An exploration into the effectiveness of service collaboration between two Irish charities providing homeless support services

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to explore the effectiveness of service collaboration between two Irish charities providing homeless support services. The objectives of this study were to explore the views of the members within the joint working group, on the effectiveness of the collaboration and their decision-making process, to examine the views of both workforces on the overall impact of the collaboration, to examine the views of the joint CEO of both organisations, on the factors that will determine the collaboration`s effectiveness, to identify the cost-sharing benefits of collaboration between the two charities, to investigate the extent to which the collaboration can facilitate a shared service and to examine the extent to which the collaboration can enhance the overall service provided to service users. A triangulation method of research was applied, incorporating both questionnaires and interviews as a means of gathering data. Questionnaires were distributed to all staff members of both organisations, while interviews were conducted with four members of the joint working group and the joint CEO also. The reason for examining the area of charity collaboration was due to the researcher's personal and professional interest in the progress of the collaboration between Company X and Company Y. The findings from this research study show that the collaboration has been very effective to date, but if the partnership is to continue to grow and develop into the future, then a number of strategic actions need to be taken.

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Abbreviations

ARACY	Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CFC	Communities for Children
CGA	Carroll Goldstone Associates
CYPSP	Children and Young Peoples Strategic Partnership
FSI	Foundation for Social Improvement
FSO	Family Service Organisation
IVAR	Institute for Voluntary Action Research
LVAWGC	London Violence Against Women and Girls Consortium
NCVO	National Council for Voluntary Organisations
NCOPF	National Council for One Parent Families
NIVCA	Northern Ireland Community and Voluntary Association
NNC	National Network for Collaboration
SATO	Substance Abuse Treatment Organisation

Introduction

According to The Wheel (2014), Ireland's non-profit sector accounted for at least 11,700 community and voluntary organisations that employed over 100,000 staff and over 560,000 volunteers. The combined turnover of these organisations in 2014 was €5.75bn, which accounted for over 3.25% of national income.

Despite these vast figures, Irish charities were facing major challenges. Of the community and voluntary organisations working within the sector, just over half of their income comes from statutory funding. The Wheel (2014) reported that since the 2008 economic downturn, almost 60% of these organisations had experienced a cut to their funding, which has created a survival culture within the sector and organisations have had to adapt quickly. This change to the sector meant that organisations were forced to introduce pay cuts, reduce staff numbers and withdraw some of their most crucial services. The sector had reached a crossroads and major decisions were required.

Following sector-wide cuts to statutory funding, and significant decreases in fundraising income, The Wheel (2012) distributed a survey to 4,500 community and voluntary organisations in order to determine what the key challenges were for the sector. The findings showed that "an uncertain future/changing external environment" (42.7%), "overly dependent on grant income" (32%) and "insufficient staff capacity/time" (27.7%), were the key strategic challenges facing organisations within the sector.

Other major changes to the sector included the establishment of the Charities Regulatory Authority in 2014, the Governance Code, the Lobbying Regulator and a new Statement of Recommended Practice for charities, with the aim being to bring greater accountability, transparency and openness to the sector (The Wheel, 2012). This drive for greater accountability and transparency caused the sector to become more business-like, with funders looking for community and voluntary organisations to justify their funding by showing measurable outcomes and providing evidence of value for money. Given the limited funding that was available to the sector, the concept of tendering for service contracts also increased.

While the introduction of stronger methods of accountability to the sector was welcomed, these measures placed further strain on organisations that were already struggling due to a lack of available resources. New ideas were required in order to reignite the sector and two organisations decided to be proactive, instead of reactive.

Company X and Company Y are two Irish community and voluntary organisations that provide homeless supports services on a regional and national basis. Over the last number of years both organisations have enjoyed a strong working relationship and both are strong advocates of responding to homelessness using a Housing-First approach. The Housing-First model focuses on sourcing immediate accommodation for a service user and once they have a base where they feel comfortable and safe, then further supports can be provided. Like many other non-profit organisations, both Company X and Company Y faced great strategic challenges.

Early in 2016, Company X completed a strategic review that examined all areas of the organisation, including services, fundraising, HR and administration. Many positives were taken from the review, but the overriding question was the future financial sustainability of the organisation. It was clear that if Company X wanted to enhance their services and provide support to more people, then they needed to examine the possibility of working alongside another organisation. Given their similar ethos and values, as well as their passion for the Housing-First model of care, Company X and Company Y seemed like ideal partners. Therefore, in April 2016, representatives of both boards of directors met to discuss the possibility of both organisations working together.

A joint working group, consisting of board members from both organisations, was formed and this group met regularly throughout the summer of 2016, reporting back to their respective boards after each meeting. It was clear from the outset that there were a number of areas where potential collaboration could take place, including back office functions, joint training and joint service development. The sharing of staff was not initially discussed in the joint working group, but when the CEO of Company Y resigned in the summer of 2016, an opportunity arose. The board of Company Y acted quickly and made an official offer to the CEO of Company X to become the joint CEO of both organisations. After much discussion between both boards of directors, Company X and Company Y officially entered into a collaboration agreement in September 2016, with both agreeing to a shared CEO.

As a staff member of Company X, the researcher has both a personal and professional interest in the progress of this collaboration. The non-profit sector in Ireland has changed dramatically over the last number of years and the future of the sector is unclear. The researcher believes that given the large number of organisations within the sector, the reductions in statutory funding and the growth of regulatory bodies, many organisations will be forced to consider

their options. Company X and Company Y opted to collaborate by sharing their CEO and this strategic choice has formed the basis of this study, with the aim being to explore the effectiveness of service collaboration between two Irish charities providing homeless support services.

Following the proposed aim, the researcher set the following six objectives prior to the commencement of the research.

1. To explore the views of the members within the joint working group, on the effectiveness of the collaboration and their decision-making process.
2. To examine the views of both workforces on the overall impact of the collaboration.
3. To examine the views of the joint CEO of both organisations, on the factors that will determine the collaboration`s effectiveness.
4. To identify the cost-sharing benefits of collaboration between the two charities.
5. To investigate the extent to which the collaboration can facilitate a shared service.
6. To examine the extent to which the collaboration can enhance the overall service provided to service users.

