

ESRC 'Delivering public services in the mixed economy of welfare' IMPACT project

Learning workshops for 'Social Clauses' guide

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Introduction

The ESRC ‘Delivering public services in the mixed economy of welfare’ **IMPACT project** was undertaken between October 2007 and March 2008. As part of the project two ‘Learning Workshops’ were planned to disseminate findings from the project and build capacity around issues of commissioning in VCSOs. One of the key things that emerged from the Project Reference group was concern with issues of measuring the impact or performance of VCSOs, and the services they deliver, by commissioning bodies. ‘Social Clauses’ within contracts are being explored by some local authorities as a way to include outcome criteria (rather than outputs) in contract specifications, and potentially better recognise the value of VCS providers. The project overlapped with a scoping exercise on Social Clauses by the North East Centre for Excellence (NECE), commissioned by the Cabinet Office. Chris Ford who led this scoping work for NECE was a member of the Project Reference Group and contributed to one of the project workshops. Two further workshops on the topic of Social Clauses were held at Newcastle University in May 2008 in collaboration with NECE.

As part of a broader capacity building of the project we decided to make the resources from the workshops available as a guide for others to amend and use in similar or related contexts.

Definition of Social Clauses

Social Clauses are requirements within contracts or the procurement process which allow the contract to provide added social value through fulfilling a particular social aim. For example, a social clause in a public contract could prioritise the need to train or give jobs to the long-term unemployed in the community as part of the contracting workforce. Source the Cabinet Office
http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector/public_services/social_clauses.aspx

Running a learning workshop

The content of the workshops is aimed at those who want to facilitate a workshop for participants who wish to find out more and learn in an applied way about ‘social clauses’. It is particularly suitable for those in local authorities working on using social clauses in service commissioning/procurement contexts and/or VCSO organisations potentially responding to commissioning briefs and/or who have an interest in innovations in service measurement – an outline agenda based

The materials can also be used as an individual reference and guide, or as a resource in developing a "training the trainers" programme.

It also provides the facilitator with:

- A practical framework to setting up and running a training programme
- A set of tools for training.

After working through this material facilitators should ensure the material on the basic approach of social clauses is up to date via the Cabinet Office website.

Some thoughts on approach

In preparing this material, the characteristics and needs of adult 'learners' have been kept in mind.

Adult learning theory emphasises that adults are self-directed and learn from connecting their personal experiences to new knowledge. A climate of mutual trust and positive reinforcement to enhance learning is a critical component of this theory.

The facilitator should bear the following characteristics and needs in mind:

- They are usually highly motivated
- Because of their many other responsibilities they have limited time
- They want to leave the learning situation with something significant
- They bring to the workshop a wealth of resources – knowledge, experience, skills and practised intellectual ability

Bearing these characteristics in mind the workshops should be structured around the participants responding individually to the issues raised or questions posed, or discussing issues in groups, which can range from two to the whole table with a rapporteur presenting the collective response either orally or on flipcharts/whiteboard.

A key responsibility of the facilitator is to provide a non-threatening environment conducive to active participation and sharing. It is also important that s/he be flexible and adaptable as it will be rare that s/he will be able to stick precisely to the prepared material because of the interactive nature of the sessions. However, if there are times when s/he feels that questions or comments have been raised by trainees which may get them off track, it is sensible to use a 'parking lot' for storing such issues, e.g. a flip chart on which you write these to pick them up later as/when may be appropriate.

And some practicalities

Numbers and composition

Because of the interactive nature of the workshop it is suggested that numbers be limited to 25-30.

Where possible, like groups of participants should be formed to assist the trainer in pitching the presentation at the appropriate level and to create a more productive synergy.

Logistics

The venue must be large enough to seat all the participants sitting in groups of five to six in moveable chairs at moveable tables facing a screen and a flipchart on a stand (not necessarily all in position at the same time).

This seating arrangement obviates the need for separate breakaway rooms.

Technology

Required:

An overhead projector/laptop for PowerPoint presentations

Accessible and reasonably prompt photocopying facilities

Stationery

Enough copy paper for copies of handouts

Flipchart/s

Pens suitable for use on flipcharts (in different colours).

Blu-tack

Personnel

Team teaching

Enough staff to avoid the danger of too few people doing far too much to the detriment of the smooth and effective running of the workshop. The trainer might wish to consider a 'team-teaching' approach to the workshop. Three or four hours is a long time for one person to talk; it's also a long time for an audience to listen to a single voice. By dividing up the major responsibilities for the various sections of the workshop (with the other trainer free to interject comments at any time), keep both the trainees and trainer from tiring)

Chair & rapporteur

Some trainers may wish for a scribe to record the proceedings and outcomes of the group discussions, although this can be the function of the group rapporteur. Given that the trainer is likely to be conducting the workshops alone, it is suggested that s/he requires of each group that they appoint a chair and a rapporteur. The former ensures that the group stays focussed on the topic. The latter takes notes and is prepared to make a presentation based on the group's responses. This format should be followed throughout the duration of the workshop but chairs and rapporteurs should change for each activity so that as many as possible group members have the opportunity to participate fully.

Liaison person

Liaison person to ensure that the needs of the facilitator/trainer are met

Be assertive!

Facilitator/trainer to be fairly assertive in stating his/her needs, for example for prompt photocopying and for equipment that works.

Time

The trainer needs time to read through the content of the manual and to take decisions on which task/s s/he wishes to include. S/he may require some lead time to convert some of the manual resources into forms better suited for the workshop audience

Appendix – Outline Workshop Flyer (including Agenda)

Introduction

[Some introduction for the workshop and for the organisations involved]

About the Learning Workshop

An invited audience limited to twenty representatives engaged in social care or welfare service delivery to [insert target audience] from the [insert area] and will work together to:

- Share experience and learning with and between voluntary and statutory agencies in order to generate new insight into good practice that is, or can be made, transferable.
- Undertake tasks focussed on the design and implementation of ‘social clauses’ in the delivery of services for older people. Followed by task to reflect on the potential reporting processes required and review the concept of social clauses/community benefits.
- Recommend meaningful, shared criteria for the monitoring and evaluation of policy and practice in service delivery by the Voluntary and community sector organisations (VCS).

Draft Agenda and suggested timings

- 30mins Coffee and networking
- 10mins Introduction and Welcome
- 10mins The workshop – aims and objectives
- 15mins Introduction to ‘Social Clauses’ – [[link to slidedecks](#)]
- 15mins Current Developments in Social Clauses [[link to OfTS website](#)]
- 15mins A Commissioners/Procurers Perspective on Social Clauses -
- 20mins Designing and Implementing ‘Social Clauses’ in services (Breakout groups) (e.g. link to ‘Older People’ and ‘Children and Young People’ service examples learning materials)
- 10mins Break
- 30mins Reporting and Reflecting on ‘Social Clauses’ (Breakout groups)
- 30mins Final plenary and networking

Example of slide to introduce group tasks

Group Tasks

- Thinking, designing and articulating ‘Social Clauses/Community Benefits’ in the context of older peoples service delivery
- Two/Three groups
- Nominate scribe and a facilitator
- Work through the case studies identifying the potential ‘Social Clauses/Community Benefits’ in each case.

Feedback Form

Please fill in our feedback form [a feedback form should be compiled covering participants views on the content; speakers; venue and overall event]