

## CHECKLIST: 8 principles of good commissioning of the VCS

1. **Understanding the needs of users and other communities** by ensuring that, alongside other consultees, you engage with the third sector organisations, as advocates, to access their specialist knowledge;
2. **Consulting potential provider organisations**, including those from the third sector and local experts, well in advance of commissioning new services, working with them to set priority outcomes for that service;
3. **Putting outcomes for users at the heart** of the strategic planning process;
4. **Mapping the fullest practical range of providers** with a view to understanding the contribution they could make to delivering those outcomes;
5. **Considering investing in the capacity of the provider base**, particularly those working with hard-to-reach groups;
6. **Ensuring contracting processes are transparent and fair**, facilitating the involvement of the broadest range of suppliers, including considering sub-contracting and consortia building, where appropriate;
7. **Ensuring long-term contracts and risk sharing**, wherever appropriate, as ways of achieving efficiency and effectiveness; and
8. **Seeking feedback from service users, communities and providers** in order to review the effectiveness of the commissioning process in meeting local needs.