In order to carry out this research, the study was divided into several chapters, with this introductory section forming chapter one.

In chapter two, previous literature on collaboration was examined, with specific sections being allocated to the decision-making process of board members, the impact of collaboration on staff, the necessary skills for managing a collaboration, the cost-sharing benefits of collaboration, the facilitation of a shared service and the potential enhancement of services and supports. Due to a lack of local and regional literature, national and international sources of literature were reviewed.

Chapter three focused on the methodology that was required to conduct this research. In order to examine the six objectives of this study, a triangulation method of research was selected, which involved both quantitative and qualitative tools. The quantitative tool utilised was a questionnaire and this was used to examine objectives two and five respectively. Seventy questionnaires were distributed to staff members working in both Company X and Company Y, with a response rate of 51% achieved. The qualitative tool utilised was an interview and these were conducted with four members of the joint working group. These interviews

examined objectives one, four, five and six respectively. An interview was also conducted with the joint CEO and this examined objectives three, four, five and six respectively. Ethical considerations were taken into account, with the limitations of the research also highlighted.

In chapter four, the key findings from the staff questionnaire and the interviews conducted with both the joint working group and the joint CEO were presented. In order to analyse the data generated by the quantitative research method (i.e. the questionnaire), statistical analysis was used to examine objectives two and five respectively. These were then illustrated by graphs that were generated by the excel computer application. In order to analyse the data generated by the qualitative research method (i.e. the interviews), a thematic approach was used to examine objectives one, three, four, five and six respectively. These were then illustrated through the use of quotes.

Chapter five contains an in-depth discussion on the findings of this research, while also comparing and contrasting these findings to research that was reviewed in chapter two of the study. The sections of chapter five are allocated based on the objectives of the research. The chapter then concludes with an evaluation of the triangulation method of research.

Following the discussion, chapter six concludes the study, while also offering a number of recommendations based on the objectives that were examined during this study. These include recommendations for the boards of directors, staff members and the joint CEO, as well as recommendations on cost-sharing developments, the sharing of services and service enhancement.

The aim of this study was to explore the effectiveness of service collaboration between two Irish charities providing homeless support services. At the time of writing, the collaboration had only been in existence for seven months and was still in the development stage. Therefore, it was difficult to prove if the collaboration had in fact been effective or ineffective. However, the results of this study have provided proof of how the collaboration has been managed to date and the researcher has recommended actions for the future development of the collaboration.

2.1 Literature Review - Introduction

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO, 2006), defines collaboration as a partnership agreement between organisations that covers a range of purposes for a fixed period or as a permanent arrangement. Majumdar (2006, p.186-189) defines collaboration as a partnership to improve the quality, quantity, accessibility, and cost effectiveness of services, and a method to reduce overlaps in the provision of services. The Institute for Voluntary Action Research (IVAR, 2012) believes that in order to work, any formal type of collaborative partnership between charities needs to be treated with a degree of caution, planned carefully and thought through patiently.

In order to examine the effectiveness of service collaboration, it is important to examine the input of the key stakeholders. The following review of literature examines collaboration within the community and voluntary sector. The report first considers the board of directors decision-making process regarding collaboration, before moving on to how the collaboration has an impact on staff members. The report then examines the managerial skills and abilities required by the CEO in order to lead the partnership. This is followed by a review of the reasons for collaboration, with this report focusing on cost-sharing, the prospect of shared services and the enhancement of supports provided to the service user.

2.2 Decision-Making Process of the Joint Working Group

The Wheel is a leading support network for the community and voluntary sector in Ireland. In many ways, they predicted the call for greater collaboration among Irish charities. In their report on the Irish Community and Voluntary Sector (2012), the top five strategic challenges for charities were found to be "reduced funding from the public sector" (57%), "sustainability of the organisation over the next twelve months" (32%), "increased demand on services" (24%), "reduced income from private/corporate donors" (20%) and "not having sufficient resources to meet the needs of current beneficiaries" (18%).

These factors paved the way for partnerships to form. However, the prospect of greater collaboration within the non-profit sector identified a number of key issues for boards of directors. The Big Lottery Fund (2011) published a study that examined collaboration and partnership working within charities throughout the UK and found that the leadership and governance of some organisations was seen as a concern, as some felt their directors were unlikely to engage in partnerships, while some felt their directors would see collaboration as a

major risk due to the managerial and financial challenges involved. Stanford Graduate School of Business (2014) surveyed 924 directors of non-profit organisations on the overall performance of their organisations and the findings showed that 69% of organisations had faced one or more serious governance-related issues in the past 10 years, 40% said their organisation was unable to meet its fundraising target and 29% explained that their organisation had experienced serious financial difficulty.

The Building Movement Project (2015) conducted a report entitled "Coordinating Collaboration to End Homelessness". This was a mid-point learning assessment of a homelessness project they were supporting in Connecticut, USA, called the "Reaching Home and Opening Doors Campaign". In terms of informing key stakeholder groups about the collaborative work being undertaken, respondents felt that government agencies (79%) and housing advocates (77%) were well engaged by directors, but people who had experienced homelessness (29%) were not engaged effectively.

Before the directors of non-profit organisations begin looking for potential partners and decide on specific areas of collaboration, they must ensure that their interests are aligned, their vision for the organisation is clear and a solid strategic plan is in place (Gray, 2000, p.243-260). The Charity Commission (2010, p.11-37) carried out research to examine the major issues that small charities were facing in relation to collaboration and found that a lack of strategic planning (29%) was the main reason given as to why collaborations had not been a success. Therefore, it is essential that directors understand the complexities of collaborating and plan accordingly.

Takahashi and Smutney (2002, p.132-135) argue that board members must put the following procedures in place to ensure that any collaborative venture has a strong governance policy:

- Defined responsibilities and clarity about the expectation of objectives.
- Joint decision-making between all stakeholders within the collaboration.
- Effective strategies when it comes to dealing with conflict.
- Development of policy guidelines and a clear affiliation agreement.

