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local focus national voice

Third sector engagement: are local area agreements making a difference?

A survey of local third sector organisations

June 2009

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 The participation of local third sector organisations (TSOs) is vital to the development and delivery of local area agreements (LAAs), something the Government recognised when it set out the new local performance framework:

“The local Third sector has a vital role to play in the development of the LAA and should be engaged throughout the process – from informing and helping to set priorities, to the final agreement of targets. The Third sector also has an important role in representing communities and as a provider of local community services many of which will be complimentary to the aims of the LAA. Local authorities and partners should ensure processes and structures are inclusive of the Third sector and take account of capacity issues, and be in line with the Compact code of practice. Local authorities should pass on the stability of their three-year financial settlements to the Third sector wherever possible. In relation to grants to Third sector organisations, the starting point should be three-year funding in all cases, subject to purpose and democratic controls, except where this does not represent best value in individual cases and in terms of overall efficiency.”¹

- 1.2 Local infrastructure organisations (LIOs) represent the local third sector on local strategic partnerships (LSPs) and support the sector’s engagement in local partnerships more generally, so their role is crucial. NAVCA’s Improving Local Partnerships Unit helps LIOs:

- Improve their level of engagement with the local authority, the LSP and other key agencies;
- Increase third sector involvement in local partnerships and promote greater cross-sector working;
- Increase the confidence, knowledge and skills of their staff;
- Understand how to target disadvantaged people and communities;
- Strengthen the engagement in local partnerships of groups that represent disadvantaged communities;
- Increase both their own and the local third sector’s knowledge of local government initiatives such as LAAs.

- 1.3 In late 2008 NAVCA conducted a survey of local third sector organisations to inform the work of NAVCA’s Improving Local Partnerships Unit and gauge the progress LSPs have made in securing third sector participation in LAAs. This report summarises the survey findings. The quotes, which offer an illuminating insight into the experience of many local third sector organisations, are from respondents to the survey unless otherwise stated.

¹ Communities and Local Government, Development of the new LAA framework – Operational Guidance 2007

1.4 **Key findings**

1. Statutory guidance had 'opened the door' for the third sector in many areas.
2. Most respondents believed LAAs had been beneficial for the local third sector.
3. However, a substantial minority thought LAAs have had a negative impact.
4. Local infrastructure organisations are more likely take a positive view of LAAs than other TSOs.
5. The majority of councils support third sector engagement, although a sizeable minority appear to give it very little consideration.
6. Effective participation often requires a change in culture.
7. Lack of time is an impediment to effective participation.
8. Partnerships are often founded upon personal relationships and trust and are highly dependent on individuals.
9. Past LAA rounds had only limited success in harnessing the sector's potential to break down the operational silos in which services often operate.
10. Although LAAs are likely to create more contract opportunities, there is little optimism that they will be awarded to local third sector organisations.

1.5 The survey identifies a number of characteristics where the third sector is positive about the LAA:

- Statutory partners understand the sector's strengths and how to make best use of them.
- Partnership and joint working is strong.
- The third sector is well informed, involved in decision making and able to influence priorities.
- The third sector understands what public bodies will fund and is, as a result, more likely to be involved in service delivery.
- Grassroots groups are more likely to participate in LSP activity.
- Local third sector organisations continue to access Area Based Grant.
- Local TSOs are more likely to operate strategically and collaborate with each other

1.6 The survey also identifies characteristics where the third sector is negative about the LAA:

- It has caused confusion created uncertainty.
- Expectations are raised and then not met.

- Third sector engagement is not resourced.
- The process can be divisive, with smaller groups often excluded.
- Area Based Grant has often ‘disappeared’ into mainstream budgets, causing a significant loss of third sector services.
- Some LAAs are dominated by the public sector, with third sector seen as an add-on rather than an equal partner.
- It can be time consuming and bureaucratic with too much time wasted in apparently pointless meetings and unrealistic timescales
- The result of the LAA is often seen as centralising power and resources in the statutory partners.
- Engagement is not designed in to commissioning processes.

1.7 Recommendations:

Local strategic partnerships should:

- Ensure that third sector engagement is embedded into the ‘DNA’ of local public bodies.
- Consider how to make the LAA more accessible to grassroots groups.
- Make resources available to support third sector engagement.
- Implement governance arrangements that enable all local third sector organisations to participate in the LAA, for example by adopting a framework such as the *Principles of Representation*².
- Support the development of the local third sector’s capacity and skills to engage.
- Develop a strategic approach to the *Duty to Involve* and the third sector’s role in community engagement and empowerment and implement a comprehensive community engagement strategy³.
- Produce information in formats and language that is accessible to grassroots groups, so that they in turn can help secure the engagement of disadvantaged communities.
- Make sure that local commissioning frameworks encourage the participation of local TSOs, support the growth of the of the local provider base and encourage the development of local delivery partnerships.
- Consider how to align the monitoring and reporting requirements of LSP partners.

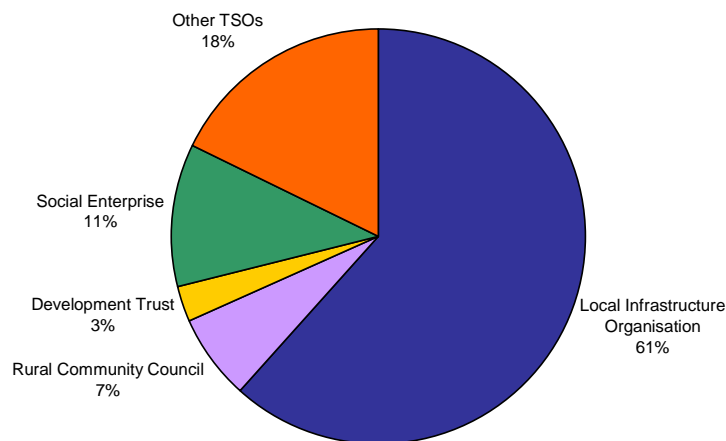
² See <http://www.navca.org.uk/localvs/infobank/ilpunews/prinrep.htm>

³ See <http://www.navca.org.uk/publications/cces/>

2 The respondents

2.1 In all, 90 TSOs responded to the survey, ranging across 78 different localities and covering a total of 53 local area agreements; about a third of all LAAs. The majority of responses were from LIOs, which is to be expected as they lead the sector's engagement in most areas. Two regional and three sub-regional organisations also responded.

Figure 1: Profile of respondents



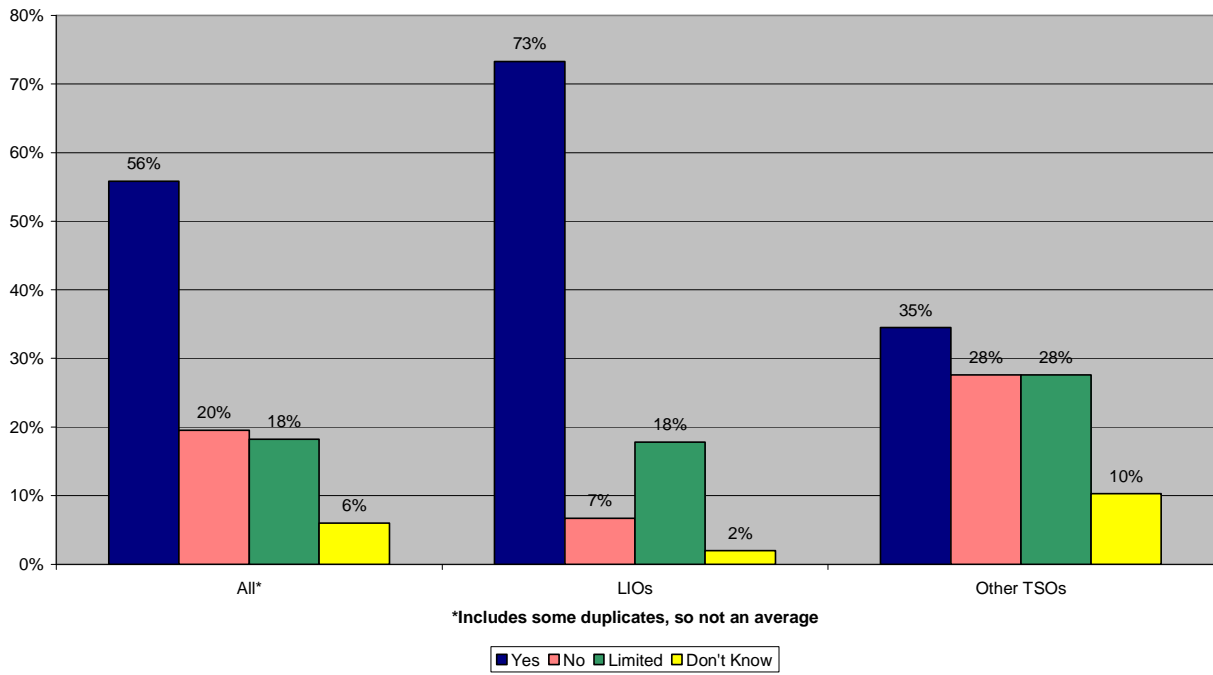
2.2 The highest number of responses – 32% – came from TSOs operating in London and the metropolitan boroughs; a similar proportion – 30% – were from those operating in district council areas; TSOs operating across shire counties accounted for 21% and slightly less – 17% – were from unitary council areas. The survey results can be found in Annex A.

