main steam school. Case C has actually a number of schools who are wit to support children in all different circumstances, including those with special needs, and some of those are better placed than others so ideally we want to make sure that young person’s stays in the school. (…) Sometimes child need could be such that need to go to a special school, so we have a number of special schools in case C who are equipped to accommodate children's with special educational needs, they can be physical, or they can be behavioural, whatever. Sometimes the needs of that child are such that we cannot accommodate the need in the special schools, so then we have to go outside of case C and look for other schools are collages that could support those young people and then we have to buy these services as they are not part of the local education establishment. So, we have then commission externally with another organization, so might be another school (..)? So, we have  to then commissioning externally with other organisations so might be with other schools so in that case we have to be  straightforward in the sense that we are buying services of a particular school or there are occasions however in which there is not one particular person to buy services from but there is a group of organisations that could all deliver services, in which  case then you have to invite people too bid to tell us, to demonstrate, who is the best person to deliver the service. In which case, we then invite all the providers that could deliver that service to demonstrate to us that they are the best ones. And then, those organisations they provides us with their proposals, in terms of how they are going to meet the requirements, what their cost, what their price is going to be. Depending upon, we might get half of dozen organizations or so that could deliver that service for you and this is the price that they will charge you. We then evaluate their proposals, including the costs and that determines who the best organisation is to deliver the service. So you can have a number of organisations bidding to deliver the service but we have to make a judgement based on which one is the best to deliver the service.

CM In your work, you use also a co-design phase, at the pre-commissioning stage of the contract of social value?

IE Where's the social value kicks in, where it happens, is that, when we commissioning the service that I mentioned before, we will make a judgement whether there is a social value element to be delivered by the service. And if we decide there is then there is more question, is there a case, or should social value happened or shouldn't be, tend to be' everything should have social value attached to it unless we can demonstrate why shouldn't have. So,  when we invite people to bid to deliver a service, we create the specification, it is a bit like you go out to buy a car and you have created in your mind what is that you want from car you're meant to buy and, so, whether you are writing it down or you have it in your head, you have a list of things that you want from that car and the chances are that you go around and visit various garages and ask and have a look to different cars. Have You done that? So basically You go shopping basically...It might be for a car, can be a washing machine or a fridge, but basically you have in your mind what is that you want from your fridge, your washing machine or your car. Some of those features will be very similar to anyone else's, if is a fridge, you want to keep it for food cold and fresh, so, and, that's the basic one, and then your requirements are different to next person because you need this size, because you have a lots of different vegetables, and needs to have freezer because I need to keep frozen food, while the next person might have vegetable, but not so much frozen food and looks different. So everyone got in their mind exactly what’s the product that they needs to buy, (..), you know exactly what you want, and then go shopping, you know.... You need to go to John Lewis and other department stores you go online and have a look to see what the best one is. And then you buy whatever you think what values, what is the best value for money, so you get the best fridge you can possibly get for the money you are going to spend. So this is the thing that we're doing, except we are going through this process, rather than we’re going shopping we actually set out our specifications, so, this is what we want and then advertise that opportunity to providers and ask them- are you interested in delivering the service for us, and if you are, have a look at our specification and tell us how you can demonstrate you'll be able to do that specifications. And also when people write in to tell us, that they can deliver those services it can be a bit subjective in terms of who you decide is the best provider unless you have a very clear criteria in terms of how you are going to judge this bid. So, we create what’s called an evaluation criteria, so is linked to your specification basically so, you want to know certain things about the product. So if you buy the fridge you want to keep your food cold, to be reliable, it comes to a warranty, it doesn’t use too much electricity.

CM Do you use any specific evaluation form?

IE Yes, we are, we call it an evaluation criteria and against that criteria we are going to judge each of those proposal of getting into an organization, part of that criteria might be social value. So you might have, you know, x, y, z evaluation and judge people bids on – is this going to keep food cold, it is reliable, do I get free services with them does it come with the warranty, in this case are coming other elements which are the social value element.

CM How is social value assessed? Using a quantitative or qualitative approach?

IE Both, you want to see, what is the social value for having this provider deliver is the service. So we are saying actually, you can deliver the service perfectly well but what are the added benefits? Social value is like an ‘added benefit’ so is not the key requirement to your fridge or your fancy car, so what is the advantage of buying this product from you, what other, there are any other additional benefits over and above deliver this specification.

CM So, you put accent on tangible or intangible value?

