

**Supporting the development of an accredited,  
sustainable learning provision to meet the  
workforce development needs of the Voluntary  
and Community Sector (VCS) in the North  
East**

On behalf of LSC North East

30<sup>th</sup> March 2007

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# I. Introduction

## I.1 Project context

New Skills Consulting was appointed by LSC North East in January 2007 to undertake a research and consultancy project aimed at enabling the further development of the VCS learning consortia in the North East of England.

In May 2004 the LSC published the Working Together Strategy. This national strategy outlines how the LSC intends to work in partnership with the voluntary and community sector (VCS) to meet the learning and skills needs of individuals, communities and employers. It recognises the important role the sector plays as a provider of learning, as an employer with workforce development needs and as a source of expertise and a channel for communication on learning and skills issues. The strategy also highlights the benefits of establishing VCS learning consortia as a means of providing a focal point for the development of learning and skills provision in the sector and for joint work with the LSC.

Since its introduction, the Working Together Strategy has provided an important catalyst for the development of VCS learning consortia across the country. In the North East, four sub-regional VCS learning consortia have been established (covering Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, County Durham and Tees Valley). They are supplemented by the North East Regional VCS Skills Forum, a North East wide representative group that promotes VCS learning and skills development across the region.

A number of other initiatives and plans have also contributed to the growing focus on learning and skills in the voluntary and community sector. They include the 'Change Up' Programme, the North East VCS Skills Action Plan (2005 to 2008) and the One Voice Network Voluntary Sector Academy, among others.

Although the four sub-regional learning consortia are organised and structured differently and each is at a different stage in its development, they are all involved in some way in the management and delivery of learning provision in the voluntary and community sector in their area. An important medium-term goal for the sub-regional consortia is to secure contracts with the LSC to provide mainstream funding for the delivery of learning by and for the voluntary and community sector. The aim is to provide their member organisations with access to a more stable source of funding to support learning and skills activities. Some of the consortia have already made good progress, for example by securing contracts with the LSC for the delivery of ESF funded learning.

While these sub-regional VCS structures have been developing, the LSC has undergone a major national reorganisation. The new LSC structure includes a national office, supporting nine regional offices (of which the North East region is one), with partnership teams dedicated to work in local areas. As a result, the VCS sub-regional consortia are no longer co-terminus with LSC structures.

To ensure that the achievements of the existing sub-regional VCS learning consortia can be built upon and that the sector continues to have an effective working relationship with the LSC, now is an opportune time to consider if and how a regional structure for VCS learning and skills could add value to the existing sub-regional structures.

## I.2 Regional context

A regional structure for VCS learning and skills could also enable the VCS to benefit from and add value to other changes and developments taking place within the region. There are a number of public sector organisations including the LSC, Job Centre Plus, Local Authorities, and One NE that are seeking to increase the role of the VCS in delivering publicly funded services. Some of these organisations (i.e. One NE) are focusing on infrastructure development to enable the VCS to engage more effectively at a strategic level, whereas others (LSC, Job Centre Plus) are focused on building the capacity of the sector to compete effectively for contracts to deliver services.

This presents the VCS in the region with a number of opportunities to both engage more effectively at a regional level to influence strategy, and to increase the number and value of public sector contracts delivered by Voluntary and Community sector organisations.

### I.2.1 The LSC

The VCS are currently delivering provision to the value of £20m for the LSC. Table I identifies the value of those contracts by LSC programme and by sub-region<sup>1</sup>. Approximately 12% of the total value of all contracts has been awarded to VCS learning consortia through LIDF, ESF and Train to Gain programmes. However, the majority of funding awarded is to individual VCS organisations for the delivery of mainstream programmes.

Table I: Current LSC funding allocations to VCS organisations

Sub-Region	ESF	PCDL/ NLDC	LIDF	WBL/E2E	Train to Gain	TOTAL
Durham	£615,000		£23,000	£1,134,000	£105,000	<b>£1,877,000</b>
Northumberland	£2,958,669					<b>£2,958,669</b>
Tees Valley	£1,579,971	£561,118	£30,000	£2,826,362	£250,000	<b>£5,247,451</b>
Tyne & Wear	£1,654,600	£1,370,373	£30,000	£7,330,425		<b>£10,385,398</b>
% Consortia activity	33%	-	92%	-	30%	<b>12%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£6,808,240</b>	<b>£1,931,491</b>	<b>£83,000</b>	<b>£11,290,787</b>	<b>£355,000</b>	<b>£20,468,518</b>

The LSC intends to widen their provider base by increasing the volume of activity that is tendered through the regional procurement office, and by developing the preferred supplier list. While all tenders will be issued regionally it is likely that a large number will be developed by the local partnership teams in response to local needs.

Consortia proposals will be welcomed by the LSC but all delivery organisations must be identified at tender stage to enable the LSC to assess whether they meet the criteria for preferred supplier status. The LSC are also very clear that there will only be one level of sub-contracting i.e. LSC to lead provider to sub-contractor.

In the 2007/08 academic year the LSC's commissioning plan identifies that the following activities will go out to tender:

<sup>1</sup> Data supplied by LSC NE. 19 March 2007.

