

Public Sector Jargon Buster

Accountable Body

An organisation that is held accountable for the spending of a significant amount of public funds. Most local regeneration funds require an organisation to act as an accountable body. This is usually the local authority.

Active Community Unit (ACU)

Government unit in the Home Office that is involved in supporting the voluntary and community sector.

Baseline

A measurement that is taken at the start of an initiative, usually in statistical terms, e.g. number of people in a local area who are unemployed. The initiative can then be measured as to how effective it has been at impacting the baseline measure.

Benchmarking

A method used by organisations for comparing themselves (in terms of efficiency, effectiveness etc) to other organisations.

Best Value

A central government policy that seeks to get local authorities to continuously improve their performance.

Big Lottery Fund

The name of the new lottery money distributor. It is the result of merging the Community Fund and the New Opportunities Fund.

Capacity

All the resources available to an organisation, including people, money, equipment, expertise and information.

Capacity Building

Activities that aim to increase the capacity of voluntary and community organisations. It can include training, advice, specialist expertise.

Change Up

A new policy and funding initiative by the ACU designed to support the infrastructure of the voluntary and community sector.

Charity Commission

The body that regulates registered charities in England and Wales.

Children's fund

A central government fund designed to support projects that undertake work with children.

Citizenship

The central government policy designed to promote people becoming good citizens – being active in their local community through volunteering etc. Citizenship education is now compulsory for young people in secondary schools.

City Academy

A government initiative designed to promote new schools being developed through partnerships between central government, a local authority and a sponsor organisation (which could be a private sector company, voluntary sector organisation or faith group).

Civil Renewal

A government initiative to increase citizen's participation in their local community and also their democratic engagement.

Civil Renewal Unit

Government Unit in the Home Office dedicated to supporting Civil Renewal initiatives.

Coalfields Regeneration

A series of funds designed to promote regeneration in former coalfields areas.

Community Chests

A fund aimed at providing small grants of up to £5000 to community groups in deprived areas.

Community Cohesion

Concern about community cohesion came out of the recent unrest in some of the Northern Cities such as Oldham. The aim of various community cohesion initiatives are to appreciate and celebrate diversity between people in local communities, promote understanding and reduce hostilities.

Community Development

The process of undertaking long-term work in a local community that leads to greater levels of sustainability.

Community Empowerment Fund (CEF)

A fund to help community and voluntary sector groups get involved in decisions about how public services are delivered in their area.

Community Empowerment Network (CEN)

A network of voluntary and community sector groups in each of the NRU's 88 most deprived areas. This network should provide a channel through which the voluntary and community sector can feed into the Local Strategic Partnership.

Community Fund

A former lottery distributor fund that has now been merged into the Big Lottery Fund.

Community Interest Company (CIC)

A new company structure that is currently being proposed by the government, in which the company's assets would be protected in the same way as with a charity, but without the red-tape of charity registration.

Community Learning Chest (CLC)

A fund aimed at providing small grants of up to £5000 to assist individuals or groups in accessing learning in order to be involved in regeneration activities. (Only available in the NRU's 88 most deprived areas)

Community Network

Same as Community Empowerment Network (CEN) but not in one of the 88 most deprived areas.

Community Strategy

The plan that every local authority must draw up for improving the quality of life for local people. These plans must be the result of consultation with local residents, businesses and voluntary groups (including faith groups).

Compact

An agreement between a public sector body and the voluntary sector. Following the development of a national compact, local authorities, health authorities and other public sector agencies are developing local compacts stating how they will work in partnership with voluntary sector groups. The national compact that looks specifically at partnership with Black and Ethnic Minority Groups includes an Appendix on Faith Groups.

Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR)

Treasury review of public sector spending across all Whitehall departments to plan expenditure over the next three years.

Connexions

Government Agency set up to offer young people information and guidance on learning and careers.

Core Costs

An organisation's central costs including administration, rent and some staff salaries.

Core Funding

Funding needed to meet Core Costs.

Council for Voluntary Service (CVS)

Local umbrella body for voluntary organisations, including faith groups.

Education Action Zones (EAZ)

Local clusters of schools in deprived areas receiving special Government grants to work together to raise and maintain education standards.

Empowerment

The process of enabling people to take responsibility for themselves and helping them to make decisions about their lives.

English Heritage

Government agency that promotes and conserves England's historic environment. Has funded the restoration and refurbishment of many churches and other religious buildings.

English Partnerships

The government's land and regeneration agency, it was set up to encourage the development of derelict land.

Enterprise Zones

Designated zones in deprived areas where businesses can get certain exemptions to encourage them to locate themselves there.

European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

European funds that are targeted at specific disadvantaged regions.

European Social Fund (ESF)

European fund that is designed to support programmes aimed at promoting enterprise and employability, as a way of reducing social exclusion.

Evaluation

An assessment of a project or programme. This may include how money has been spent, how effective the programme has been at achieving its aims and what lessons need to be learned for the future.

Faith Communities Unit (FCU)

The Home Office Unit tasked with providing a point of contact between government and Britain's faith communities.

Faith Schools

The designation given to schools with a religious ethos.

Floor Targets

Minimum standards set by the government for improvements in deprived areas, covering five areas: unemployment, crime, education, health and the environment.

Full Cost Recovery

The process by which voluntary groups delivering public services are expected to be able to cover all their costs (including a proportion of Core Costs).

Futurebuilders

A new £125m fund designed to assist voluntary sector groups (through a mix of grants and loans) who wish to deliver public services

Genuine Occupational Requirement (GOR)

The justification that must be provided by religious organisations who wish to designate a specific post as being one which requires the post-holder to be drawn from the organisation's faith basis.