2.3 We asked respondents if they had been actively involved in the development of the LAA. Over half said they had; amongst LIOs it was three-quarters but it was only around one-third of other local TSOs. Respondents' comments reflect a wide range of different experiences: one "*chaired LAA Steering Group*"; another "*was lead negotiator for Stronger Communities*". Others said they were involved "*only on the fringes*", or as one put it, "*half way in!*" One suggested that the level of engagement had declined from previous LAAs: "*the first one - yes, this second one - no*".

In some places third sector involvement appeared "*a tick box*" exercise, more about keeping up appearances than meaningful engagement; or else the third sector was

“informed, then asked, but our views were not taken” on board; for one particular respondent the exasperation was all too obvious: “we tried!!”

Figure 2: Were you actively involved in the LAA?

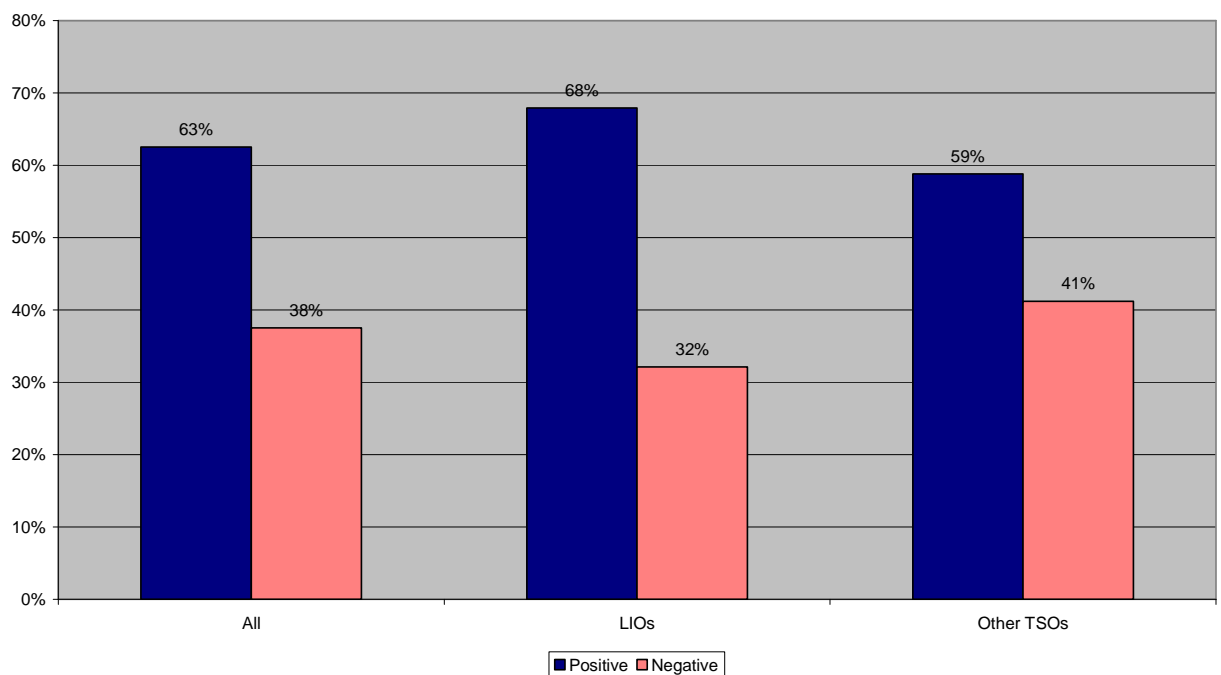


3 The third sector experience of LAAs

3.1 Opinion amongst respondents was divided over whether LAAs had been beneficial for the local third sector: whilst almost two-thirds were positive, a substantial minority believed it to have had a negative impact. The survey suggests that LIOs were more likely to be positive than other TSOs, which appears to reflect the differing level of engagement between the two groups indicated in figure 2. However, many had some critical things to say about the quality of engagement. The survey also indicates that there is a sizeable minority of areas where the third sector has struggled to make its voice heard and where, as a consequence engagement has been limited.

For those with a positive experience, engagement in the LAA had generally improved the third sector’s understanding of what was “*happening where and how to get involved*”, and given them a much better appreciation of the sort of activity that public bodies might wish to fund. There was also a clear sense that it had strengthened partnership and typically led to “*increased joint working across the sectors*”, so that: “*cross-sector thematic partnership working is endemic (if not always easy or effective)*”.

Figure3: Overall impact of LAA on third sector

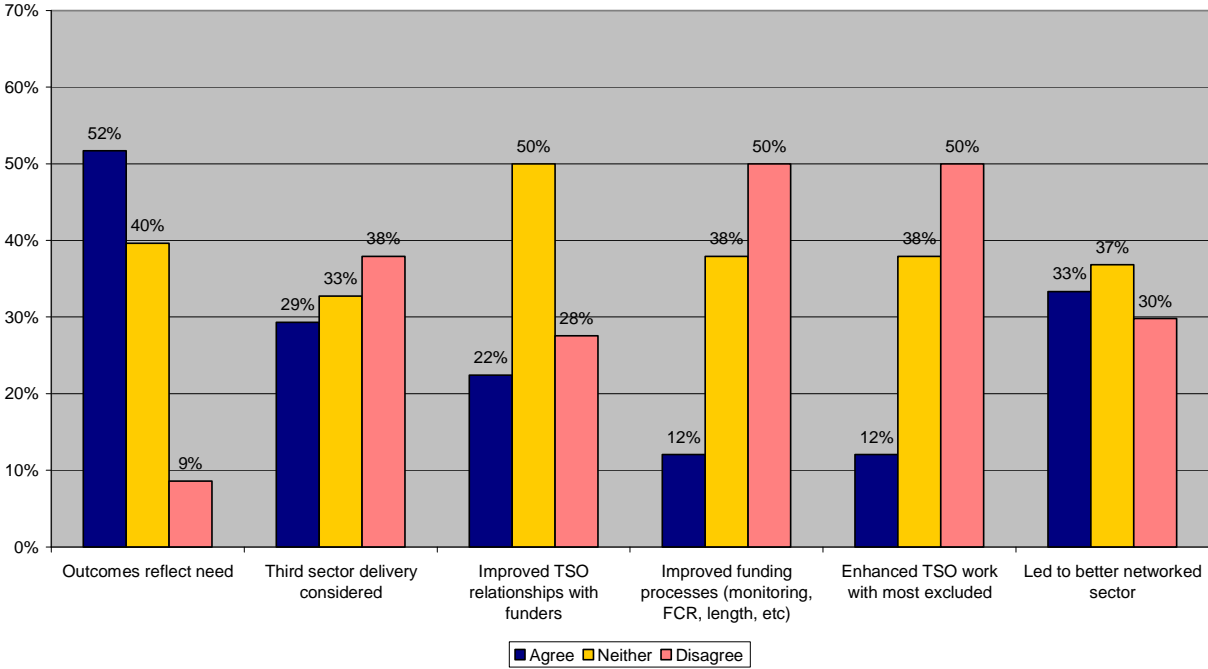


A number of respondents believed that the LAA had been instrumental in gaining the third sector “*a seat at the table*”, from where it was able to increase partners’ awareness of “*what the sector can offer*”. This “*encouraged the sector to think more about how to influencer*” public bodies and that to realise it was possible to get more “*actively involved in decision making*”.