When developing terms of reference for a collaboration, Mattessich et al (1992, p.40-44) argue that board members must be flexible, adaptable and be willing to compromise, while

Le Ber and Branzei (2009, p.140-141) believe that cooperation is the key to collaborative success. Warburton et al (2008, p.470-482) state that any imbalance of power within the collaboration must be dealt with straight away, as not addressing it could lead to future conflict. Wilcox (2009, p.79-81) believes that board members must have a shared and clear vision in order for the collaboration to succeed. Having this collective vision gives more credibility to the partnership (Hardy et al, 2005, p.58-77) and identifies a goal which neither of the organisations could achieve on their own (Cairns et al, 2005, p.878-879).

2.2.1 Ensuring an Effective Collaboration: The Decisive Actions

NCVO (2006) recommends that a document outlining the specific terms of reference for a partnership must be put in place, with a group also formed to monitor the progress of the arrangement. Wernet and Jones (1992, p.367-380) report how the boards of the Family Service Organisation (FSO) and the Substance Abuse Treatment Organisation (SATO) began negotiations over a joint merger, but as discussions developed it became clear that what was being offered was actually an acquisition, as opposed to a merger. Tapper et al (1997, p.176-188) agree that clear roles and responsibilities need to be in place in order to give the collaborative process a structure, while Shaw (2003, p.107-120) argues that power must be shared equally among the members.

Kail and Abercrombie (2013) carried out a study on the impact of collaboration and conducted a focus group with a number of major UK based charities. Their recommendations for a more effective collaboration include always putting clients first, understanding the financial implications, measuring the impact and taking the culture of both organisations seriously.

In terms of developing an effective partnership, The Wheel (2012) recommends that collaborating organisations have one voice at national level, become aware of their partner's skills and experiences and tap into their partner's potential. They also outline the potential pitfalls as having unrealistic expectations, insufficient communication, not accepting another board's dynamics and not engaging all stakeholders equally.

IVAR (2012) argues that during times of organisational change, clear and consistent communication between the board and the CEO, and the CEO and staff is essential, as staff members are the stakeholders who are experiencing the collaboration in its entirety.

2.3 Collaboration and Staff

Eppel (2008, p.8-44) defines collaboration as working across boundaries in multisector relationships in order to achieve common goals. While the purpose of collaboration is for organisations to work together, its immediate impact can be difficult to measure. Geber (1987, p.28-37) argues that it can take up to a decade before two organisations methods form into one specific culture. However, Hirsh (1985, p.86-87) believes that the impact of collaboration occurs much sooner and that it immediately affects 25% - 50% of all staff in both organisations.

Putnam and Feldstein (2003, p.75-90) believe that building relationships between staff should be the first priority when organisations begin to collaborate, as these relationships will form the new culture of the organisation. Takahashi et al (2001, p.141-153) agree that organisations are better equipped to handle difficult situations when the culture is strong, and when there are strong networks and relationships among staff. According to Quinn and Cameron (2006, p.4-11), the four types of culture are clan (*working together*), adhocracy (*dynamic and innovative*), market (*results focused*) and hierarchy (*structured and controlled*).

When considering the effects of collaboration on staff, IVAR (2012) believes that the best way forward is communicating the decision to staff as soon as it has been made and allowing for a question and answer session to take place with senior management. Therefore, staff members are able to ask questions regarding their role and the idea of change will not be as intimidating. Whittle (2002) carried out research on employee behavioural patterns during the merging of two non-profit organisations, and found that staff who were not kept informed of the merging process responded in a hostile, despondent and withdrawn manner. Pritchett (1987, p.14-38) argues that a workforce with low morale could have negative long-term effects on a collaboration, including the loss of talent, competitive position and productivity. A report by Halbeck et al (2000, p84-86) found that 86% of organisations involved in a collaboration believe that they failed to communicate the reasons for collaboration effectively to their staff.

Barnes et al (2010, p.238-247) conducted a study on collaboration between Canadian Health Promotion support groups and found that the most common benefit of collaboration reported amongst staff was the increase in communication with senior management. The Foundation for Social Improvement (FSI, 2016) carried out a study on charity collaboration and found that of the 39% of charities taking part in a strategic alliance, the opportunity to share knowledge and discuss work related issues with their managers were the most common benefits reported.

Engaging with staff and providing leadership to them is also essential, as employees who are not engaged are more likely to be less committed (Blessington White, 2006). As previously mentioned, the Building Movement Project (2015, p.7-19) conducted a report entitled "*Co-ordinating Collaboration to End Homelessness*" and in terms of the campaign`s overall leadership during the collaboration, 88% of staff believed that the managers had taken on leadership in advocating for policy changes, 76% believed that they promoted collaboration among staff to work towards shared goals, 74% believed that they developed a common understanding among staff and 72% believed that they provided staff with the motivation to work towards shared goals. In terms of communicating to staff, of those actively partaking in the collaboration, 88% were being informed of the progress of the collaboration, while of those not actively partaking in the collaboration, only 32% were being informed of the progress.

Kroeger and Thuesen (1988, p.67-68) believe that the key to managing staff through a major organisational change is trying to see the change from their point of view and facilitating their social supports. According to Marks and Mirvis (1986, p.34-40), social supports are the individuals or groups that employees turn to in times of uncertainty, as they can provide the employee with advice and information that empowers them to face the issue. They argue that those employees who feel supported are less suspicious of senior management.

Selden et al (2006) found that as a collaboration developed over time, with proper communication systems put in place, frontline staff became more satisfied with their role, their benefits package and the advancement opportunities it created. However, Levinson (1970, p.139-147) argues that even though a collaboration may offer new opportunities to staff, it can still appear as a threat to their balance in the organisation. Bell (1988, p.167-168) believes that a collaboration can create imbalance in terms of work behaviour, culture and staff relationships, and feels that the CEO has a major role to play in managing the partnership at all levels.

2.4 Collaboration: The Key Ingredients for a CEO

The success of any collaboration or partnership will be determined by how well it is managed (Hirsh, 1985, p.86-87). Whether it is two CEO`s working together or one CEO overseeing the entire project, the following factors are essential when managing the initial transition and subsequent operation of a collaboration. (Charity Commission, 2003).

