**Factsheet Seven**

**Lead partner consortia**

**VCS led model**

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**Background**

The Fusion Consortium is a user led organisation formed from a partnership of 3 organisations:

* Living Options Devon (representing people with physical and/or sensory disabilities and Deaf people),
* Westbank (representing carers)
* Devon Link Up (representing people with learning disabilities).

Its key objectives are to :

* promote independent living;
* promote people's human and other legal rights;
* work with local disabled people, carers and other people who use
* support either directly or by establishing links with other local networks and organisations; and
* recognise that carers have their own needs.

**Governance**

The three agencies are bound by a consortium agreement[[1]](#footnote-1) but Living Options Devon (LOD) alone is solely accountable to the commissioner having to report and account for both finances and project delivery, and have to 'manage' the partners. This is operationally managed through an Operational Executive Management Committee but with users having oversight and responsibility for vision through the User Led Board that is linked to networks of users and supporting services. The Consortium Agreement is in place for certain contracts, but each member organisation has complete autonomy.



**Accountability**

* clearly defined outcomes based on an mapping of core values
* robust and transparent mechanisms for information about performance and financial management as defined by the consortium agreement, which was the bases of the SLA with the LA
* a single lead organisation with clear reporting lines but also trust built over 20 years of working for user and carer empowerment.
* good governance arrangements based around an agreed vision for Fusion developed with all the partners staff, trustees and users through independent facilitation
* a clear system for dealing promptly with failure suggested by the terms of the consortium agreement
* funding allocation process that is explicit and auditable, supported by a thorough evaluation of outcomes based on strategic partnership with the LA based on a relationship of communication, education, trust and cooperation

**Local VCS engagement as provider**

Enables users to lead on service delivery and broadens the services that a partnership of VCS could take on. Also ability to bring in national lead partners to work with local VCS

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| **Pros** | **Cons** |
| * Value driven | * Time and trust needed by partners to develop and maintain partnership |
| * Children’s services focus | * Dual track negotiations |
| * Creates VCS led provision | * LA contacting and procurement arrangements need to ensure that this type of bid is possible |
| * Relatively simple to set up |  |
| * Users and carers still have advocacy support |  |

**For information on the current situation**

<http://www.livingoptions.org/uploads/documents/Fusion%20Spring%20Newsletter.pdf>

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1. The Consortium Agreement was signed by all partners and covers all the legal aspects of the consortium arrangement such as governance, insurances, risks, liabilities, responsibilities, funding arrangements, declarations of interest, quality standards, intellectual property rights, confidentiality, data protection,

   mediation, termination and withdrawal. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)