3.2 A number of respondents reserved judgement about the impact of the LAA on the third sector: implying that early expectations have not been met – “*promised a lot gave little*”; damning with faint praise – “*better than nothing at all*”; offering cautious optimism – “*the jury is out - it should be positive and I remain hopeful!*”; or simply reflecting that there is still much to be done “*we started from a low base..... some progress.....but it is still at a very low level*”.

3.3 The survey then asked respondents to consider several specific issues. Most believed that their LAA outcomes reflected local need as expressed by the third sector and had led to a better networked sector. However, most thought that the LAA had generally failed to make the most effective use of the sector’s strengths in relation to service delivery. We look at this in greater detail in section 5.

Figure 4: Third sector view of LAA



3.4 Quite a few respondents were concerned that they had invested a considerable amount of time and commitment, yet the local third sector had very little to show for it. One expressed the view that the LAA had been “*negative for the sector because of the sheer amount of time and energy its production has taken up*” without any compensation and “*little obvious benefit*”. Another talked about the “*lack of resource[s] to do this properly coupled with [increased] demands*”, which was placing considerable pressure on the LIO. Elsewhere, it was claimed that third sector representatives were “*dropping out as*

they are not getting anything in return for their involvement". There are clearly plenty of TSOs that perceive no benefit for themselves, their clients or community.

- 3.5 Another similar set of concerns related to the LAA being *"time consuming and bureaucratic"* and a *"talking shop that's very council led"*, with too much *"time wasted on meetings"*. Sometimes the process had led to either to *"mixed messages"* or to raised *"expectations around new funding opportunities"* that were simply not met or, even worse, resulted in *"loss of funding, lack of involvement, lack of trust"*.
- 3.6 Some areas had seen no real improvement in third sector engagement. As one put it, *"no engagement wanted"* because the LAA was simply *"about council meeting its targets"*. In one area we were told that the *"third sector does not even have a place on the LSP"*, elsewhere that the sector was *"being kept in the dark"* or that *"the LSP still thinks we're all volunteers (seriously)!"*
- 3.7 Despite all this there is a fair degree of optimism, best captured by the respondent who believed that *"the door to a thriving third sector is opening wider every month"*. LIOs take a more positive view of LAAs than other TSOs. The challenge for LIOs is to secure LSP support to engage the wider local third sector more effectively⁴; for example, by taking proposals to the LSP on how it might implement the *Principles of Representation*⁵.
- 3.8 The LAA has tested the third sector; as one respondent said, it has *"revealed very starkly the divide between VCS organisations who are strategically minded and those who are not and it increases the onus on LIOs to support and enthuse their members [and] constituents"*.

The challenge is to replicate this enthusiasm everywhere; the survey suggests that this will be easier in some areas than in others. For many the first step may well have to be a discussion at the LSP about the value of third sector engagement and how it will be resourced and supported.

⁴ NAVCA's Improving Local Partnerships Unit already has a number of resources and is currently developing others to assist LIOs in this endeavour. See <http://www.navca.org.uk/localvs/infobank/Representationandparticipation/Home.htm>

⁵ Department for Communities and Local Government. Principles of representation: A framework for effective third sector participation in Local Strategic Partnerships. London. November 2007

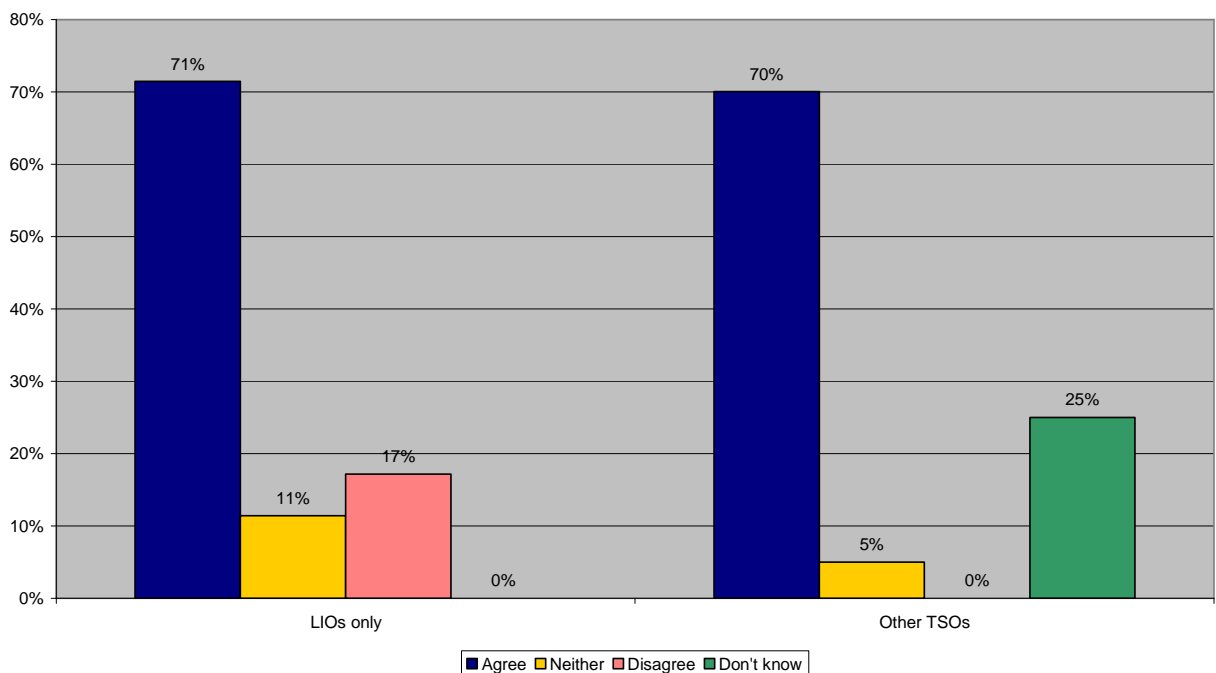
4 Third sector participation in local area agreements

4.1 A previous survey suggested that the level of third sector involvement in LAAs is directly related to the quality and level of resources available for third sector infrastructure⁶, which is crucial as LIOs are expected to fulfil several important functions:

- represent the local third sector on the LSP;
- support local third sector networks; and
- promote the engagement of local TSOs by local public bodies.

4.2 It is clear from the survey that creating an environment where, as one respondent described it, “*the third sector here feels highly involved in the development of this LAA*” requires commitment on all sides. However, in some places the LIO simply does not have the resources to support third sector engagement: as one said, “*we do our best with the resources we have*”; whilst another “*still lacks capacity and skills to influence the whole picture*”.

Figure 5: The local authority supported third sector involvement in the LAA



4.3 It is clear that in the majority of areas respondents believe that the local authority supported third sector involvement in the LAA. However, nearly one in five of LIOs did not agree and a quarter of other TSOs simply did not know. Whilst some respondents complained that LIOs were not given the resources to engage TSOs, a number credited the local authority with providing at least some resources to support engagement.