IE We expect to see it from tangible value; it is quite tricky for lots of organizations because if you are saying someone we are going to evaluate your bid to being able to demonstrate x, y and z and including that is social value so we should be able to measure to do that. So, must be tangible and that’s the reason that many organizations fall down because they don’t demonstrate tangible benefits and social value that are going to bring.

We are still learning what social value is to be honest with you, in terms of how to judge the social value of the organizations. Ehm, so, how do we judge their social value, so how do we judge social value that one organization bring against another organization, which also bring social value but is quite different, so how do you measure these two things against from that. And also, and the tendency seems to be to go to the most tangible things because clearly if you can measure it, is much easier, than lets go to less tangible things.

CM The priority are the economic parameters?

IE Yes, one of the problems we have in the service environment is different when people are building shelters, or houses or whatever, but I think when it comes to services, people get a little bit confused what is an inherit benefit for the beneficiaries that the service has been procured for and separating out the additional benefits which is what we are looking for in social value. So, a lot of organizations will say to us, in their bid, which the social value they are going to bring is- we are going to ensure the health and wellbeing of the beneficiaries; and I will say, of course you are, as we are buying services which are intended to do precisely that, so, that’s no social value to me, that’s an inherited part of the service.

CM Do you mean, it is implicit?

IE Yes, that’s implicit, and for that we are buying it, so we want to see something over and above. So, tell me that you are going to look after the wellbeing of the beneficiaries. Eh, because lot of things that we are buying should do precisely that. We provide services to help children and young people and their families, and they are all around...and all our services are around their health, their wellbeing, education and so forth, so for an organization to tell me that their social value is going to contribute to those things, well I want to see something which is over and above the specification in the delivery, otherwise (…) and sometimes we might say actually, that’s the reason we don’t have social value in that particular context. And actually sometimes we will decide not to include social value as it might be no social value to be procured. But, when we have social value we expect to see something over and above what’s implicit in the service specification. Does that make sense?

In that particular scenario, essentially the service that we are buying in those organizations, invariably there will be an element of service user satisfaction. So we want the organization to demonstrate to what extend to us, which the end users, that we are buying the service fore, are really happy and they are delighted about the service they are getting. And we will want that irrespective if the social value is attached to it at all. So when is a social value element attached to it, if that organization saying that they are bringing social value to that service then we want to see what they are providing to those service users which is over and above the basic service specifications; as the service specifications are just the basic, and should to be additional value. So if they are just saying, service users love us, we are delivering a brilliant service from the feedback we get from our service users, they couldn’t be more delighted with us. We say great, but where is the social value? Because we will be asking them to say but was it is that they are delighted about which is over and above the services that we bought, so we want something additional. So I think the VSOs are really very well placed to do that but they didn’t really do it. They often tell us that the service users are delighted, but they wouldn’t tell us why they are delighted more than they should be, and they do not demonstrate that additional social value, they just demonstrate what they already doing, or what they think secured to deliver. Social value is an extra over and above the basic service. But lots of organizations can do it, they do it very well some of them. And VSOs I think are very well placed to do it because ... Most commercial organizations are set up to deliver particular service any whey, aren’t they, so that’s their (..) to deliver particular services and secure certain financial rewards to doing that, so that they can pay the shareholders, make dividends and rest of it, to be successful. But the VSOs tend do not be about that, they tend to have a wider social mission in the first place, but then we come along and ask them to deliver particular service for us, you know, begin to deliver that, ehm, but they tend to forget about the broader … actually they bring a lot of social value to us, as the VSOs are really important to the community and the benefits having that that organizations in the community can be really huge for case C. And if they went we miss them they have a lot to bring to the community which outside that contracts. All we what to do, is to see the evidence of that in terms of service they provide in. And I give you an example, we have a contract years ago, one of the first contract I commissioned with social value, was with an organization B., a children’s charity, they are quite all known nationally; so they already got a high profile nationally and they are recognised as being credible. So if they produce a report on something, the government takes note, is in the paper and so forth, so are one of the large charities and they have charities shops and so forth.