Table 2: Potential LSC tender opportunities 2007/08

Target Group	Learning / Programme	LSC Funding	Focus	Opportunities for the VCS
Young People (16 - 18) that are NEET	Entry to Employment	Work Based Learning (WBL); ESF.	Localised provision in East Durham, South East Northumberland and Urban Tees Valley.	Some VCS organisations (i.e. Springboard, Rathbones) are approved E2E providers. All providers must be accredited with the appropriate awarding body.
Young People (16 - 24)	Apprenticeships	WBL; ESF.	Retail and commercial enterprise, health, public services and care, engineering and manufacturing technologies.	A small number of VCS organisations already deliver apprenticeships. All providers must be accredited with the appropriate awarding body.
Adults 19+	Skills for Life & Employability	FE; WBL; ESF; other discretionary funding.	Provision for Job Centre Plus clients.	A number of current consortia (Learning Links, The Humberside Learning Consortium) have won mainstream Skills for Life contracts
Adults 19+	Skills for Jobs programme	FE; WBL; ESF.	Progression of workless individuals into employment by providing access to relevant job training.	The VCS will be well placed to access the target group. Delivery will involve nationally accredited qualifications.
Adults 19+	Adult learning / PCDL	Adult and Community Learning (ACL).	Any gaps in existing provision will be tendered.	This is the area of delivery that is likely to be of most interest to the VCS as it involves first step learning, skills for life and capacity building.
Adults 25+	Adult Apprenticeships	WBL; ESF.		As with the apprenticeship programme. There will be opportunities but organisations must be accredited to deliver the relevant qualifications.
Adults 19+	Train to Gain	Train to Gain	20% of the budget is set aside to commission activity throughout the year to respond to demand or the need of specific sectors.	VCS organisations in Durham and Tees Valley have secured contracts to the value of £355,000. There will be opportunities to secure further contracts.

**Personal and Community Development Learning:** This is the area of LSC provision which is likely to be of most interest to the VCS. In 2007/08 the PCDL budget for the region will be £4.8m. PCDL involves:

- ⇒ Leisure and community related learning for personal and community development;
- ⇒ Neighbourhood learning in deprived communities. The purpose of which is ‘To support local voluntary and community sector organisations to develop their capacity to deliver learning opportunities for residents of disadvantaged neighbourhoods’. The regional budget is £2m pa;
- ⇒ Family literacy, language and numeracy learning. This aims to encourage family members to learn together and to reach learners that will not attend an adult only learning programme. This element focuses specifically on Skills for Life learning;
- ⇒ Wider family learning. This element aims to enable parents to learn how to support their children’s learning.

The administration of PCDL is contracted to local authorities who either deliver learning themselves or sub-contract delivery to other providers including FE Colleges, private providers and VCS organisations. Total PCDL funding currently contracted to the VCS in the region is approximately £1,931,491<sup>2</sup>.

### 1.2.2 Job Centre Plus

Job Centre Plus procure all their provision by open and competitive tendering. All tenders are advertised on their website through the regional procurement team. However the majority of tenders are developed at a district level (Northumbria, South Tyne and Wear Valley, or Tees Valley) to respond to local need. There may occasionally be a tender that covers the whole region if all 3 districts have identified the same need, but there still may be a number of successful contractors as opposed to one contract for the whole region.

National programmes (i.e. New Deal) are tendered by the Job Centre Plus head office and are being awarded to prime contractors at a district level. It is expected that prime contractors will sub-contract a large proportion of the provision to other providers in the area from a range of sectors. All sub-contractors must be identified to Job Centre Plus who will ensure that they meet the relevant contracting requirements.

Table 3: Job Centre Plus prime contractors in the North East.

District	Prime Contractor
Northumbria	A4E
South Tyne and Wear Valley	A4E
Tees Valley	Working Links (Essential Skills)
Tees Valley	TNG (Voluntary Sector, Environment Task Force, IAP and Full Time Education and Training)

<sup>2</sup> Data supplied by LSC NE. 19 March 2007.

### 1.2.3 One NE

One NE is working to help the VCS to engage at a strategic level in regional structures. To support this they have set up the Third Sector Capacity fund, managed on their behalf by the Community Foundation. This fund provides grants of up to £50k to VCS organisations to build their capacity to enable them to participate at a regional level. There are a number of key policy areas where One NE is developing strategic links with the VCS. These include:

- ⇒ Economic Inclusion.
- ⇒ Equality and diversity.
- ⇒ Rural issues.
- ⇒ Enterprise, and particularly the link with social enterprise.

**Sub-regional partnerships:** One NE allocates a proportion of their regional resources annually to four sub-regional partnerships to deliver the regional economic strategy at a sub-regional level. To date only TyneWear Partnership have established a mechanism to enable the VCS to engage in the partnership and to participate in delivery. The Pentagon Partnership represents the VCS at all levels of TyneWear partnership and the 'Included Communities Fund', administered by the Community Foundation allocates capital and revenue grants.

### 1.2.4 Other developments

There are a number of other recent developments in the region aimed at supporting the VCS to engage more effectively with the public sector.

**Regional Compact:** This is a framework for strong and effective relationships between the public sector and third sector in the region. It aims 'To improve partnership working and relationships between regional organisations within the third sector and the public sector in the North East'.

A number of key regional partners have signed the compact including One NE, VONNE, The North of England Assembly, BECON, LSC, Job Centre Plus, Funding Information NE, Business Link, and NESEP.

**North East Centre of Excellence:** The North East Centre of Excellence (NECE) is currently working with the VCS to enable them to maximise the opportunities presented by public sector procurement, and to develop opportunities for engagement between the sectors.

**Local Area Agreements:** Local Area Agreements are made between central and local government in a local area. They seek to improve local performance, by allowing a more flexible use of resources, to achieve better outcomes, and to devolve responsibility. The VCS are considered to be key to the delivery and achievement of the targets set by LAA's.

