

Norfolk and Waveney **VCSE** Assembly

VCSE Assembly Updates May 2025

- ICB and NHS England Changes
- Risk Register and Action Plan
- Get Norfolk Working Plan Engagement Session
- Safeguarding Board Engagement Survey
- New Research and Innovation Lead
- Website updates

Dear all,

I want to start with a quick apology, this update is going out a little later than planned. I had initially planned to send updates in early April, highlighting updates from the latest meeting, plans moving forward and a potential event in the summer to bring together colleagues from across the sector. Please find below some key updates from the last few months.

ICB and NHS England Changes

You will be aware of the ongoing changes within ICB's across the country. In our region, there have been some changes regarding our Chair and also CEO.

<https://improvinglivesnw.org.uk/professor-will-pope-and-ed-garratt-obe-appointed-as-interim-chair-and-interim-chief-executive-for-nhs-norfolk-and-waveney-icb/>

For us as a sector, this will have a big change in our relationships moving forward, many of which have been built over a number of years, but also how decisions on commissioning and key strategic planning will be done, and by who. NAVCA (National Association for Voluntary and Community Action) have produced a clear guide of the changes, and how they may impact the VCSE sector here: [NAVCA Newsletter](#)

The VCSE Assembly board wrote a letter to the new CEO Ed Garratt, expressing concerns about the impact on the VCSE sector, and asking for some clarification on priorities and future plans for the VCSE sector and its role within the new ICB structure. I am due to meet with Ed within the coming weeks, and will have an opportunity to discuss the issues raised.

Risk Register and Action Plan

On a more positive note, and continuing to move forward, the Assembly Board met in March to discuss ongoing issues highlighted by colleagues across the sector. A risk register has been created and highlights ongoing risks to the sector, which is being presented to the Patients and Communities committee in May. The aim of this is to ask for the ICB to help support a programme to mitigate risks, and help push forward a programme of work to help with understanding and collaboration across the system. This includes issues surrounding commissioning and increased financial pressures on the VCSE sector, and how this impacts the wider system and our population.

Alongside the risk register, an action plan is being developed, to help provide a clear set of actions needed to help mitigate risk, and develop a greater VCSE voice within the ICB. Although still in its draft phase, some key themes have been highlighted, including:

- Development of a commissioning framework, which embeds social value and social impact, alongside guidance for best practice to help build a greater resilience within the sector.
- Build the awareness of the impact and effectiveness of the VCSE sector to colleagues within the ICB and ICS, leading to a greater relationship building across the system.
- Data sharing across the system, supporting VCSE organisations to have access to data from across the system, as well as how we can provide VCSE data, and embed within data sets across the ICS.
- Embed the VCSE sector within key strategic priorities, such as the new hospitals programmes, Integrated Neighbourhood Teams and the implementation of the NHS 10 year plan locally.
- Develop a better model of representation and opportunity for VCSE colleagues across the system to have meaningful engagement and influence in decision making. Embedding VCSE representation into key decision making groups and commissioning decisions.

The plan is continuing to be built and as we move forward, will pull together key tangible actions to support this work. I am pleased to say that conversations have already started for much of this, including a project working with the ICB on social value and conversations on Data sharing across the system.

Get Norfolk Working Plan Engagement Session

A key aspect of the VCSE Assembly moving forward is to help the wider sector have a greater influence on strategic plans and developments that impact our communities and service users. I am delighted that we have been asked to support in facilitating ongoing engagement regarding the Get Norfolk Working Plan. We are co-hosting an event in June alongside colleagues from Norfolk County Council and the Norfolk and Waveney ICS, and would love to see a range of organisations from across the sector to get involved.

The event will be held at the **King's Centre in Norwich** on **Wednesday 11th June** between **1.30 and 4.30 pm**. The plan is being developed in response to the UK Government's Get Britain Working White Paper, which aims to support two million people into work.

The voluntary, community and social enterprise sector is often uniquely placed to reach people outside mainstream services, and capturing and understanding the sector's insights will help to deliver a more coordinated and sustainable plan. Please note that this event has limited spaces, and organisers are keen to hear from a broad range of organisations. Therefore, spaces are limited to one per organisation.

In addition to this event, other stakeholder activities will be held throughout the summer. The final version of the Get Norfolk Working Plan will be submitted in **September 2025**.

To register your interest in this event, please email: Adultskills@norfolk.gov.uk
You can also use this email address to let us know if you would like to receive Get Norfolk Working updates.

Safeguarding Engagement Survey

We have also been asked if we can share a survey from the Norfolk Adult Safeguarding Board, who want to hear from VCSE colleagues.

"We want to understand the difference that good safeguarding practice makes to people's lives in Norfolk, for adults at risk and those who work with them. We also want to see how the things we do as a board help shape that difference, and showcase in our annual report. We need your help to do this!"

Please find the link here: [NSAB engagement survey 2025](#)

Research and Innovation Lead

Last time I wrote to you all, I highlighted exciting developments with the start of an appointing process for a new board member, Research and Innovation Lead. I am delighted to say that after interviews, I have appointed Paul Cheeseman as the first Research and Innovation Lead. Paul brings with him extensive experience working across the VCSE sector, as well as a wealth of knowledge working across the system with stakeholders. Paul will be working closely with the Research and Innovation team to help support them in embedding the voice of our communities within upcoming research and working with them to help engagement with the VCSE sector to help support this work. This is a key step forward, as much of the research and innovation work is embedded in the development and commissioning of key strategic workstreams, so it's vital that as a sector, we have an opportunity to have a voice and collaborate.

Website Updates

Finally, there have been website updates, which will continue to develop over time, but highlight all the forums and networks that feed into the VCSE assembly and any events or opportunities for engagement moving forward.

<https://improvinglivesnw.org.uk/our-work/working-better-together/the-vcse-assembly-2/>

As outlined within my last update, the VCSE Assembly is continuing to develop and will continue to move forward in the coming months. I hope to have much more news and opportunities in the near future and promise to continue to communicate updates. If you have questions, about the Assembly, Get Norfolk Working Plan or anything else please get in touch: nwicb.vcseassembly@nhs.net

Best Wishes

Tim Gardiner
Chair VCSE Assembly