Now, so they are probably the first contract that I commissioned with social value element to it, and they brought quite a lot of social value to the service. I have commissioned them to provide, what is called the Short Breaks, for young people with special needs, with disabilities, so basically is for (…) it is to provide various holidays schemes, place schemes and so forth, for children during the school holidays, so that their parents and their carers have a break from looking after them, because they are children with special needs and therefore need more intensive care, and parents get more in/out particularly during the school holidays. So, it’s nice to be able to say, actually, I can send my child to this place scheme for few hours, or a day or whatever, and this organization, in this case Barnardo’s have the skills and the way that we thought,…, and the expertise and look after my child, and I go shopping and spend some time with other children, partner or whatever. So this is what we commission them to do, and they told ok and did very well at that, but also what they weren’t able to demonstrate is that … people, naturally in the organization where also able to bring in additional benefits over and above what we wanted. So one of the things to bring in, was pastries schemes, a big national organization to have a pastries scheme so that get additional grants for the children and their families, who have particular needs, so, they provided cookers and TVs and things like that, Christmas presents. They also said they can work with local commercial organizations to support these children, vulnerable children and young people in their families. So, and again because their profile, they were able to secure support from John Lewis’s, Santander, things like that, so brought in volunteers in Christmas time. John Lewis contributed for all Christmas presents for children. They are able to attract volunteers into their services so they cannot just deliver their services but also enhance the services that we commission from them. So, for instance, with the Short Breaks, they have been able to get volunteers to come and help so that they can do a one to one support, particularly for young children who might need that support (…) that the parents like that their children to go to that particular play schemes, and they know that B. is able to provide the support necessary but the child circumstances needs more intensive support with one to one support… all the time, but on occasion, B is able to provide a volunteer who can actually be with that child all the time, so they are able to enhance the basic service provision quite extensively, so the social value we got I that it has been quite considerable.

CM This project is currently ongoing?

IE Yes, is running at the moment, for over 3 years now. And the social value they have been able to bring in has been increasing year by year, because they have been able to demonstrate that they can deliver the basic service and also demonstrate that the outcome … they have the capability of delivering of some additional social value which is over and above the service and over the years being implemented. So the social value they bring there is probably equivalent…they are large organization, and they have been able to do that ….

[unclear] (…) a lot of voluntary sector organizations do not have the capacity to deliver that additional benefits though their core work….as B will do.

CM It is a project between your local council and B?

IE Yes, basically we need to provide…Local authority has to provide the Short Breaks – is a statutory requirements, just to alleviate the carers’ responsibilities, so we develop a service specification and then we invited people to bid for those services. So there are all range of organizations who needs to deliver it, most of them are the voluntary sector organizations because of the nature of the services that are mandated.

But the B. was able to demonstrate that they were the organization best able to demonstrate that they can deliver the service but also delivered a lit bit more in terms of the social value

CM What are the barriers for the VSOs in understanding the Social Value Act?

IE Yes, I think, is not just the voluntary sector, we do as well. We struggle with it as well sometimes. I think where we get better at it, has been around for few years, but I think we do struggle with it a bit. I think that even organizations that also more commercially based organizations struggle with it a little bit as well to demonstrate that additional benefits. It is quite clear, what are the additional benefits that you can bring either to the environment, the economy, socially…so tell us what you bring…so I think that people do struggle to separate that out, from the basic service because they quite often refer back to what is implicit, in the specification anyway.

Although they would just miss ….as you will often get people say …why are they telling us about other staff they know we can deliver … …that would be suitable, value in terms of social value but they tend not to mention it … [unclear], but I think all organizations actually do they struggle with that..

CM So, one of the barrier is around the understanding. There are any other barriers?

IE I think this is being able to understand….what we mean by social value and being able to demonstrate it. I know is unfortunate, that we tend go for those things that are tangible, but they tend to be things…that’s how we evaluate services. Because we are looking for service, which can demonstrate its value very clearly, so we are looking for tangible benefits. So, when the VSOs….the social value, you got us here….that’s not really, I know what they mean sometimes… but is not enough, because we need to actually….yes, but what are the benefits, and how we can demonstrate. I do usually want to see, this is where we tend to struggle, because once we awarded the contract then we want to see how we are going to monitoring that contract it is going to deliver the services, and typically, you know- if we are buying that fridge we are saying –it is keeping my food cold, it is working, does it break down …and things like that. So we want something which we can monitor the service.

So the monitoring for Short breaks, for instance, that I just described to you it would be how many children have been delivered the services too, was available at the x, y, z time, and also there will be how you are able to demonstrate the social value to delivered. So you want to see something measurable if you like so…

CM During the monitoring and evaluation period you are engaging with B. on the way how the service should be shaped and delivered?

IE Sometimes, it varies. The council has commitment to co-produce as far as possible, but I’m not sure who was very successful in that, for various reasons. Sometimes because of the timescale, also to get the right people on board so forth, but as far as possible we try to co-design services, with service users, local community and so forth. Now in those case, VSOs can and likes to be heavily involved in that. So that would be helping to inform the service specifications, and also how we are going to evaluate the best bidd4ers. But this is not always occurs.