**Northern Rock Foundation:** Northern Rock Foundation has an annual programme of VCS training and development activity. They invest funding when there are gaps in provision and they prioritise resources on under-resourced topics and locations i.e. effective partnership working and public sector procurement.

## 2. Current VCS learning consortia

### 2.1 Overview

In the North East there are currently four sub-regional VCS learning consortia and one regional VCS skills forum. This section provides a brief description of their current structures and activities.

Table 4: Summary of North East VCS learning consortia

Consortia	Structure	Membership	No of Staff	Contracts
County Durham Working Together VCS Forum	Strategic Working Group; Information network open to all VCS organisations.	27 members of the Strategic Working Group.	Secretariat provided by One Voice Network Voluntary Sector Academy. DISC is the accountable body.	LSC ESF co-financing to support the VCS as a provider of learning. Funding secured from Future builders and LSC LIDF to prepare consortia for contestability.
Northumberland VCS Learning Consortium	The consortium operates as an open forum.	50+ members.	NCDN provides the secretariat function and NCDC is the accountable body.	LSC ESF co-financing for Workforce Development; Funding secured from Capacity Builders through the sub-region's VCS Consortium.
Tees Valley Working Together	Consortium Steering Group.	20 members of the steering group.	DISC provides the secretariat function which is based at 5 Lamps.	2 LSC ESF co-financing contracts for Workforce Development: One for activity in 3 of the LA boroughs of Tees Valley (DISC) and one for activity in the other 2 (5 Lamps). DISC and 5 Lamps have both taken on the role of accountable body.
Working Together Tyne and Wear	Strategic Working Group; Information network open to all VCS organisations.	15 members of the Strategic Working Group.	GVOC provides the secretariat function.	LSC ESF Co-financing to support Workforce Development in the sector. WEA are the accountable body. Delivery is sub-contracted to VCS providers.
NE VCS Regional Skills Forum	Core Group; Advisory Group; Full Forum; Information only group.	The forum has 28 members.	2 (NE VCS Learning and Skills Co-ordinator; NE VCS BME Co-ordinator). Secretariat provided by One Voice Network Voluntary Sector Academy.	LSC LIDF funds for consultancy costs to support the consortia to meet LSC standards and enable them to secure LSC mainstream funds.

## 2.2 County Durham Working Together VCS Forum

The County Durham Working Together VCS Forum was established in December 2004 in response to the LSC's Working Together Strategy. The group consists of representatives from the voluntary and community sector across the County and the LSC. The Forum is structured around a Strategic Working Group of 27 members with responsibility for driving the forum forwards and a wider information network that is open to all VCS groups. The One Voice Voluntary Sector Academy provides the secretariat role for the Forum, and DISC has taken on the role of accountable body in bidding for and managing contracts. The Academy brings partners together to develop the workforce of the VCS and to promote it as a learning provider and as a source of learning and expertise.

**Activities:** Recent activities include:

- ⇒ Securing LSC ESF Co-financing to engage people who are unemployed or in part-time work in learning, and to build the capacity of the forum;
- ⇒ Securing funding from Future Builders and LSC LIDF to build the capacity of the forum to compete effectively against other providers for LSC mainstream funding;
- ⇒ Producing a self-assessment report in January 2007;
- ⇒ Completing an LSC Provider Financial Assurance (PFA) audit in January 2007.

## 2.3 Northumberland VCS Learning Consortium

The Northumberland VCS Learning Consortium was established in June 2005 in response to the LSC's 'Working Together' initiative. The development of the consortium was facilitated by the Northumberland Community Development Network (NCDN), which has established a partnership based and community led approach to VCS based learning in Northumberland. NCDN also provide the secretariat function for the consortium. Its parent company, the Northumberland Community Development Company (NCDC), has taken on the accountable body role in bidding for and managing contracts. NCDC is a company ltd by guarantee.

The consortium has over 50 members from across the County. They hold open meetings for any organisation that is a learning provider to attend. The learning consortium is built into the framework for the NCDN, and as such it reports to the NCDN working group. It also reports to the NCDC board which ratifies all decisions, provides financial governance and project co-ordination. This ensures that the learning consortium is part of a larger network and as such is linked in to other community based activities and opportunities within Northumberland.

**Activities:** The consortium has been involved in the following activities:

- ⇒ Delivering an LSC funded programme of management skills training for VCS staff and volunteers;
- ⇒ Overseeing the 'VCS learners' project which provided practical audits, support and training to VCS agencies interested in developing as learning providers;
- ⇒ Supporting, through task groups, the development of new accredited youth work training; moderator and assessor training; and the collaborative delivery of management skills.
- ⇒ Developing a strong working relationship with Northumberland Strategic Partnership (NSP);
- ⇒ Securing funding from different sources to support the delivery of a range of activities including: LSC ESF co-financing for workforce development activities; funding from Change-up; funding for a backfill project to support VCS staff to access training and networking opportunities; and funding to develop action learning sets across the county.

## 2.4 Tees Valley Working Together

The Tees Valley Working Together Consortium was established in late 2004 in response to the LSC's Working Together Strategy. The consortium secretariat support service is provided by DISC, who are based at 5 Lamps in Stockton. Both Disc and 5 Lamps act as an accountable body for the purposes of bidding for and managing externally funded contracts. The consortium is structured around a steering group that involves representation from the voluntary and community sector as well as statutory agencies (LSC, Job Centre Plus). There are currently 20 members.

