



**Purpose**



**Gather VCSE sector views** on the relationship with the Integrated Care Board (ICB)



**Explore the scale and impact of funding cuts** on the North East and North Cumbria (NENC) VCSE sector



**Build a clearer picture of local funding** and commissioning across NENC

**Key findings**

- Respondents covered **all geographic areas** and **all sizes of organisation**
- **ICB is taking the relationship with the VCSE sector seriously**
- **Mixed feelings around ICB engagement**
- Concerns around **limited VCSE representation**
- **VCSE perspective is listened to** at meetings
- **Time, capacity and lack of invitation** were main reasons VCSE organisations felt unable to engage with the ICB



**35% of respondents experienced cuts to service funding 23/24**



**83% of respondents with health funding were not getting full cost recovery**

**Context**



- Under-funded health system
- ICB subject to 30% operational cuts
- Increased healthcare pressures post-covid

**Main impacts of cuts:**



- **Reduction in service provision (57%)**
- **Job losses (57%)**
- **Social impact on communities (50%)**

## Highlighted concerns



- Welfare of service users
- Need for transparency regarding funding
- Potential rise in health inequality
- Need to support smaller VCSE organisations
- Inadequate understanding by the ICB of the breadth and depth of support provided by the VCSE sector
- The impact of cuts on service users who would no longer be receiving support

The majority of those who specified the length of their current health system funded contract/s stated one year with a key ask from the VCSE sector being for: longer-term contracts to improve financial planning; staff wellbeing; service continuity; sustainability; and overall community benefit.

## Recommendations

- **Full cost recovery** for all commissioned services
- **Clear and accessible information**
- **Improved, meaningful engagement** and communication with the ICB
- Improved **understanding of the VCSE sector**
- Work towards **more sustainable funding**, including longer-term contracts - to benefit organisations and the communities being served



“It is important that we work together as an Integrated Care System to address these issues and ensure the best outcomes for those that we serve – the three million people living in our region who may need to access NHS and VCSE health and wellbeing services during their lives.”



*These findings were shared with members of the VCSE Partnership Programme Executive Group. The majority of VCSE representatives agreed that the results accurately represent feedback they have received from VCSE organisations relating to the capacity in which they attend the group. **These representatives are listed in the full report.***

[Read the report](#)