- Personal Relationships

- Leadership

- Culture

- Purpose and Vision

- Communication

2.4.1 Personal Relationships

Mattessich et al (1992, p.40-44) believe that personal or informal relationships built up over time are the key to collaborative effectiveness, while Austin (2000, p.78-82) states that personal relationships are what bring organisations together in the first place. According to the National Network for Collaboration (NNC, 1995), the most effective collaborations involve well connected people, groups and organisations who have built both formal and informal networks over time. Linden (2010) argues that these personal relationships will help to build the trust that will overcome hurdles such as differences in size, feelings of control and competitive egos, as these are the factors that can hinder the success of collaboration.

2.4.2 Leadership

Hosley et al (2003, p.157-168) believe that strong leadership by senior management is essential to the sustainment of any collaboration, while Linden (2010) states that having a passionate Chief Executive Officer provides the collaboration with a sense of credibility. Macharia (2016) believes that those CEO`s who are running two organisations at the same time must possess strong leadership skills, excellent organisational skills and place great value on their time. Macharia (2016) also refers to how Elon Musk, joint CEO of SpaceX and Tesla Motors, allocates Mondays and Thursdays to SpaceX, Tuesdays and Wednesdays to Telsa Motors and divides Fridays between the two, while Jack Dorsey, joint CEO of Twitter and Square, will spend his morning being the CEO of Twitter and his afternoon being CEO of Square, but can only do so because of the strong team he has created in both organisations.

2.4.3 Culture

According to Rogers et al (2006), organisational success relies on a culture that binds staff together regardless of hierarchy or geography, and one that allows staff to make the right decision without specific direction. Kotter and Heskitt (1992, p.90-91) state that a strong sense of culture is essential for an organisations overall success. In order to instil a winning culture,

the CEO must set the expectations, align the leadership team, focus the organisation on delivering its primary objectives, manage the culture by managing the drivers, communicate and celebrate. Having distributed their survey to 365 different CEO`s within Asia, Europe and North America, Rogers et al (2006, p.9) found that 68% of CEO`s believed their organisation`s culture was a competitive advantage, 65% believed they needed to change their organisation`s culture, 81% believed that an organisation that lacked a meaningful culture was doomed to mediocrity and 10% believed their organisation had yet to build a proper culture.

2.4.4 Purpose and Vision

According to Butterfoss and Goodman (1993, p.315-316), having a clear purpose and vision is the key to collaborative success. Warburton et al (2008, p.470-482) believe that this vision needs to encompass the ambitions of both collaborating organisations and represent something that neither organisation has done before or could do on their own. Hardy et al (2005, p.58-77) believe that this shared vision gives a concrete meaning to the group and can help to create a new type of culture for the collaboration. In 2007, Brazil`s Banco Real was acquired by Spanish Banking Group Santander. The CEO of Banco Real, Fabio Barbosa, was tasked with combining both organisations into the new entity, Santander Brazil. Kanter (2011) explains that despite facing great pressure to increase profitability, while also merging two organisations into one, it was the long-term vision that Barbosa instilled within his staff that allowed the venture to succeed.

2.4.5 Communication

Allen and Clarke (2010) believe that clear, open and frequent communication is essential to the success of any collaboration. Hosley et al (2003, p.157-168) state that frequent communication allows all key stakeholders to have the correct information when it comes do decision-making, while Warburton et al (2008, p.470-482) believe that consistent communication empowers the members of the collaboration. Sheridan et al (2000, p3-16) view open communication as a process that allows all stakeholders to be concise about their contributions. Triantis (1999, p.120-122) suspects that poor communication prevents a collaboration from being successful, while the Charity Commission (2010, p.11-37) found that 29% of collaborating charities reported a lack of communication as one of the main factors behind their unsuccessful collaboration. Kanter (2011) argues that long-standing values of an organisation should not

only be consistently communicated verbally by the CEO, but expressed in their daily actions so that their Line Managers can replicate them and express these values to their own staff.

Xu (2014) believes that the best way for a CEO to bring two organisations together is by developing a strategy that makes harmony the top priority, allows the CEO to keep their time and tasks separate, allows them to trust themselves and their teams, allows them to prioritise problems and allows them to use each role so that it can inform the other.

While the management of collaboration is clearly essential, company directors also need to have a clear vision of what they are hoping to gain from the partnership. Some organisations are looking to reduce costs and share expenditure with another organisation, some are looking to develop a shared service or a new joint project, while others are looking to enhance the service provided to the service users.

2.5 Cost-Sharing Benefits of Collaboration

Given the reduction in statutory funding faced by many non-profit organisations in recent years, one area that all organisations want to keep under control is cost. Cost-sharing is a popular form of collaboration that many organisations are now looking towards, with the Foundation for Social Improvement (2016) reporting that of the 62% of charities collaborating with another charity in a given period, 64% of these were taking part in cost-sharing ventures. The Charity Commission (2010, p11-37) also reported that of the 32% of charities engaged in collaboration during a given period, one of the main positive outcomes reported was the cost-reductions made, while Carroll Goldstone Associates (CGA, 2009) found that of those charities that had taken part in a collaboration with another charity, 51% reported that financial savings had been made.

In many cases, non-profit organisations are under severe pressure to reduce their costs. According to IVAR (2012), financial stability was one of the key reasons behind Gingerbreads` decision to merge with the National Council for One Parent Families (NCOPF) in 2007. The Charity Commission (2003) conducted a nationwide report that examined the benefits and challenges of collaboration between varying charities and found that reducing costs was one of the most common reasons given for entering into a collaborative agreement.

When conducting a UK survey with collaborating charities, Wilcox (2009, p.79-81) found

that 40% of respondents had collaborated in order to reduce costs. Nolan and Kelleher (2010) explain how the merger between Harvest Help and Self Help Development International allowed both organisations to significantly reduce their managerial and administration costs. Aikins and Stacey (2009) found that over 36% of organisational expenditure within the UK non-profit sector was being spent on operational costs and believe that this could be significantly reduced by collaborating with similar organisations.

Of course, there are many different ways for organisations to share their costs. Stengel (2013) explains how collaboration between the Chicago Youth Centre and Family Focus brought about cost-sharing in the form of joint purchasing and renting of facilities. By collaborating, both organisations were able to develop their services without increasing their budget. The Charity Commission (2010, p11-37) explains how charities have shared training workshops and volunteers in order to reduce costs. Orsi (2010) examined the area of collaborative cost-sharing without losing autonomy and recommends that instead of delivering a shared service, organisations could reduce costs by sharing back office functions such as administration, information technology and human resources.