Government Offices in the Regions (GO)

An office of central government in each region with responsibility for applying/administering certain central government policies in the region.

Health Action Zone

Partnerships between the NHS, local authorities, community and voluntary sector groups aimed at tackling health inequalities.

Healthy Living Centre

A network of centres across the UK promoting health and healthy lifestyles in deprived areas.

Housing Association

Non profit landlords providing housing to people in housing need. Housing Associations registered with the Housing Corporation are given the official title – Registered Social Landlords (RSLs).

Inner Cities Religious Council

A forum of leading religious practitioners in faith-based work in the UK's inner-cities convened by the ODPM. It acts as a faith advisory board for several of their key policy units.

Learning and Skills Council

The local agencies responsible for adult training in England.

Local Government Association

The organisation that represents local councils in England and Wales.

Local Strategic Partnership

Initiative in every local authority to develop partnership working between public agencies, voluntary groups and business and to more effectively deliver public services.

Match Funding

The process by which certain funders will only fund a percentage of the total costs of a project (e.g. 50%) and require the remainder to be matched with income from other funders or in-kind donations.

National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)

National umbrella organisation representing the voluntary sector.

Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF)

Funding that is available in each of the governments designated 88 most deprived areas.

Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy (NRS)

The government's overall plan for regenerating disadvantaged areas.

Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (NRU)

Government unit based in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister tasked with implementing the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy.

New Deal for Communities (NDC)

An initiative designed to provide intensive financial support (£50m over 10 years) to regenerate relatively small geographic areas.

New Opportunities Fund (NOF)

A former lottery distributor fund that has now been merged into the Big Lottery Fund.

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM)

The government department responsible for the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit, Inner Cities Religious Council, Local Government and a range of regeneration initiatives

Primary Care Trust (PCT)

These are local health bodies that are responsible for providing primary and community health services.

Private Finance Initiative (PFI)

Government initiative to develop large capital projects initially financed by the private sector and then leased back to the public sector.

Procurement

The process by which public sector bodies purchase services from both private and voluntary sector organisations. Central Government is increasingly interested in local authorities and other agencies procuring services delivered by voluntary organisations (including faith groups) instead of delivering those services directly.

Prosletysm

The secular term that is sometimes used to describe the evangelistic work of religious organisations.

Public Service Delivery

Where a voluntary or private sector organisation delivers a service that is paid for by a public sector body.

Quango

Acronym for 'Quasi-Autonomous Non-Governmental Organisation'. These are part of central government but operate at arm's length from it. Examples include the Housing Corporation, Audit Commission etc.

Quick Wins

A term used by various government departments to refer to relatively cheap and easy initiatives that have a significant impact.

Regeneration

The process of improving disadvantaged or hard pressed areas.

Regional Assembly/Chamber

A regional body in each of the 8 English regions (except London) which scrutinises the work of the Regional Development Agency. In London, this is done by the Greater London Authority.

Regional Development Agencies (RDAs)

The agency within each of the 9 English regions, Scotland and Wales that promotes economic growth and regeneration.

Regional Voluntary Sector Networks (RVSNs)

Regional forums for the voluntary sector, where they can receive advice and support.

Regions

The 9 regional areas that England is divided into: South West, South East, London, West Midlands, East Midlands, East of England, North West, North East, Yorkshire and the Humber.

Ring Fencing

The process by which money within a larger fund is kept aside for a specific purpose.

Single Pot

The regeneration funds that have now been placed into a single pot under the direction of Regional Development Agencies.

Single Regeneration Budget

A regeneration fund which has now been merged into the Single Pot that provided specific communities with multi-year regeneration funds.

Small Business Service

The government agency responsible for support small and medium enterprises in the UK. It is part of the Department for Trade and Industry and oversees the network of Business Links across the UK.

Social Capital

A concept that refers to relationships of trust between people from within one particular social group and between people from different social groups in a particular area.

Social Enterprise Unit (SEnU)

The Government Unit (now part of the Small Business Service) that supports social enterprise

Social Entrepreneurs

Individuals who are instrumental in setting up or running social enterprises

Social Exclusion

The term used to describe people or areas that suffer from multiple disadvantage, e.g. in areas of unemployment, high crime, low incomes and poor housing.

Social Exclusion Unit (SEU)

The government unit with the ODPM set up to tackle social exclusion.

Social Regeneration

The term that differentiates social aspects of regeneration such as from economic dimensions of regeneration.

Stakeholders

People who have an interest in an organisation or process including users, customers, partners, employees, residents, owners, government and regulators.

Statutory Authority/Agency

An organisation that is set up by law (statute) and is publicly funded, e.g. local authorities and health authorities.

Statutory Services

Services that a public sector body is required by law to deliver/provide.

Sure Start

An initiative that aims to improve children's life opportunities by funding projects that work with parents and parents-to-be in deprived areas.

Sustainability

The process whereby an organisation moves from short term funding for their activities to more dependable funding.

Sustainable Communities Plan

The ODPM's plan for developing urban areas in the UK that people will want to live in.

Sustainable development

A process of development that allows economic growth without damaging the environment or natural resources.

Voluntary and Community Infrastructure

The support structures in place at a local, regional and national level for voluntary and community organisations. This support is often provided by umbrella groups.

Voluntary and Community Sector

The name used to describe organisations that are neither public or private sector. Voluntary organisations are typically larger and unlike community organisations may not be rooted in one individual local community.

White Paper

Statement of policy issued by government. White papers often form the basis of new legislation, and are usually preceded by a consultative green paper.

Youth Service

Youth work/youth centres etc run by statutory agencies such as the local authority.