CM There are any other successful projects around this?

IE Yes, there are… we run several children and families…we always try to issue services at least with service user involvement when we design …the beneficiaries …..yes, so, if I commission a service for children and young people I want children and young people to be involved in it … So, the extent to which we co-produce it does vary quite a bit. But where we were able to…yes, we were able to involve as many stakeholder possibly we can.

CM So, you do meetings, workshops?

IE So, we might have meetings with young people, were I ask some of them …there are some facilitators which helps with that….we have meetings with parents …And we have, what called, on a regular very, a key feature, what we call the market engagement day, a consultation day. But what actually invite potential suppliers, along to meetings to discuss with them what they are thinking about what we are doing and to establish what the viability of that is. So, organizations might come along to the meetings, and might say we planning on commissioning this service, what do you think…and they can tell us, you cannot do that…(over-talking) and that will help shape how we then analyse the service. That quite often will tell, the result of that sort of consultation changed how was intent was…because what we had in mind was totally ridiculous…it cannot be done..

Inviting people to bid to deliver services, which is totally unpractical... Is better for us to have a good understanding of what the local providers can actually do, you know. They say to us, you know that we can do that, how much you offer, we can’t just do it, you know. So we try to shape our services based upon what different groups are telling us…the parents, carers, children, young people, service providers from the voluntary sector, other interested party. We are trying to shape the services to take into account all those various views …can be trickier at time, but usually means that you have better services at the end of it, as everyone is happier…all the key stakeholders, if you like, had the chance to say their ideas…

CM Do you have a strategy around SV for your service on how should be delivered?

IE Well, we know that should be some sort of social value attached to that service. Whether we have a clear idea of what that social value should look like in that particular service that varies so sometimes it could be that we have a clear idea what social value should look like other times we don’t, and I think, early on, sometimes, if we are too clear about what social value should look like, we could probably be quite restricted and we can end up, limiting organizations and what we get from that services.

CM Do you have a particular strategy of defining social value and aligning it with its delivery, monitoring and evaluation?

IE The certain services that I have been involved we were not having a strategy for that service, and I don’t think of occasion which that happened. We never set this is the social value that we want for this contract. That’s can happen, but it didn’t happen to me so far. Certainly no more than some basic social value … quite often people say, we want to see them employ local people to help the local economy, so that’s social value, fair enough…

But seems to be very limited, very slow narrow minded to ask that, because that’s the service for providing service locally for local people that’s (unclear) unless you pay lots of transportation, travel, costs and so forth, or they are paying quite high salaries so that the people can afford more to commute .. case C residents but they will come from case C or surrounding areas…so all seems to me quite narrow minded in terms just to ask the provider to employ people who leave locally. We want to see that and most providers will always put that in their social value… we will employ local people (smile) …because is easy to produce skills …it is a beginning, it is a social value that helps the local economy, helps people … but I’m not sure if that’s as extensive I would like to see…

So, that, to my experience, might me that’s the extend of …we start off and then we start think what social value will be, that’s the sort of thing we are looking at, but it is very limited I think.

CM You mean is less prescriptive, allows a flexible approach?

IE I think so. Personally, if we are too perspective we are limited by our own thinking (over talking). The VSOs are involved in such a wide variety of services and they are very considerable don’t they, they are very small organizations so their scope and capacity is varied hugely, so like it does in the commercial world, for me. So, it would be a little bit unfair to, if you talk about commercial ones, to restrict anyone to the same basic common regulator… to such up to the same as John Lewis, because local (unclear) operates on different scales than John Lewis, they are able to deliver lots of different things (unclear) …to compare that with B. that have different capacity, different scope and is able to deliver different things.

CM What are the barriers in commissioning for social value for local council?

IE The understanding of the social value is a bit unclear. I think where become very unclear is measuring. So before measuring social value, because sometimes in not so tangible, some of the benefits (..) when they are tangible are great, they are the one that we tend to go for because they are (smile). So, that’s mean that we can’t be missing sometimes because we could miss out on social value purely because we cannot measure it very well and that’s where we rely on, the bidder, in this case the VSOs be able to demonstrate to us how are able to demonstrate that social value.

CM Thus, it is around the ability to show the difference?