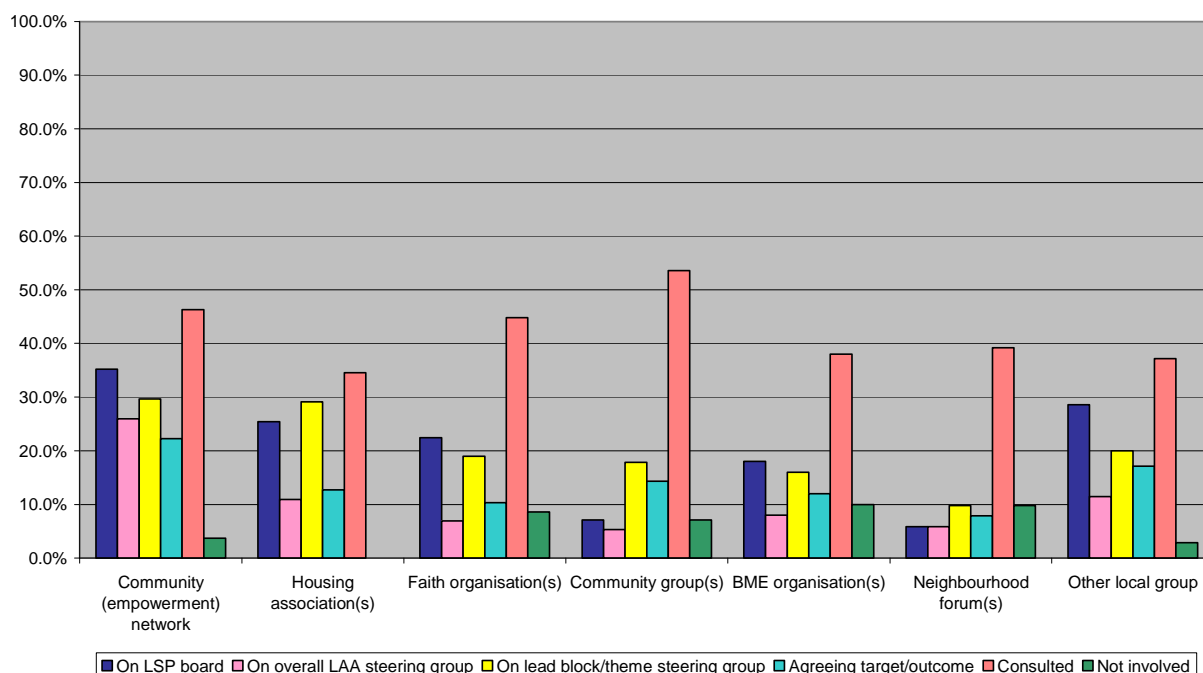
⁶ *Voluntary Sector Involvement in the Development of Local Area Agreements in London*, LVSC, Rocket Science London (2006) – pp3

Respondents identified a number of other barriers to third sector engagement.

The LAA was generally viewed as a rather technocratic exercise. As one respondent put it, an “*unwieldy technical process*”, that was “*far too complicated for people who are not directly involved*”, containing, according to another “*too much jargon*”; none of which would appeal to local TSOs, let alone the public. Yet the participation of TSOs not directly involved in the LSP is central to the success of LAAs. Third sector bodies such as LIOs can play an important role in helping LSPs to make information more accessible to the wider third sector, so that they in turn can help secure the engagement of local communities.

4.4 We were also interested in the types of TSOs involved in the LAA and how. Figure 6 shows how a number of specific types of TSO were involved and figure 7 indicates the most common forms of involvement. Perhaps unsurprisingly the most frequent involvement was through consultation.

Figure 6: Third sector engagement

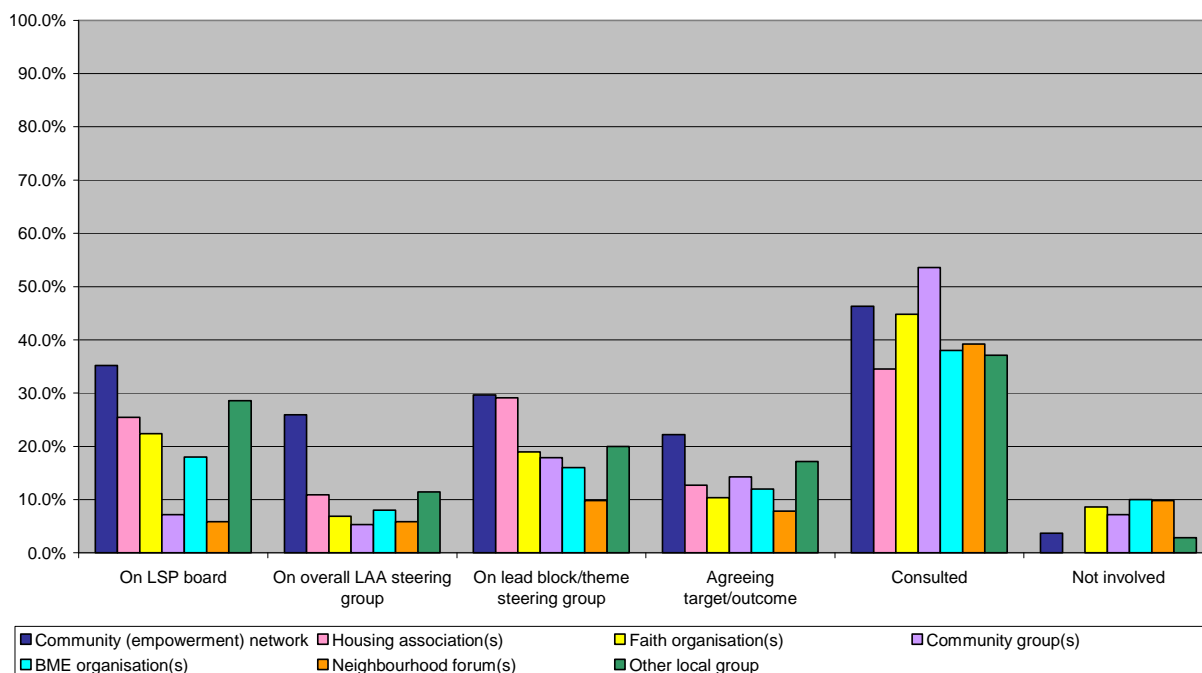


Community networks⁷ were involved most consistently across the spectrum, with only two areas reporting no community network involvement whatsoever. They were more likely to be involved on the LSP, the LAA steering group, on theme groups and in agreeing targets and outcomes than any other type of organisation apart from LIOs.

⁷ Many of which were Community Empowerment Networks previously supported through the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund

Housing associations were the next most likely to be involved either at the strategic level or on a theme group. Indeed, all areas reported some housing associations involvement.

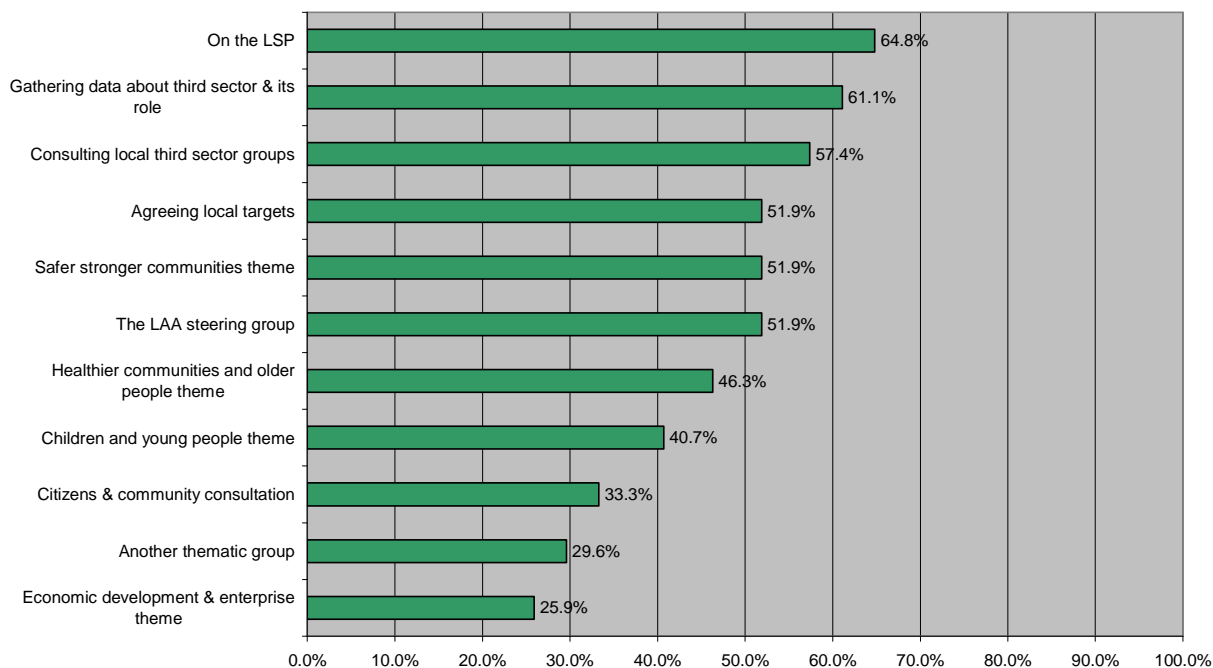
Figure 7: How is wider third sector involved?