**Activities:** The consortium has been involved in the following activities:

- ⇒ Securing two LSC ESF co-financed contracts to deliver workforce development training to VCS staff and volunteers across Tees Valley. DISC is the accountable body for the contract being delivered in Darlington, Middlesbrough and Hartlepool. 5 Lamps are the accountable body for the contract being delivered in Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton;
- ⇒ Producing a self-assessment report in January 2007;
- ⇒ Completing an LSC Provider Financial Assurance (PFA) audit in January 2007;
- ⇒ Developing a learning provider manual to support VCS organisations to develop their quality systems to the standard required by the LSC. This will help organisations to deliver provision as part of the current ESF co-financing contracts, and also to compete for mainstream LSC contracts.

## 2.5 Working Together Tyne and Wear

The Working Together Tyne and Wear voluntary and community sector consortium was established in October 2004 in response to the LSC's Working Together Strategy. Gateshead Voluntary Organisations Council (GVOC) currently provides the secretariat function to the consortium. They also provide support for consortium development. The consortium involves a Strategic Working Group of 15 representatives from the voluntary and community sector and key partner agencies, as well as a wider information network.

**Activities:** The consortium has been involved in the following activities:

- ⇒ Securing an LSC ESF co-financed contract to deliver workforce development training to staff and volunteers of the VCS in Tyne & Wear, to build the capacity of the VCS to deliver accredited training, and to provide a secretariat function to the consortium;
- ⇒ A number of events to raise the profile of the consortium and to attract new members;
- ⇒ A benchmarking exercise with OCN about delivery of OCN accredited provision to support the workforce development needs of the sector.

## 2.6 Regional VCS Skills Forum

The North East Regional VCS Skills Forum was established in December 2004. The group consists of representatives from the voluntary and community sector across the region, from the 4 sub-regional consortia, and from key partner organisations including the LSC, GO-NE and NIACE. Members have a strategic interest in ensuring that the workforce of the VCS, which includes paid staff, volunteers and trustees, has the right skills to fulfil their roles and responsibilities effectively.

The Regional Forum has recently re-structured. There is now a Core Group of 6 members which is open only to representatives of the 4 sub-regional learning consortia, the NE Regional VCS Learning and Skills Co-ordinator, and the Regional BME Co-ordinator. There is also an Advisory Group which is open to VCS organisations but not to the statutory or private sector; the Full Forum which involves 28 members including representatives from the VCS, the public and the private sector; and finally an information only group which is open to any organisation or individual with an interest in the Regional Skills Forum.

**Activities:** The regional forum has been involved in the following activities:

- ⇒ Securing LSC LIDF funding for consultancy costs to support the Forum to prepare for LSC mainstream contracts;
- ⇒ Organising a number of regional events linked to the NE VCS Sector Skills Action Plan and Implementation Plan;
- ⇒ Developing the Sector Skills Implementation Plan;
- ⇒ Securing funding from Capacity Builders in January 2007;
- ⇒ Organising task groups on Skills for Life, ESOL, and volunteer learning;
- ⇒ Securing funding from Train to Gain to support the VCS consortia in the region to achieve the VCS sector action plan;
- ⇒ Securing LIDF funding to support the implementation of the BME action plan.

### 3. Consultation activity and responses

The first part of the project involved undertaking a detailed consultation exercise with the key organisations and individuals across the North East that have a stake and interest in the development of a regional model for VCS learning and skills development. The consultation involved:

- ⇒ Regional agencies - including the LSC, and ONE NorthEast;
- ⇒ The North East Regional VCS Skills Forum - both the core group and the wider membership;
- ⇒ Representatives from the four sub-regional learning consortia – including VCS infrastructure organisations as well as VCS organisations involved in the delivery of learning.

The purpose of the consultation was to gather views from the sector on the potential for a regional approach to the contracting and delivery of learning by VCS organisations. Consultation took place during February 2007 using a structured questionnaire to gather information in a consistent format. The questionnaire covered the following main areas:

- ⇒ Current arrangements among VCS organisations for the delivery and funding of learning.
- ⇒ Future plans for the delivery and funding of learning.
- ⇒ Views on the existing structures to manage VCS learning, including the sub-regional consortia and the VCS Regional Skills Forum.
- ⇒ Views on regional contracting and management structures.
- ⇒ Other views on how the LSC could support the VCS to deliver learning.

Consultation was undertaken using a combination of face-to-face and telephone interviews and an e-mail survey. The findings informed the development of a number of potential regional contracting models for the VCS in the region. More details about the potential models are contained in section 5.

The following table provides a summary of the organisations that participated in the consultation.

Table 5: Consultation responses, by organisation type

Organisations / consortia	Total number	No face-to-face interviews	No telephone interviews	No e-mail returns	Response rate (%)
Regional agencies	3 (LSC, One NE, Job Centre Plus)	1	1	0	66%
North East Regional VCS Skills Forum - Core Group	6 (4 sub-regional consortia representatives, Regional Learning Co-ordinator, BECON representative)	6	0	0	100%
North East Regional VCS Skills Forum - wider membership	28 (13 regional / statutory bodies and 15 VCS members of sub-regional consortia)	1	8	1	36%
Northumberland VCS Learning Consortium	50 group members	3	6	1	20%
Working Together Tyne and Wear	15 steering group members	5	4	0	60%
County Durham VCS Working Together Forum	27 steering group members	3	7	1	41%
Tees Valley Working Together	20 steering group members	4	6	3	65%
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>23</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>6</b>	

A total of 39 separate organisations participated in the consultation, providing a total of 59 responses. The total number of responses is higher than the number of organisations as some are members of more than one sub-regional consortium or attend a sub-regional consortium and the VCS Regional Skills Forum. In these cases, organisations were asked to provide two sets of responses, one regarding sub-regional issues and another regarding regional issues.