Duncan (2015) reports that four organisations providing homeless support services decided to collaborate because of their close geographical location. Their close proximity allowed all four organisations to become more familiar with each other's respective services. Service users were then linked in with the most appropriate service, based on their specific needs and required expertise. This sharing of information meant that each organisation did not need to invest large amounts individually, but instead shared the cost and invested smaller amounts collectively. Provan et al (2003, p.646-662) share this view and believe that it is not feasible for regions to have one organisation providing one specific support, and recommended that regionally based organisations share the cost by forming a network of collaborating service providers.

Main (2014, p.8-10) believes that cost-sharing partnerships can also possess a major cost benefit to funders, as this now gives them the opportunity to fund a wider range of projects, including new and innovative services, while at the same time it presents an opportunity for organisations to share salaries. The Wheel (2014) reported that salaries are the biggest expense

for non-profit organisations and found that 36% of Irish charities spend 60% of their annual expenditure on salaries, while 27% spend 60 - 80% of their annual expenditure on salaries.

2.6 Facilitation of a Shared Service

While cost-sharing is a common reason to collaborate, many organisations also see potential in the sharing of services. Darlington and Feeney (2008, p.187-198) believe that there are a number of benefits to be gained from organisations collaborating on projects, including the development of new policies and practices, faster access to services, better decision-making and a more effective use of limited resources.

The Charity Commission (2003) found that joint service delivery was one of the most common reasons given for entering into a collaborative agreement. In their report on the benefits and challenges of collaboration, the Charity Commission found that 45% of the charities collaborating on service delivery noted improvements in this area. According to a study conducted on collaboration among smaller charities, the Charity Commission (2010, p11-37) found that of the 26% of charities collaborating during a given period, joint service provision was the most common type of collaborative action.

When developing joint projects, Kagan (1993, p34-35) believes there are four levels at which the collaboration of services can occur:

- *Client centred integration*: The coordination of services for individual clients.
- *Organisation centred integration*: The creation of a unified programme which will improve the sharing of information and the running of existing services.
- *Policy centred integration*: Both organisations set up an advisory policy council that enables the sharing of information and the development of new programmes.
- *Programme centred integration*: A system whereby staff can integrate with both services and joint development/funding can be examined.

When sharing a service, it is crucial for both organisations to adopt clear regulations, expectations and decision-making processes (Head, 2008, p.733-749). Katz and Hetherington (2006, p.429-439) also argue that before any joint project is developed, joint training must be organised for the staff working in the new project, not only to familiarise themselves with their new role, but with their new colleagues also.

A shared service can take many different forms, for example, the Walled City Partnership in Derry. The Northern Ireland Community and Voluntary Association (NICVA, 2014) reported on three separate organisations all facing financial challenges and how they ensured their survival by creating a shared premises and developing shared services. The Holywell Trust, The Junction and The Peace and Reconciliation Group all shared an ethos of community redevelopment and the basic principle of cooperation. After discussing their financial issues individually, they saw an opportunity to reduce their costs by sharing a premises. The success of this venture encouraged them to look at other areas of partnership and given the similarities of their core service of community redevelopment, they combined in 2010 to form the Walled City Partnership and made a successful funding application to provide a joint service for clients in a newly-renovated building on Bishop Street in Derry.

Smedley (2014) examined how the Nia Project in London, a support service for female victims of domestic violence, fell into severe financial difficulty in 2012 and was forced to cut some of its emergency services. They responded by collaborating with other service providers in London, and in 2013 they set up the London Violence Against Women and Girls Consortium (LVAWGC). When the local authority put a new service out to tender, this collective agency made a successful joint bid and set up a new shared service. Stengel (2013) also reports how collaboration between the Chicago Youth Centre and an organisation called Family Focus brought about better services and a more effective outreach. By working together, both organisations were able to offer a continuum of care to their service users, with Family Focus providing a steady flow of service users into programmes run by the Chicago Youth Centre.

According to NICVA (2016), Parenting Northern Ireland and Family Mediation Northern Ireland collaborated by developing a joint referral system whereby staff from both organisations could refer a patient to the opposite organisation based on the needs of the patient. Collaboration has meant that their patients reach the required service and access the necessary supports much faster. This correlates with the Safe Community Foundation (2008, p.1-7), who believe that joint projects allow for a much greater impact in the community than individual groups can achieve on their own.

In order to overcome the barriers to successful shared services, Dunlop and Holosko (2004, p.1-18) believe that senior management must create a readiness for change before the new project begins and once it does begin, immediately address any conflict or lack of trust that

may appear between staff. Garreth (2004, p.77-97) believes that communication between staff is key when facilitating a shared service, while Head (2008, p.733-749) argues that staff working together on a new project must discuss at length their current practices and roles to ensure the quality of the service remains high.

2.7 Enhancement of Services and Supports

While cost-sharing and the sharing of services are both common reasons to collaborate, improving the overall service provided is another key reason why charities choose to work together (Dowling, 2004, p.309-317).

In order for a collaboration to enhance the service provided, Miles and Rouse (2011) believe that senior management must put the service user experience at the forefront of the service and undertake the following process:

- Set ambitious goals and adopt specific service user metrics to track service performance.
- Instil consideration of the service user experience as an essential part of the collaborative planning.
- Continue to identify actions to improve the service user experience.
- Consistently listen to and communicate with your frontline staff.
- Empower staff and ensure they have the necessary training and information to respond to service users.

The Charity Commission (2010, p.11-37) found that of those charities that had collaborated, one of the main positive outcomes reported was improved services, while the CGA (2009) found that of the 46% of charities that were already collaborating, 50% had identified improved service delivery as the main benefit.

Focus Ireland and the Fr.Peter McVerry Trust have also undergone a recent cross-sector collaboration, with the aim being to improve supports for the service user. Fitzgerald (2017) explains how both housing support organisations have come together to provide a new Housing-First service in Dublin. Staff members from both organisations have formed the services intake and support team and since its formation in 2015, the programme has provided seventy-one people with long-term housing.