- 4.5 A number of other organisation types were identified by respondents: older people’s groups; networks of community centres; various type of sector forums; sub-regional consortia; carers’ groups; lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender organisations; and children and young people’s groups. A number also mentioned that the sector’s participation in LSPs and other partnership bodies was often conducted through formally elected representatives.
- 4.6 One of the ambitions for LAAs was to improve the level of community and third sector participation in the debate about the local area’s priorities and to do so at a much earlier stage in order to inform decision-makers before decisions have been made. Yet the survey shows consultation to be the most common form of involvement for local TSOs, which as one respondent put it often “*feels very much like consultation once decisions have been made*”. There was a view that there needed to be “*a cultural change to ensure involvement*” that goes beyond the most basic consultation and seeks to generate a more participative approach to local democracy.
- 4.7 We asked how the respondent’s own organisation was involved in the LAA. Most were on the LSP and many were also helping the LSP to gather data about the sector, its role and the work of local organisations in order to set a baseline against which future activity could be compared. A significant proportion of respondents were engaged in consulting

the wider third sector in some way, although considerably less were involved in community consultation.

Figure 8: Third sector participation



4.8 The Duty to Involve⁸ will make the participation of a wide range of local TSOs in the LAA even more important for LSPs than it is now. It will certainly require a significant shift away from simply consulting towards a much more participative approach. Some areas are already considering how they might secure the wider engagement of the third sector; in one area third sector representatives to the LSP and associated partnership bodies are elected from sector forums and supported by policy staff from the LIO. Elsewhere the prospects for wider third sector participation appear to be improving as the result of a range of initiatives, for example:

- surveys to gauge the sector's views about engagement;
- reviews of third sector representation;
- support for sector forums and assemblies;
- development of empowerment strategies delivered by the sector;
- review of LSP governance arrangements to accommodate greater third sector involvement.

⁸ All local authorities now have a duty to inform, consult and involve the people they serve. See Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities Statutory Guidance, CLG 2008, London

- 4.9 A constant refrain from respondents was that lack of time was an impediment to effective participation: with *“too much happening too quickly”* and not enough people in post to support the sector’s engagement in the LAA; making it difficult to *“feed views to the CVS in advance of planning meetings”*; and stretching capacity in the sector, leading to a *“lack of liaison between specialist and generalist.... third sector representatives”*.
- 4.10 The survey highlighted some serious questions of credibility, with some suggestion that the sector’s involvement has been little more than window dressing. One third sector LSP representative spoke of *“a conference with some third sector involvement and a talk delivered about LAA at the third sector partnership”*, warm words that did not result in actions, as *“many decisions were made externally to the LSP”*. The point is well made by another who considered the council’s *“support strong in principle but follow through....patchy”*. Another complained that the new LAA had resulted in a *“move to a more local authority controlled system”* which had left a feeling that *“much ground has been lost”*, nevertheless *“there is a better understanding of the need to involve”* the third sector, which holds out the prospect of improved engagement in the future. Another reported that *“the LAA process was highly internalised”*, with the third sector *“effectively excluded”* from any debate on which indicators should be selected.
- 4.11 Partnerships were often founded upon *“personal relationships and trust”* and had become highly dependent on individuals. This can lead to an over reliance on those individuals and limits the range of voices that might shape local decisions. Similarly, another response talked of *“battling to get public bodies to understand how to engage the VCS”*, something which could *“be very hit and miss”* and depended to a large extent upon *“which department and which person in it you are talking to”*.

5 LAA impact on commissioning, service delivery and funding

5.1 In 2008 the Government issued statutory guidance on the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, which stated that:

“Local authorities should recognise and embrace diversity in the way services are provided, with the focus on desired outcomes and not on whether the service is delivered by the public, private or the third sectors. The range of delivery mechanisms include:

- *joint working with other statutory bodies*
- *partnerships or grants with the local business and third sector*
- *co-production with service users and communities of interest and place*
- *developing and shaping local markets*
- *contracting with providers in the public, private and third sectors*
- *securing services through service level agreements with an in-house provider”⁹*

This, alongside the commitment to supporting three-year funding (see section 1.1) and the general acceptance of the principle of full cost recovery created grounds for optimism that a new settlement was in place for third sector organisations. It suggested that LAAs might institute a change in the approach of public bodies to third sector involvement in the commissioning and delivery of public services and lead to a more sustainable approach to the sector’s funding.

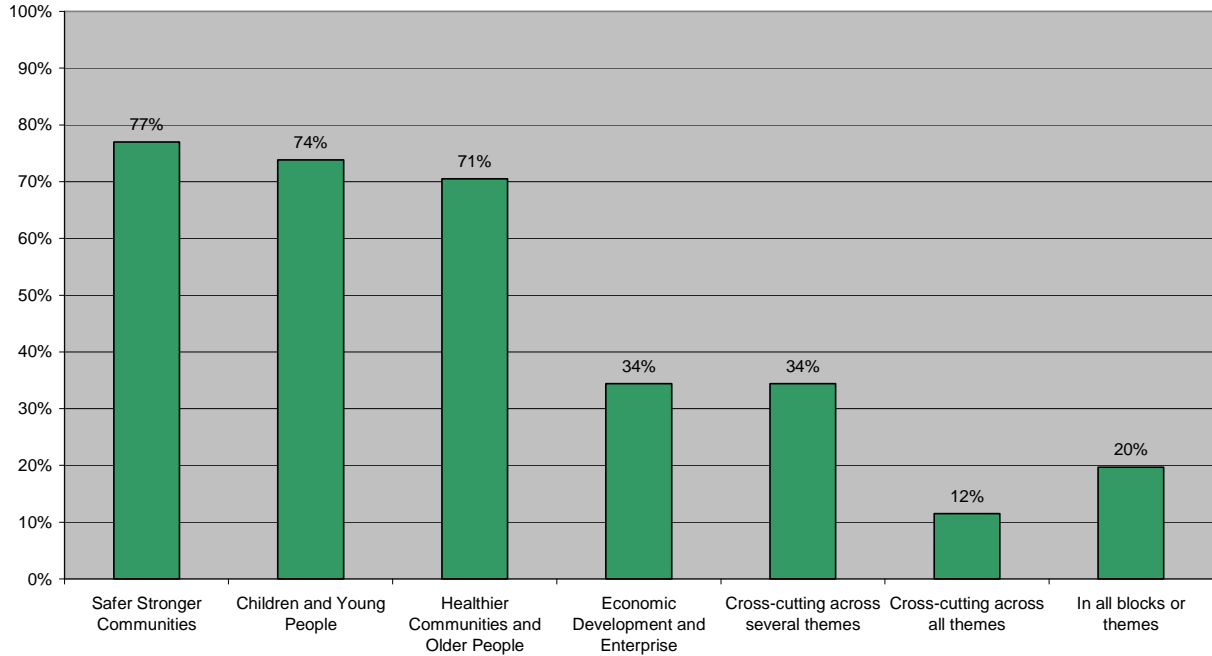
5.2 The survey shows that in previous LAA rounds the third sector was delivering services in just under three-quarters of localities in at least one of the safer and stronger communities, children and young people and healthier communities and older people themes (see figure 9). The Government has identified one of the sector’s strengths as having *“the personalised approach and public trust required to build services around the needs of users”¹⁰* in other words, services that cut-across the boundaries of traditional public provision.

5.3 The survey indicates that the third sector was only delivering in all themes in around one in five areas and that the proportion of cross-cutting provision was limited. Whilst this represents progress, it suggests that past LAA rounds had only limited success in harnessing the sector’s potential to break down the operational silos in which services often operate. However, it may be too soon to judge how approaches to service delivery may change as a result of LAAs and the contrast between past experience and future prospects offers some cause for optimism.

⁹ Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities: Statutory Guidance (Department for Communities and Local Government, London 2008) p48

¹⁰ *Partnership in Public Services: An action plan for third sector involvement.* (Cabinet Office, London 2006) p9

Figure 9: Third sector service delivery in previous LAAs



5.4 The survey indicates that LAAs have not had a major impact on the number of opportunities for TSOs to bid for new contracts, although a significant number of respondents believe that there had been progress. However it is not clear whether any change is directly attributable to the LAA or to other changes in public policy. An increased number of respondents thought that there would be more contract opportunities for the third sector in the future. This may well reflect the considerable attention being given to the third sector's role in public service delivery rather than a direct consequence of LAAs, nevertheless the process of developing the LAA could well create the opportunity for fresh ideas and be the catalyst for change.