Two non-VCS organisations, namely LSC North East and One NorthEast, have also been consulted taking the total number of responses to 61.

All responses were provided in confidence and so it is not possible to identify from the research findings the information provided by a single individual or organisation.

Table 6: Consultation responses, by membership of sub-regional and regional consortia

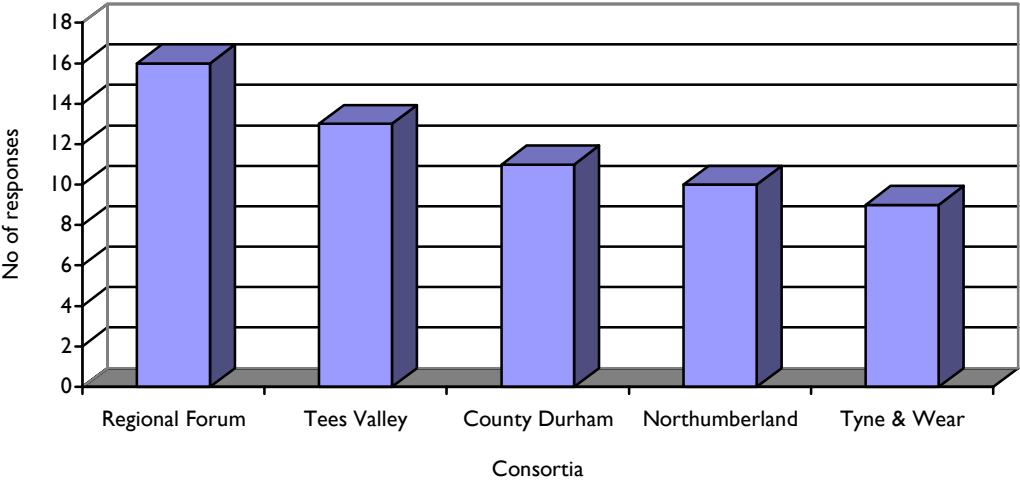
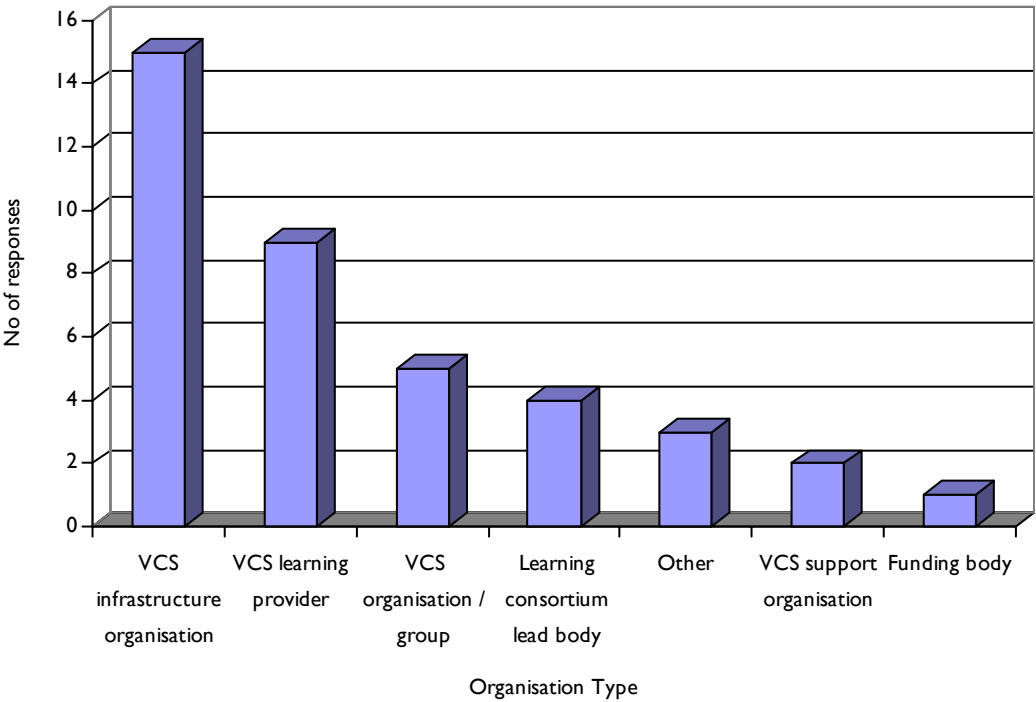


Table 7: Consultation responses, by organisation type



The above tables illustrate that responses have been provided by a wide cross-section of VCS organisations, working in all parts of the region. A good response has been achieved from the membership of each of the four sub-regional VCS learning consortia and the VCS Regional Skills Forum and from a range of different organisation types including learning consortia lead bodies, infrastructure organisations and VCS learning providers.