Having carried out a review on the effectiveness of cross-sector collaboration, Boydell (2015, p.18-35) found that over 90% of clients that engaged with the Children and Young People`s Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) service had a positive outcome. Austin (2000, p.69-97) believes that cross-sector collaboration not only improves the service provided, but it also improves the social impact and sustainability of organisations, while Osbourne (2000, p.9-17) argues that it allows for a more innovative service delivery. Selden et al (2006) explains how a collaboration between child care services in Canada resulted in a successful funding application, which allowed for improvements in the activities, furnishings and the overall structure of the service provided. Hall (2002, p.80-82) believes that non-profit organisations who enter into a collaborative agreement are actively improving their sector by providing new professional knowledge and operating requirements, which will help to improve the overall service given to clients.

There is no one method that guarantees service enhancement when it comes to collaboration. Each partnership will apply different strategies, with the desired outcome being an enhanced service. For example, Stewart (2011) explains how the Communities for Children (CFC) focused on building relationships, cooperation, resource sharing and brokering between communities. Stewart (2011) identified the outcomes as an increased organisational, individual and service capacity, increased interagency working with a greater number of referrals and support, shared practices and problem solving, the fostering of a culture where services were committed to a common cause and increased collaboration between partaking organisations. Muir et al (2010, p.35-42) conducted an evaluation of the CFC partnership and found that fewer children were now living in a jobless household and parents now felt more effective in their role.

Cairns et al (2003, p.7-8) explain how the collaboration of the Terrence Higgins Trust (HIV and Sexual Health Charity) has not only resulted in improved services for the organisation, but it has also provided an increased profile and a stronger voice for the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). The Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY, 2010, p100-105) reports how the service collaboration between the Tresillian Family Care Centre and Kathleen York House resulted in an improved capability within the joint workforce to work in partnership at managerial and operational level, with staff also feeling supported by a larger network due to the collaboration. The support and guidance given to staff during a collaboration is a major factor when trying to enhance a service (Whittle, 2002).

2.8 Conclusion/Justification for the Research

In order to examine the effectiveness of service collaboration, there are a number of factors that need to be studied, such as the decision-making process of both boards of directors, the impact of the collaboration on staff members and the views of the CEO on the managerial skills that they believe to be necessary. The reasons for collaborating must also be investigated, as they can range from cost-sharing, to the prospect of a joint project development, to the enhancement of services and supports.

The published reports, articles, books and online resources cited above clearly indicate that all actions need to be strategically planned and carefully managed in order for a collaboration to be effective. The review of the literature has also identified a notable gap in the Irish research, both locally and regionally. While significant research on the area of collaboration has been undertaken in the UK, throughout Europe, North America, Canada and Australia, there has been minimal research on non-profit collaboration in Ireland.

Therefore, this thesis plans to examine the effectiveness of service collaboration between two Irish charities providing homeless support services. The decision-making process of the board members within the joint working group will be examined, while also investigating how the collaboration has affected both sets of staff. The views of the CEO will be sought in relation to the managerial skills required, while the reasons for collaborating including cost-sharing, shared services and improved supports will also be explored.

3.1 Methodology - Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology used in the research. Firstly, the different research methods being utilised are examined, while also outlining their advantages and disadvantages. The process of the research is then explained, followed by a description of the sample group for each respective research method. Ethical considerations and limitations of the research are also discussed, while an outline of the research context and the method of data analysis brings the chapter to a conclusion.

3.2 Method

There are two specific types of research methods, namely quantitative and qualitative. According to Olson (1995), both quantitative and qualitative indicate possibilities of data gathering, whether estimating or measuring. The definition of qualitative cites quantitative as its implied opposite, therefore also implying its links to data gathering.

3.2.1 Quantitative Research

When conducting research using a quantitative method, individuals will gather a large quantity of information using a research tool, analyse it and turn it into statistical data to give it value and meaning. In order to give it value and meaning it is measured and compared with pre-existing data. Burns and Grove (2005, p.65-66) define quantitative research as a formal, objective and systematic process in which numerical data is used to gather information within a pre-determined study, while Williams (2007, p.66-72) defines quantitative research as a method that allows for a statistical or numerical approach to research design. This type of research material prompts the use of a structured survey, poll or questionnaire. Connolly (2007, p.140) argues that analysing quantitative findings is much less time-consuming than analysing qualitative findings, as statistical software can be used to measure this data. However, Rahman (2016, p.104-105) questions the reliability of quantitative research as it overlooks the participant's actual experience and therefore prevents the formation of a connection between the researcher and the participant. Olson (1995) believes that while it is important to use the right data analysis tool, it is even more important to use the right research design and data collection instrument.

3.2.2 Qualitative Research

Qualitative research focuses on the quality of the information that is being collected or communicated. Greenhalgh and Taylor (1997, p.740-743) define qualitative research as the aim of studying subjects in their natural setting, while attempting to understand phenomena in terms of the meaning people give to them. Such research methods may include the use of pre-designed interviews, while focus groups can also be utilised. Tewksbury (2009) believes that the knowledge gained through qualitative investigations is more informative, richer and offers enhanced understandings, in comparison to the knowledge obtained from quantitative research. Rahman (2016, p.104-105) believes that qualitative research allows for a more detailed description of participants` true opinions and experiences. However, Sallee and Flood (2012, p.137-144) argue that when it comes to decision-making, stakeholders are more interested in the facts produced by quantitative research, as opposed to the opinions provided by qualitative research. Mora (2010) believes that qualitative research is used when one does not know what to expect, when one wants to define a problem or when one wants to develop an approach to a problem. Qualitative research is also used to delve deeper into issues of interest and explore areas related to the research topic.

3.2.3 Triangulation Method of Research

In order to examine the effectiveness of service collaboration among two Irish charities providing homeless support services, a triangulation method of research was carried out by using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Yeasmin and Rahman (2012, p.156-157) explain that triangulation is the combination of two or more research methods in the study of a single phenomenon to converge on a single subject, and can be utilised in both qualitative and quantitative studies. Bradley (1995, p.81-89) argues that a triangulation method of research enhances the validity of research, while Halcomb and Andrews (2005, p.71-82) believe that triangulation research can produce more insightful and authentic data. However, Sim and Sharpe (1998, p.23-31) argue that the effectiveness of triangulation research is limited, as both quantitative and qualitative research methods are potentially incompatible.