IE Yes, because we are not the experts you know but we are looking for something which is …we have to make a judgement which is as objective as possible, it has to be based on objective things, so tangible things in order to make a judgement on…but intangible. So it is up to the organization, in bidding terms, to say this is the social value we would deliver to you, and this is how we can measure its impact, and this is how we are able to demonstrate…

Quite often I say to an organization, you tell me how you are able to demonstrate, this sounds really good, but I don’t know how to quantify that, how should I quantify it? Now, for an organization that do it this way, I don’t know, they have some kind of evaluation, those elements itself on annual basis, that’s...

The problem is when the organization cannot tell me how to measure it, that’s the tricky thing, so I think that’s one of our problems, so…we relay a lot on the organizations. When organizations tells us that they can deliver social value x, y, z the more relying on the organization telling us how to quantify it because if it is just about employing local people locally that’ easy. The organization says we will help local economy because we employ x % of our staff locally but we see that they can demonstrate, but other things could be trickier

CM What’s your opinion on the wider relationships between local council and VSOs (e.g. austerity and cuts)? Any visible impact on the commissioning for social value?

IE I think is trickier for VSOs as we cannot make any specific allowance to the VSOs. So it is, we know that in case C, VSOs suffered quite significantly in terms of reduction of funding those received, either if that come direct from government or from local authorities. Local authorities in the past have been known for giving grants but have been reduced quite considerably. Funding from central government departments have reduced quite considerably, so the VSOs has been under increasing pressure, so we know has an impact on their capacity to deliver services. But we cannot take that into account when we evaluate their bid because if the voluntary sector organization being to deliver services alongside the commercial organizations we have to treat them both the same. I can’t say we are going to give more points to VSO because we know they got difficulties. So there is an abroad understanding and appreciation in the local authority that we want to support voluntary sector but the voluntary sector might not always think (smile) that’s the case. But there is, broadly speaking, some empathy with the voluntary sector because the local authority needs the voluntary sector. It can’t deliver all the services. If the voluntary sector were to disappear tomorrow the local authority would soak them up to deliver those services because would be a terrible situation, (unclear) so we need them, but we cannot make any exceptional arrangements to award contracts to voluntary sector organizations as supposed to.

VSOs deliver so many services which central and local government doesn’t deliver and could never deliver within its resources, they are highly depended of the voluntary sector to do all kinds of things, so we need it, but because we don’t make any particular provision for it we let it within (unclear). So there is a potential, this is my person view, if the x, y, x services organizations will disappear, the people that were depending on those services were they will go to… they are local authority services, so…I think should be particular provision for VSOs but there isn’t.

CM The financial sustainability and thresholds influences their position?

IE Yes, when we invite them to service we need to know that organisation is going to be long enough to deliver it, so we wouldn’t want to award the contract to someone who is not a very good bid, not able to demonstrate, have capacity to deliver, then that’s a problem for us. So we need that they got some financial stability.

When we invite people to bid for contracts, we can be very particular about the types of the organizations we want to deliver those services. Or we can be very unspecific, so depending on the nature of the service really, but there are a number of different types of organizations we can accept bits from generally, so it might be a single organization, who is going to deliver the service. So invite bids, organizations bid individually to deliver those services. We can also have bids, which we accept bids from the organizations that are going to subcontract their work and this is quite common within the central government, subcontracting, there are lots of organizations who will deliver service for the government but they will subcontract lots of the elements of the service to different organizations, small organizations. So we can commission service from a single organization that could deliver all the service itself directly or we can commission an organization which use to bid the services but is going to deliver the service via subcontracts or we could … an organization might deliver as part of a consortium. So is like a formalised partnership. So a number of organization get together, create a consortium, and they bid to deliver the service collectively, they will do it. So there are different arrangements that can and I had, not in the local authority, but where I worked before, we had a consortium of VSOs that deliver the services and those VSOs covered case C. And we had a consortium of VSOs made up of a number of different VSOs across three local authorities, and that consortium was led by the WMK (unclear) so they were the lead provider. Made up of a total of 15 VSOs. The field was about the young people support and advice services. The local authority was able to do that because the VSOs are rich and diverse range of service provision across the different organizations. So, you know, sometimes we would say, we only want a single provider but quite often we will say it can be a single provider, it can be a lead provider with subcontracts, it can be a partnership, a consortia, or any other. But one the organization demonstrate it got the right infrastructure in place, subcontractor arrangements and so forth, but otherwise we can accept (unclear). The VSOs in a consortia are very few and is not happening much in my experience. Certainly in case C, I can’t think of…The same with alliances. When it comes to bid for the services I don’t see them (unclear)…I don’t remember a consortium of VSOs saying collectively we can do this (over talking).

CM Thank you!