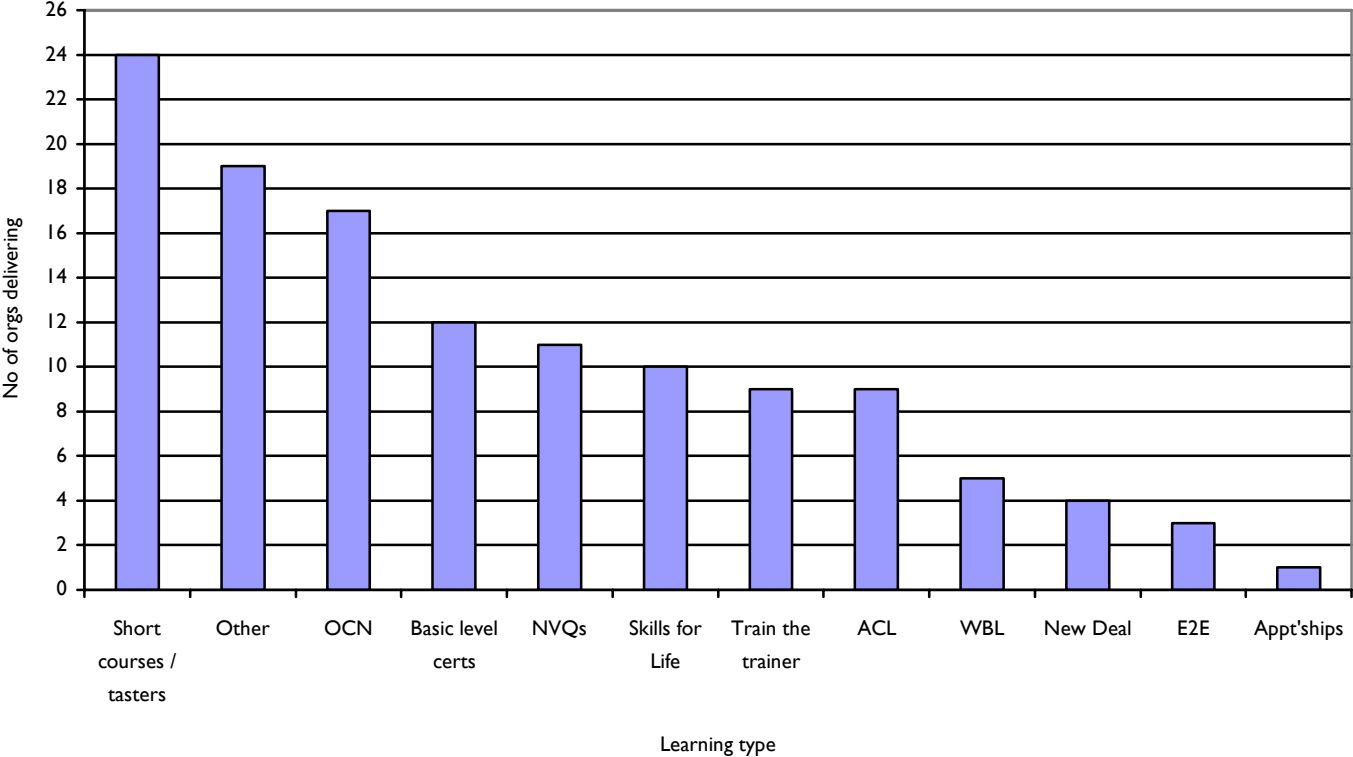
On this basis, the results of the consultation provide a good representation of the views of the full range of organisations in the region currently involved in VCS learning consortia.

## 4. Research findings

### 4.1 Current learning delivery to meet VCS skills needs

- ⇒ The majority of learning currently delivered by VCS organisations is short course and unaccredited first step learning (e.g. financial management, volunteer development, governance, food hygiene health and safety etc).
- ⇒ Open College Network (OCN) courses and qualifications are also widely delivered.
- ⇒ Most of this learning is delivered by VCS organisations' own staff or by sub-contracted independent trainers and consultants.
- ⇒ The group most commonly benefiting from learning is the VCS workforce (i.e. paid staff, volunteers and trustees).
- ⇒ A significant number of organisations also support unemployed people and people from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- ⇒ VCS organisations most frequently use local regeneration and charitable funding to support learning. This includes: NRF, Single Programme, Northern Rock, and Big Lottery among others. The second most commonly used funding source is LSC ESF co-financing, accessed via the sub-regional learning consortia.
- ⇒ The least used sources of funding are LSC LIDF and mainstream LSC funding.
- ⇒ The majority of learning delivered by 61% of respondents is unaccredited. However, the majority of learning delivered by 39% of respondents is accredited.
- ⇒ Just over one third of VCS organisations responding are currently or plan in the near future to deliver learning as a part of a sub-regional VCS learning consortium.
- ⇒ The remainder do not deliver on behalf of a sub-regional consortium and have no plans to do so. The reason most commonly given is that the consortia need to deliver mainly accredited learning (linked to ESF / LSC funding), whereas many VCS organisations want to deliver first step or unaccredited learning.

Table 8: What types of learning does your organisation currently provide to meet VCS skills needs?