Figure 10a: LAA impact on commissioning, service delivery and funding

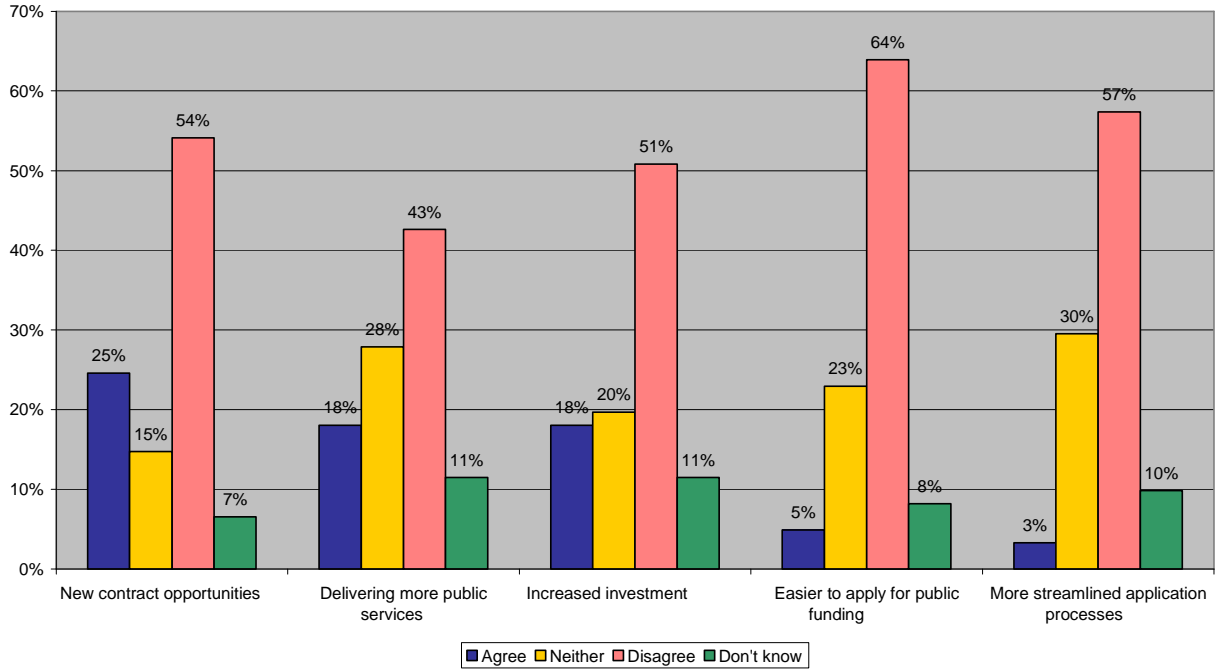
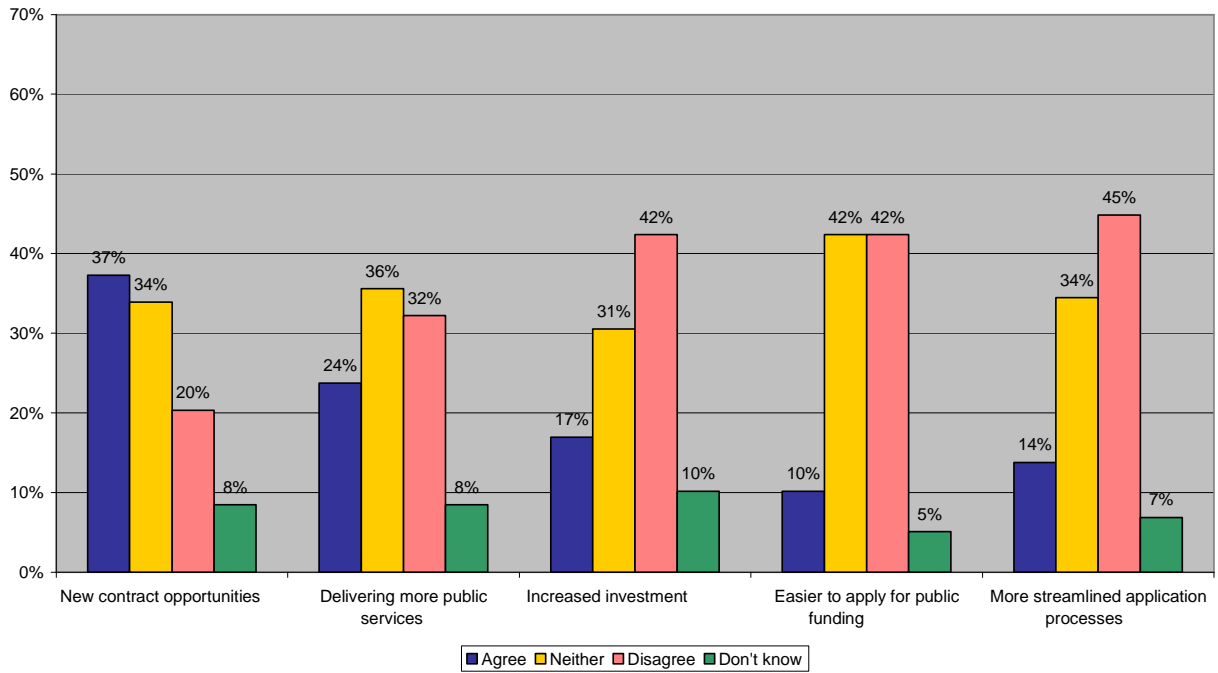


Figure 10b: LAA prospects for commissioning, service delivery and funding



- 5.5 Most respondents had seen no increase in the volume of services being delivered by TSOs; whether under grant or contract. There was, however, some optimism tempered by increased uncertainty about future prospects. Respondents thought that LAAs would create more contract opportunities, few of which, they believed, would be awarded to local third sector organisations.
- 5.6 This may well reflect a growing concern about the future of grant funding. Indeed, there was some evidence that grants were being replaced by contracts – in one area there had been “a net loss of £2 million of funding to the sector - 175k lost on advice services alone” with “little or no involvement in the design” of services. One respondent said that “small grant funding has now dried up” as a result of the LAA and another thought it would become “harder for smaller organisations to access grant aid” with the move “from grants to contracts”. Elsewhere, “the trend..... is to pull services back in house rather than develop” third sector capacity to deliver and another had seen “huge losses of funding”. The removal of the Area Based Grant (ABG) ring-fence had also led to funding difficulties, with no “guaranteed ABG funding beyond” the current year “despite the LAA commitments”.
- 5.7 Very few respondents considered that the LAA had made it easier to apply for public funding. Indeed, a significant majority believed that access to funding had definitely not improved and saw little prospect of improvement.
- 5.8 One of the ambitions for LAAs was to “reduce red-tape and improve value for money”¹¹, which one might hope would result in more proportionate monitoring and reporting for TSOs. There was little to suggest that LAAs had led to any real improvement: a small proportion of respondents thought the LAA had helped and a few more anticipated improvements in the future.

Similarly, very few respondents agreed that LAAs had led to more streamlined application processes for public funding, whilst a large majority thought they had made little difference or may even have made matters more complicated. There were limited grounds for optimism about the future, with only a few confident that the latest LAA would lead to a more streamlined process and most remaining sceptical.