3.2.4 Process

The findings from the literature review indicated that there was a significant gap in the research on Irish non-profit collaboration to date and there was a need to examine many aspects of the

subject. In order to determine the effectiveness of collaboration between two Irish charities providing homeless support services, the objectives sought to gain the views of members of the joint working group, of which there were few, and staff members of both organisations, of which there were many. Therefore, a triangulation method of research was justified as this would utilise both quantitative and qualitative methods of research.

For the quantitative research, seventy questionnaires were distributed to service staff members working in both Company X and Company Y, with a response rate of 51% achieved. For the qualitative research, four interviews were conducted with members of the joint working group of both Company X and Company Y, as well as one interview with the joint CEO of Company X and Company Y.

3.2.5 Participant Sample – Quantitative Research

Online questionnaires were distributed via email to the staff members working in services of both Company X and Company Y.

With the participant sample, Company X had twenty staff members working directly in services, while Company Y had fifty staff members working directly in services. This questionnaire would gather the information necessary to examine objectives 2 and 5 respectively. The views of both workforces on the overall impact of the collaboration would be examined *(Objective 2),* while the extent to which the collaboration could facilitate a shared service would also be investigated *(Objective 5).*

Before contacting staff, permission was sought from the joint CEO to contact staff members from both organisations. In relation to obtaining the co-operation of the participants, the researcher worked directly with the services staff of Company X on a daily basis and was in a position to discuss the research with them. In order to communicate with the services staff of Company Y, the joint CEO was asked to speak to them to see if they were willing to take part in the questionnaire. Given that the research would benefit both organisations, the researcher was confident that services staff from Company Y would be willing to take part in the questionnaire. In order to contact the services staff from Company Y, explain the process to them and distribute the questionnaire, permission was sought from the joint CEO to obtain their staff email addresses.

A pilot questionnaire was then developed and distributed to three pre-selected participants. The aim and objectives of the research were explained in full and all three participants were asked to highlight any areas they believed required strengthening. As a result of this feedback, the layout of the questionnaire was amended and the wording of certain questions was edited.

With the final questionnaire ready for distribution and all necessary contact details for staff members in place, staff members from both organisations were contacted via email, to officially ask them to take part in the questionnaire. Accompanying the email was a cover letter **(See Appendix 1)** that explained the aim and objectives of the research being undertaken, the questionnaire length and process, an assurance of confidentiality and the anonymity of the participants. It also explained that participants were free to opt out at any point and feedback could be provided at the end of the questionnaire **(Feedback Summary - See Appendix 13)**. The questionnaire **(See Appendix 4)** was then distributed to staff members from both organisations, and given their busy schedules staff were allowed two weeks to complete and return the questionnaire. **(Correlation of Questionnaire Results - See Appendix 12)**

3.2.6 Participant Sample – Qualitative Research

Interviews were conducted with members of the joint working group of both organisations, as well as the joint CEO of both organisations.

3.2.6.1 Interviews with the Joint Working Group

A joint working group was set up to oversee the collaboration. This group was made up of the joint CEO, two board members from Company X and three board members from Company Y.

Interviews were conducted with four members of the joint working group. These interviews would gather the information necessary to examine objectives 1, 4, 5 and 6 respectively. The views of the members of the joint working group would be examined, on the effectiveness of the collaboration and their decision-making process *(Objective 1)*, the cost-sharing benefits of collaboration between the two charities *(Objective 4)*, the extent to which the collaboration could facilitate a shared service *(Objective 5)* and the extent to which the collaboration could enhance the overall service provided to service users *(Objective 6).*

Before contacting any members of the joint working group, permission was obtained from the joint CEO to make contact with the relevant board members. Given that the researcher worked directly with the relevant board members of Company X on a monthly basis and having obtained the joint CEO`s permission, it was possible to speak directly to these board members about taking part in the interview. In order to communicate with the relevant board members of Company Y, the joint CEO was asked to speak to them, to see if they were interested in taking part in the interview. Given that the research would benefit both organisations, the researcher was confident that the members of the joint working group would be willing to take part in the interviews. In order to contact the relevant board members from Company Y, to explain the process to them and set up the interviews, permission was sought from the joint CEO to obtain their phone numbers and addresses.

Draft interview questions were then developed and a pilot interview was conducted on three pre-selected participants. The aim and objectives of the research were explained in full and all three participants were asked to highlight any questions they believed required strengthening. As a result of their feedback, the wording of certain questions was edited.

With the official interview questions ready **(See Appendix 5),** and all necessary contact details for board members in place, four members of the joint working group were contacted by telephone in order to set up a date for interview. Once the date for each interview was set, a covering letter **(See Appendix 2)** was posted out to each member of the joint working group. This letter explained the aim and objectives of the research being undertaken, the interview length and process, an assurance of confidentiality and the anonymity of the participants. It also explained that participants were free to opt out at any point. The schedules of all participating board members were accommodated and they also chose the most suitable time and place to carry out the interviews. **(Interview Transcripts - See Appendices 7, 8, 9 and 10)**

3.2.6.2 Interview with the Joint CEO

The joint CEO was also interviewed. This interview would gather the information necessary to examine objectives 3, 4, 5 and 6 respectively. The research study proposed to examine the factors that would determine the collaboration's effectiveness from the CEO`s point of view *(Objective 3),* the cost-sharing benefits of collaboration between the two charities *(Objective 4),* the extent to which the collaboration could facilitate a shared service *(Objective 5)* and

the extent to which the collaboration could enhance the overall service provided to service users *(Objective 6)*.