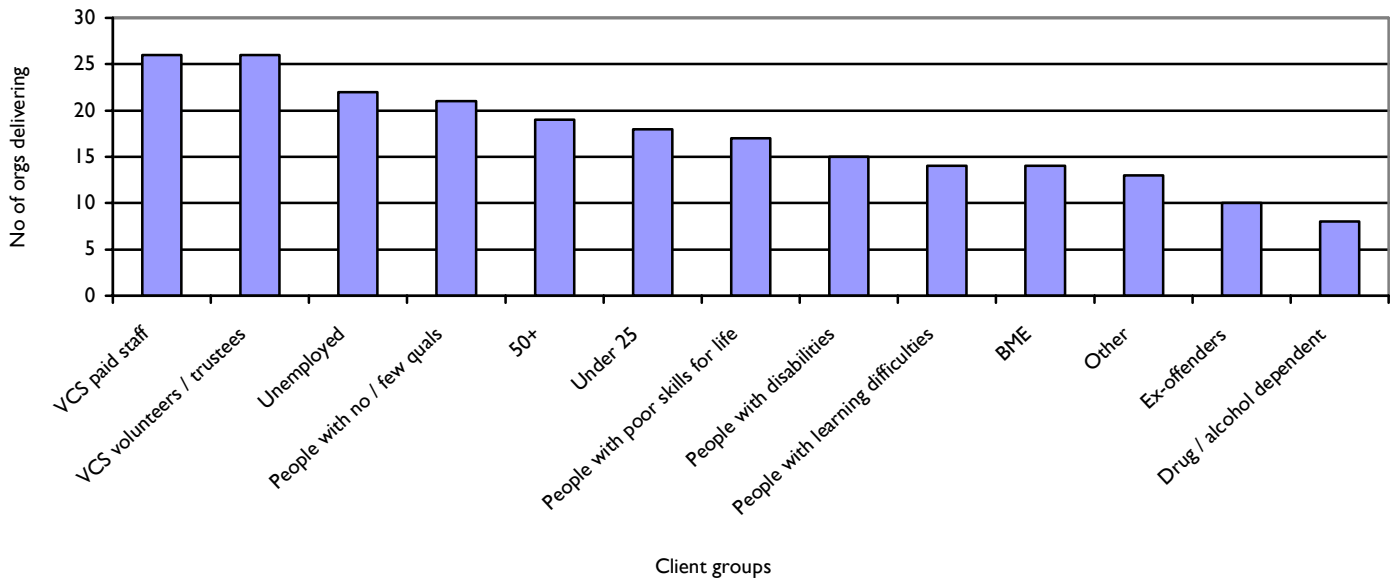


At present, the types of learning most frequently delivered by VCS organisations are short courses and tasters, other learning (examples include: ICT, IAG, profile of achievement, Dyslexia awareness, elements of HE programmes) and Open College Network (OCN) courses. The learning that is delivered least by respondents includes Apprenticeships, New Deal, Entry to Employment and Work-based Learning.

Table 9 demonstrates that VCS organisations provide learning for a very wide range of client groups from many different backgrounds. The groups most commonly supported are VCS paid staff, volunteers and trustees, reflecting the fact that three of the four sub-regional consortia currently have ESF funding to support workforce development activities. Some of the VCS workforce also falls within one or more of the other disadvantaged categories.

A significant number of organisations also support unemployed people and people from a range of disadvantaged groups. People with a drug / alcohol dependency and ex-offenders are least likely to access learning from VCS organisations.

**Table 9: For which client groups does your organisation currently provide learning?**



**Table 10: What types of funding do you currently use to support learning delivery?**

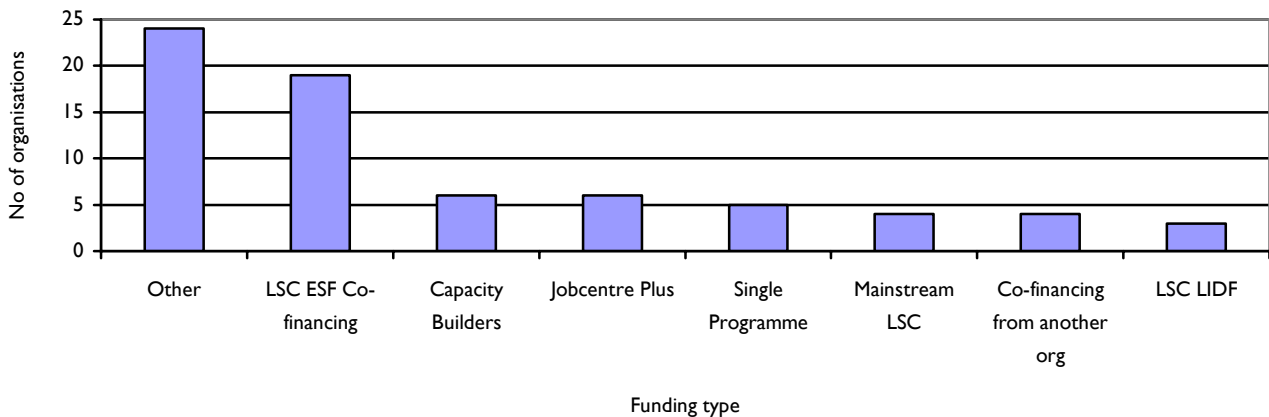


Table 10 highlights that ‘other’ funding is most commonly used by VCS organisations to support learning. This category includes a wide range of funding types as follows:

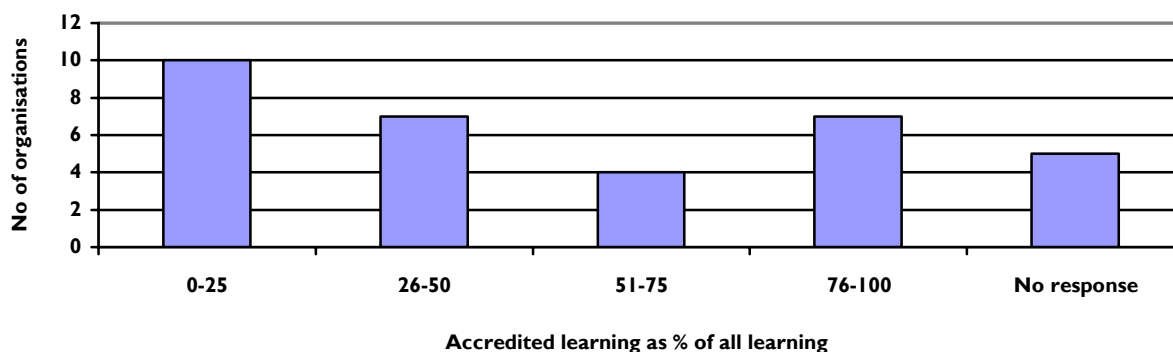
**Table 11: ‘Other’ funding sources used to support learning delivery**