¹¹ See <http://www.communities.gov.uk/localgovernment/performanceframeworkpartnerships/localareaagreements/>

Figure 11a: LAA impact on commissioning, service delivery and funding

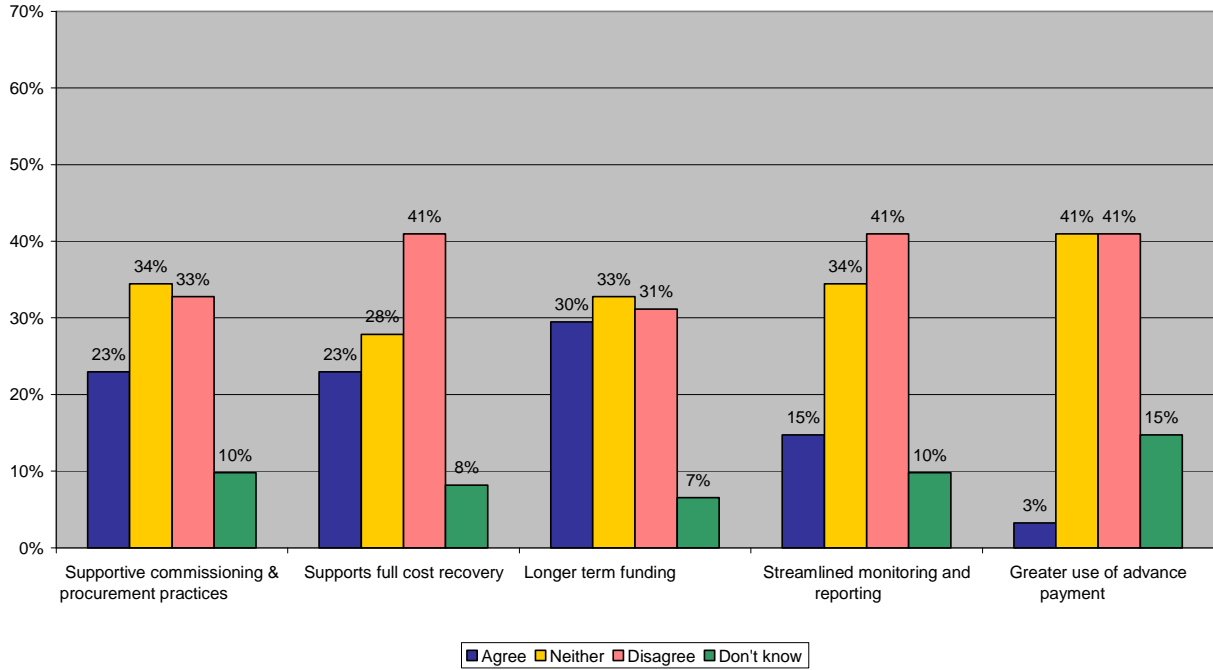
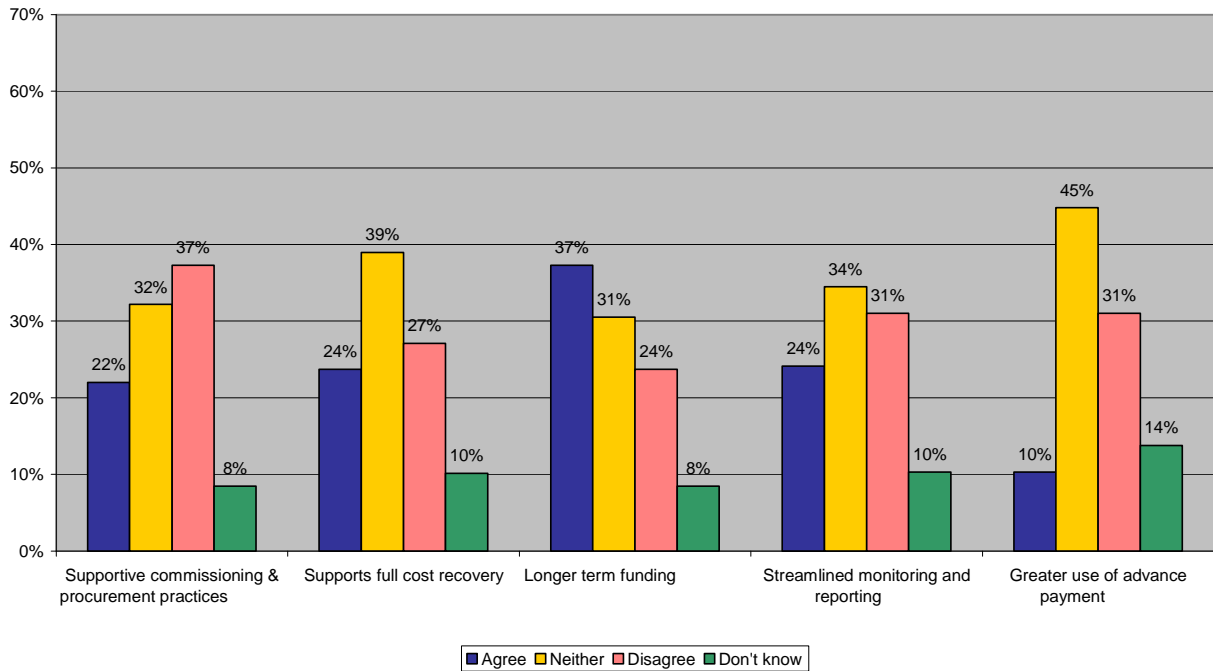


Figure 11b: LAA prospects for commissioning, service delivery and funding



- 5.9 The Government has invested considerable energy and resources in promoting third sector engagement in commissioning¹². However, most respondents believed that the LAA had made very little difference and some thought it had made matters worse. Just under a quarter agreed that the LAA had resulted in a more supportive commissioning environment and a similar proportion thought it may in the future.
- 5.10 As might be expected the picture is mixed: on the one hand “*transparency of practice around commissioning has degenerated in the past year*”; on the other there has been “*increasing involvement in development of commissioning processes*”. In another locality the LIO is being funded by the LSP to “*improve commissioning processes*” for the benefit of third sector organisations. This can be contrasted with another area where “*all resources are being channelled through the LSP with no accompanying commissioning*” arrangements to involve the sector. Whilst positive about changes in commissioning practice, one respondent was concerned that public bodies’ attempts to “*create services in their own image*” was in “*danger of losing what the sector does best*” and would certainly run counter to government expectations set out in statutory guidance (see paragraph 5.1). Another considered that commissioning arrangements lacked transparency and had resulted in “*some of the worst practice I have ever come across*”.
- 5.11 The action plan for third sector involvement in public service delivery¹³ called upon commissioners to “*consider investing in the capacity of the provider base*” of third sector organisations “*particularly those working with hard-to-reach groups*”¹⁴ in order that the sector may deliver more public services. Just over half the respondents did not agree that the LAA had led to increased investment in the sector and a similar number considered that it would not in the future. Less than one in five thought that the LAA had increased investment; a similar number expected it to bring investment in the future.

One respondent demonstrated how good commissioning practice can open up opportunities for the third sector: “*56% of the total ABG to the district is being delivered by the VCS*”, largely due because services are commissioned according to “*evidence of need and ability to deliver*”, which results in the third sector tending to “*come out more favourably as they are reaching the target neighbourhoods and clients*”.

- 5.12 Full cost recovery (FCR) is now widely accepted as good practice across government, its agencies and the bodies charged with public inspection and assessment, such as the Audit Commission and the National Audit Office. Despite this the survey offers little evidence acceptance of FCR is widespread: only around a quarter said that LAAs had supported FCR in the past or were likely to in the future.

¹² See, for example the IDeA National Programme for Third Sector Commissioning, <http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=6583598>

¹³ *ibid*

¹⁴ Office of the Third Sector op. cit. p17

5.13 Respondents were fairly evenly split on whether or not they had seen progress on longer term funding for third sector organisations. However, when asked what impact they expected LAAs to have on the length of funding in the future there was a positive shift, with over a third believing that LAAs would lead to long term funding arrangements.

5.14 Very few respondents agreed that LAAs had encouraged more use of advanced payments, upon which the Treasury offered clear guidance in 2006 that:

“Payments to third sector organisations should be made on the basis of need and therefore can and should, where appropriate and necessary, be made in advance of expenditure, in order to achieve better value for money.”¹⁵

The vast majority were either unsure or believed that they had not contributed to more advanced payments and saw no reason to believe that they would in the future.

