

## Devolution and the Voluntary Sector Summit

Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> September

# Principles for devolution

### Voice and Advocacy

- 1) Devolving power to local communities is not cost-free but the value should be recognised.
- 2) Devolved areas need to be given the time and resources to create new democratic methods and shouldn't be tied to pre-existing structures and processes. Devolution needs to be tailored to communities and places by people.
- 3) There needs to be a commitment (political, financial and access), to local and specialist voluntary organisations to enable them to engage people and communities, particularly disadvantaged and disenfranchised groups, in devolved decision making.
- 4) The voluntary and community sector should be seen as a necessary partner to cooperate with and challenge public authorities and elected officials to make sure that local people are at the heart of devolution.
- 5) The process and systems of devolution need to be visible and accountable to everyone.
- 6) Devolution should not leave anyone behind.

### Financing devolution

- 1) No financial settlement can be agreed with an area until there has been an opportunity to map and assess what needs and resources (including voluntary and private sector assets) there are in the local area.
- 2) Rebalancing and redistribution should not be abandoned, there needs to be a way for distributing resources post-devolution so that inequalities are not locked in.
- 3) A good process supports better outcomes – financial decisions should be made in an open and democratic way.

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## Public Service Reform

- 1) Any contract to deliver public services should protect charities' right to an independent voice.
- 2) There needs to be an agreement between devolved authorities, elected officials and the voluntary sector about the design, commissioning, funding and delivery of public services.
- 3) Devolution should be based on the principle of subsidiarity. Local services should be co-designed, shaped and reviewed by the people that use them.
- 4) Mapping local needs and assets (including services already being delivered and the expertise of local organisations led by and for people with lived experience) must be the starting point for any public service reform.
- 5) Central government needs to articulate at the beginning of the process how it is accountable for services that will be devolved.
- 6) Services should be commissioned on the basis of long term social outcomes rather than short term financial pressures.
- 7) Public services should be funded by the simplest mechanism possible (e.g. grants).

## The organisations that attended the summit are:

ACEVO  
Age UK  
Association of Charitable Foundations  
Barca-Leeds  
Charity Finance Group  
Children England  
Clinks  
Colebridge Trust  
Community First  
Directory of Social Change  
Hunts Forum of Voluntary Organisations  
Lloyds Bank Foundation for England and Wales  
Locality  
Macc  
Middlesbrough Voluntary Development Agency

NAVCA  
NCVO  
Small Charities Coalition  
Social Adventures  
South West Forum  
Voice4Change  
Voluntary Action Sheffield (VAS)  
Voluntary Action Worthing  
VONNE  
Voluntary Sector North West  
Volunteer Centre North East Lincolnshire  
Women's Aid Federation  
Women's Resource Centre



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