Local Authority	Coalfield Communities Fund	Business Link Brokerage
VCS organisations’ own funds	Big Lottery	Defra
Neighbourhood Renewal Fund	Northern Rock	Connexions
Single Programme	Other charitable trusts	Union Learning Fund
New Deal for Communities	Arts Council	Department of Health

ESF co-financing from the LSC is the second most commonly used source of funding. The majority of this has been secured via the sub-regional learning consortia.

The least commonly used funding sources accessed by respondents are LSC LIDF, mainstream LSC funding and ESF co-financing from an organisation other than the LSC.

Table 12: What % of the learning you provide leads to accredited qualifications?



There is a wide variation between VCS organisations in the proportion of the learning they provide that leads to accredited qualifications. While 10 organisations provide only a very small proportion of accredited learning (25% or less), for 7 organisations almost all of their learning is accredited.

All consultees were asked the question: If your organisation currently delivers short courses, what subject areas do they cover, who delivers them on your behalf and what funding is used to support them? The responses were as follows.

Table 13: What subject areas do short courses cover?

Fundraising	Presentation skills	Early years
Volunteer development	Food hygiene	Employability
Governance	Health and safety	Environmental awareness
Legal structures	Site safety	ICT
Financial management	First aid	Enterprise awareness
Book keeping	Life skills	Community work
Business planning	Duke of Edinburgh and ASDAN	Dyslexia awareness
Mediation	Car maintenance	Hairdressing

Table 14: Who delivers short courses on your behalf?

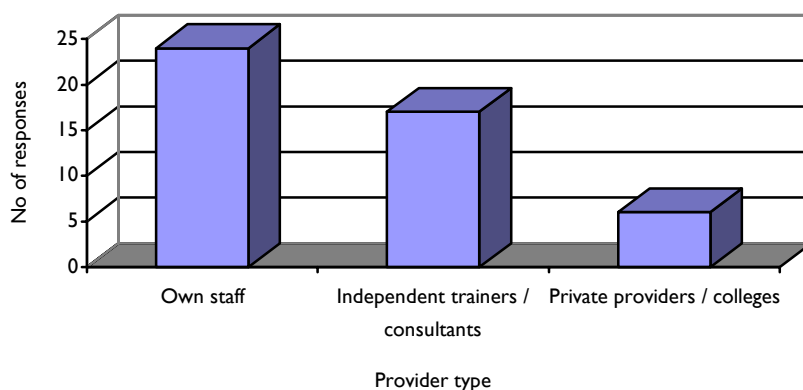


Table 15: What funding is used to deliver short courses?

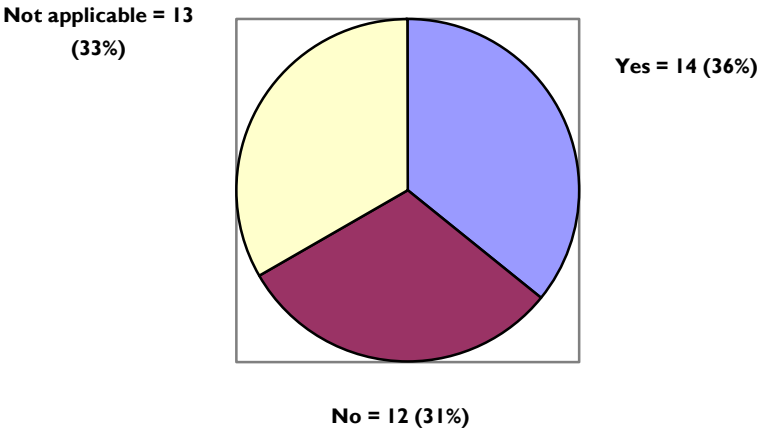
Local Authority	Coalfield Communities Fund
VCS organisations' own funds	Big Lottery
Neighbourhood Renewal Fund	Northern Rock
Single Programme	Other charitable trusts
New Deal for Communities	Delivering as a sub-contractor using other organisations' funding e.g. WEA
Capacity Builders	

A significant proportion of short course learning provision is in areas linked to the development of voluntary organisations, such as volunteer development and legal structures etc. The remainder is training for the VCS workforce and for service users (e.g. first aid, food hygiene, employability).

The majority of short courses are delivered by VCS organisations' own staff, although they also make significant use of independent trainers and consultants. Only a few organisations sub-contract work to private training providers and colleges.

Most of this training is supported with local regeneration and charitable funds, which tends not to be contingent on the delivery of accredited qualifications.

Chart 1: Are you currently or do you plan in future to deliver learning as a sub-contractor on behalf of a sub-regional learning consortium?



Just over one third of respondents are currently or plan in the near future to deliver learning as a sub-contractor to a sub-regional VCS learning consortium. A similar number do not deliver on behalf of a sub-regional consortium and have no plans to do so. The reason most commonly given is that the consortia need to deliver mainly accredited learning (linked to ESF / LSC funding), whereas many VCS organisations want to deliver unaccredited or first steps learning.

The remainder of the organisations did not provide a response to this question.











































