¹⁵ Improving financial relationships with the third sector: guidance to funders and purchasers. HM Treasury. London 2006

Annex A

1. How would you categorise your infrastructure organisation?	
Council for Voluntary Service	61.6%
Rural Community Council	6.8%
Development Trust	2.7%
Social Enterprise	11.0%
Specialist or Other	27.4%

2. What type of local authority area does your organisation primarily operate in?	
London & Metropolitan	33.3%
Unitary	16.7%
County	20.5%
District	29.5%

3. Was your organisation actively involved with the development of your LAA?	
Answer Options	All
Yes	55.8%
No	19.5%
Don't know	6.5%
Other	18.2%

4. Listed below is a selection of National Indicators. Please indicate those selected as local priorities.	
Answer Options	All
NI 1: %of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area.	53.2%
NI 4: % of people who believe they can influence decisions in their locality	61.3%
NI 6: Participation in regular volunteering	61.3%
NI 7: Environment for a thriving third sector	66.1%
NI 8: Adult participation in sport and active recreation	41.9%
others where local third sector contributes	29.0%

5. Thinking back to previous rounds of LAAs, consider the effect on funding, and funding processes, for the local third sector. Please indicate how far you agree or disagree with the following statements:						
Answer Options	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
No significant impact on funding	14.8%	31.1%	9.8%	29.5%	4.9%	9.8%
New contract opportunities	1.6%	23.0%	14.8%	36.1%	18.0%	6.6%
Delivering more public services	1.6%	16.4%	27.9%	31.1%	11.5%	11.5%
Increased investment	0.0%	18.0%	19.7%	37.7%	13.1%	11.5%
No significant effect on funding arrangements	9.8%	36.1%	13.1%	23.0%	8.2%	9.8%
Easier to apply for public funding	0.0%	4.9%	23.0%	44.3%	19.7%	8.2%
More streamlined application processes	0.0%	3.3%	29.5%	39.3%	18.0%	9.8%
Supportive Commissioning & procurement practices	0.0%	23.0%	34.4%	21.3%	11.5%	9.8%
Supports full cost recovery	3.3%	19.7%	27.9%	24.6%	16.4%	8.2%
Longer term funding	0.0%	29.5%	32.8%	19.7%	11.5%	6.6%
Streamlined monitoring and reporting	0.0%	14.8%	34.4%	27.9%	13.1%	9.8%
Greater use of advance payment	0.0%	3.3%	41.0%	26.2%	14.8%	14.8%
Change in focus of funding	5.0%	28.3%	38.3%	11.7%	6.7%	10.0%

6. Thinking back to previous rounds of LAAs. In which LAA themes were the third sector organisations delivering services?	
Answer Options	All
Safer Stronger Communities (or equivalent)	77.0%
Children and Young People (or equivalent)	73.8%
Healthier Communities and Older People (or equivalent)	70.5%
Economic Development and Enterprise (or equivalent)	34.4%
Cross-cutting (across several blocks)	34.4%
Cross-cutting (across all blocks)	11.5%
In all blocks or themes	19.7%
Other block (please specify)	6.6%

7. Are you aware of any other third sector organisations involved in developing the LAA in your area? If so, how were they involved?

Answer Options	On LSP board	On overall LAA steering group	On lead block/theme steering group	Agreeing target/outcome	Consulted	Other involvement	Not involved	Don't know
Community (empowerment) network	35.2%	25.9%	29.6%	22.2%	46.3%	7.4%	3.7%	18.5%
Housing association(s)	25.5%	10.9%	29.1%	12.7%	34.5%	5.5%	0.0%	41.8%
Faith organisation(s)	22.4%	6.9%	19.0%	10.3%	44.8%	5.2%	8.6%	29.3%
Community group(s)	7.1%	5.4%	17.9%	14.3%	53.6%	10.7%	7.1%	21.4%
BME organisation(s)	18.0%	8.0%	16.0%	12.0%	38.0%	8.0%	10.0%	32.0%
Neighbourhood forum(s)	5.9%	5.9%	9.8%	7.8%	39.2%	3.9%	9.8%	31.4%
Other local group	28.6%	11.4%	20.0%	17.1%	37.1%	2.9%	2.9%	25.7%

8. In your local area, are you involved with...?	
Answer Options	All
Citizens & community consultation	33.3%
On the LSP	64.8%
The LAA steering group	51.9%
Consulting local third sector groups	57.4%
Gathering data about third sector & its role	61.1%
Agreeing local targets	51.9%
Safer stronger communities theme	51.9%
Children and young people theme	40.7%
Healthier communities and older people theme	46.3%
Economic development & enterprise theme	25.9%
Another thematic group	29.6%
If you ticked 'Sitting on another thematic partnership' (please specify)	31.5%

9. Third sector involvement in the LAA process was supported by ...						
Answer Options	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Local infrastructure organisations (LIOs)	37.7%	42.6%	8.2%	1.6%	1.6%	8.2%
The lead Local Authority	16.7%	51.7%	10.0%	6.7%	5.0%	10.0%
The lead LSP	18.0%	34.4%	19.7%	9.8%	4.9%	13.1%
The Government Office	13.3%	25.0%	31.7%	6.7%	5.0%	18.3%
The lead Local Authority Through the LIO	11.9%	42.4%	16.9%	6.8%	5.1%	16.9%

10. Third sector involvement in the development of the LAA has resulted in:						
Answer Options	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable
Outcomes reflect local need	6.9%	44.8%	37.9%	6.9%	1.7%	1.7%
The services the local third sector can offer are reflected	0.0%	21.1%	43.9%	22.8%	10.5%	1.8%
Good for the local third sector	1.7%	34.5%	32.8%	20.7%	8.6%	1.7%
Relationships between the local third sector and local funders have improved as a result	0.0%	22.4%	48.3%	15.5%	12.1%	1.7%
Local third sector role in service delivery was actively considered	1.7%	27.6%	31.0%	27.6%	10.3%	1.7%
Ways to improve funding processes for the third sector (longer term funding, full cost recovery, less bureaucracy) were considered	0.0%	12.1%	36.2%	29.3%	20.7%	1.7%
The third sector's work with the most excluded communities has been enhanced	1.7%	10.3%	36.2%	32.8%	17.2%	1.7%
The third sector is better networked as a result	1.8%	31.6%	35.1%	22.8%	7.0%	1.8%

11. Consider the effect the LAA will have on future funding, and funding processes, for the local third sector. How confident are you that:						
Answer Options	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
It will have no significant effect on funding	8.5%	25.4%	27.1%	23.7%	10.2%	5.1%
It will create new opportunities to bid for service delivery contracts	0.0%	37.3%	33.9%	13.6%	6.8%	8.5%
The local third sector will be delivering more public services as a result	3.4%	20.3%	35.6%	22.0%	10.2%	8.5%
It will increase financial investment	0.0%	16.9%	30.5%	33.9%	8.5%	10.2%
It will have no significant effect on the funding processes	6.8%	23.7%	32.2%	27.1%	5.1%	5.1%
It will make it easier to apply for public funding	0.0%	10.2%	42.4%	28.8%	13.6%	5.1%
Public funding will have more streamlined application processes	0.0%	13.8%	34.5%	31.0%	13.8%	6.9%
Public commissioning or procurement practices will reflect the sector's ability to provide services	0.0%	22.0%	32.2%	18.6%	18.6%	8.5%
There is an achievement of, or a move towards, full cost recovery	0.0%	23.7%	39.0%	10.2%	16.9%	10.2%
Longer term funding rather than one year contracts or grants will become the norm	1.7%	35.6%	30.5%	16.9%	6.8%	8.5%
Public bodies will use more streamlined monitoring and reporting arrangements	0.0%	24.1%	34.5%	19.0%	12.1%	10.3%
There will be greater use of advance payment for funding arrangements with public bodies	1.7%	8.6%	44.8%	20.7%	10.3%	13.8%

12. Two-tier areas. How far do you agree or disagree with the following statements?						
Answer Options - County	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Third sector involvement in the LAA development process was supported by your district Local Authority (lower tier) or LSP	10.00%	30.00%	30.00%	15.00%	5.00%	10.00%
Third sector involvement in the LAA development process was supported by your County Council (Upper Tier) or LSP	20.00%	45.00%	20.00%	10.00%	0.00%	5.00%
LIO work (for Third sector involvement in the LAA development process) was supported by your district Local Authority	10.00%	35.00%	20.00%	20.00%	10.00%	5.00%
Answer Options – District	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Third sector involvement in the LAA development process was supported by your district Local Authority (lower tier) or LSP	16.67%	25.00%	25.00%	16.67%	4.17%	12.50%
Third sector involvement in the LAA development process was supported by your County Council (Upper Tier) or LSP	16.67%	54.17%	12.50%	8.33%	0.00%	8.33%
LIO work (for Third sector involvement in the LAA development process) was supported by your district Local Authority	12.50%	33.33%	12.50%	25.00%	8.33%	8.33%

13. What role has your organisation played in implementing the LAA?	
Answer Options	All
Defining services	64.5%
Delivering services	77.8%
Brokering service delivery partnerships	60.0%
Scrutiny role	68.4%
Allocating resources	50.0%
Other	100.0%

14. Do you consider the LAA process has, on balance, been positive or negative for the local third sector?	Positive	Negative
All	62.5%	37.5%
LIOs	67.9%	32.1%
Other TSOs	58.8%	41.2%