It was possible to obtain the co-operation of the joint CEO as the researcher works in an assistant capacity to him on a daily basis. The joint CEO had been made aware of the proposed research from the start. Draft interview questions were then developed and a pilot interview was conducted on the same three pre-selected participants. As a result of their feedback, the wording of certain questions was edited and additional questions were also suggested. The official interview questions were then developed. **(See Appendix 6)**

Subsequently, the joint CEO was contacted by telephone in order to set up a date for interview. Once the date of the interview was set, a covering letter **(See Appendix 3)** was posted out to the joint CEO. This letter explained the aim and objectives of the research being undertaken, the interview length and process, an assurance of confidentiality and the anonymity of the participant. It also explained that the participant was free to opt out at any point. The schedule of the joint CEO was accommodated and he also chose the most suitable time and place to carry out the interview. **(Interview Transcript - See Appendix 11)**

3.3 Ethical Considerations

With both forms of research, namely the interviews and questionnaires, explanatory letters were sent to the joint CEO and all members of the joint working group. Explanatory emails, with covering letters attached, were also sent to all staff members before they took part in the research. This explanatory letter and email outlined the aim and objectives of the research being undertaken, gave an assurance of confidentiality and anonymity, explained how long it would take to complete the interview or questionnaire and reminded all participants that their participation was voluntary and that they were free to cease participation in the interview/questionnaire at any time.

The examination of objective 5, (*To investigate the extent to which the collaboration can facilitate a shared service)* merited particular ethical consideration. The joint CEO and three members of the joint working group communicated plans for the development of potential new services. This information was not yet public knowledge and was therefore confidential. Confidentiality was maintained by referring to these potential new developments in the interview transcripts as "Projects 1 - 4".

The publication of the research will not cause difficulty for any of the research participants, as neither organisation was identified. Both organisations taking part in the collaboration were referred to as Company X and Company Y. No member of the joint working group, the joint CEO or any staff member was identified before, during or after the research. Denscombe (2014, p.306) discusses the need to avoid harming the rights and interests of research participants, by taking responsible steps to ensure their safety, protecting their anonymity and gaining their consent. As this was a new venture for both organisations, all findings, whether positive or negative, were to be used in a constructive manner in order to help the collaboration develop further.

3.4 Limitations of the Research

When reviewing previous literature, there was no information available locally or regionally and only a small amount available nationally. In order to find high-quality information for the literature review, a large amount of data had to be gathered from international sources.

All four members of the joint working group were heavily involved with other organisations, therefore organising a suitable date and time for interview was difficult to schedule. Staff members of both organisations were also very busy with work and family commitments and may not have been able to give the questionnaire their full attention.

Despite the assurance of anonymity, staff may still have been uncomfortable answering questions about their own organisation. This was understandable as some questions did ask the participants to rate their own organisation`s performance. Therefore, it must be considered whether the answers given represented the staff member's true opinion.

Collaboration agreements between Irish charities are a relatively new concept and it is an area that requires extensive research. The set objectives only deal with a small aspect of what is a very complex and detailed area.

3.5 Research Context

The underlying research philosophy is positivist. Aliyu et al (2014, p.81-83) define the positivist philosophy as a research method that is based on the idea that truth and reality are free and independent of the viewer and observer. The research approach was deductive. The

research tools that were implemented were an interview and questionnaire, as these methods, tend to be used for exploratory research and this is usually associated with the deductive approach (Saunders et al, 2007, p.406-518).

3.6 Data Analysis

In order to analyse the data generated by the quantitative research method (i.e. questionnaire), statistical analysis was used, illustrated by graphs that were generated by the Excel computer application.

In order to analyse the data generated by the qualitative research method (i.e. interviews), a thematic approach was used, illustrated through the use of quotes.

3.7 Conclusion

The diversity of the research objectives meant that a triangulation method of research was most suitable. This involved conducting individual interviews with the joint CEO and four members of the joint working group, as well as distributing a questionnaire to staff members of both organisations. Most importantly, the triangulation method allowed the aim and objectives of this research to be examined thoroughly, resulting in the provision of in-depth data.

4.1 Results - Introduction

This chapter focuses on the results obtained from both the quantitative and qualitative methods of research. The quantitative method was represented by questionnaires, while the qualitative method was represented by interviews. The questionnaires were completed by staff of both Company X and Company Y and the interviews were conducted with four members of the joint working group and the joint CEO. The findings from the questionnaire are presented under objectives 2 and 5 respectively. The information gathered includes data that examines the views of both workforces on the overall impact of the collaboration *(Objective 2)*, and includes data that investigates the extent to which the collaboration could facilitate a shared service *(Objective 5)*. The findings from the interviews are presented under objectives 1, 4, 5 and 6 respectively. The information gathered includes data that examines the views of the members within the joint working group, on the effectiveness of the collaboration and their decision-making process *(Objective 1),* the cost-sharing benefits of collaboration between the two charities *(Objective 4)*, the extent to which the collaboration could facilitate a shared service *(Objective 5)* and the extent to which the collaboration could enhance the overall service provided to service users *(Objective 6)*. The findings from the interview conducted with the joint CEO are presented under objectives 3, 4, 5 and 6 respectively. The information gathered includes data that examines the factors that would determine the collaboration`s effectiveness from the CEO`s point of view *(Objective 3)*, the cost-sharing benefits of collaboration between the two charities *(Objective 4)*, the extent to which the collaboration could facilitate a shared service *(Objective 5)* and the extent to which the collaboration could enhance the overall service provided to service users *(Objective 6)*.

4.2 Questionnaire – Participant Profile, Organisational Challenges and Culture

There were 36 respondents to the staff questionnaire. The participants were made up of 17 staff members from Company X and 19 from Company Y.

When asked to highlight their own organisations strategic challenges, Figure 4.2.1 shows that 61% (22) of staff selected *"Growing demand for services",* 50% (18) selected *"Recruitment/retention of staff/volunteers",* 50% (18) selected "*Maintaining a sustainable flow of income",* 50% (18) selected *"Promoting the organisation"*, 44% (16) selected *"Rising costs"*, 33% (12) selected *"Operational issues"*, 19% (7) selected *"Complying with legislation",* 17% (6) selected *"Managing organisational growth"* and 8% (3) were *"Not aware of the challenges".* Of the 5% (2) of staff that selected "*Other"*, *"Internal resistance to growth of the organisation"* and *"Lack of relief staff"* were provided as strategic challenges.

Figure 4.2.1 - Strategic Challenges
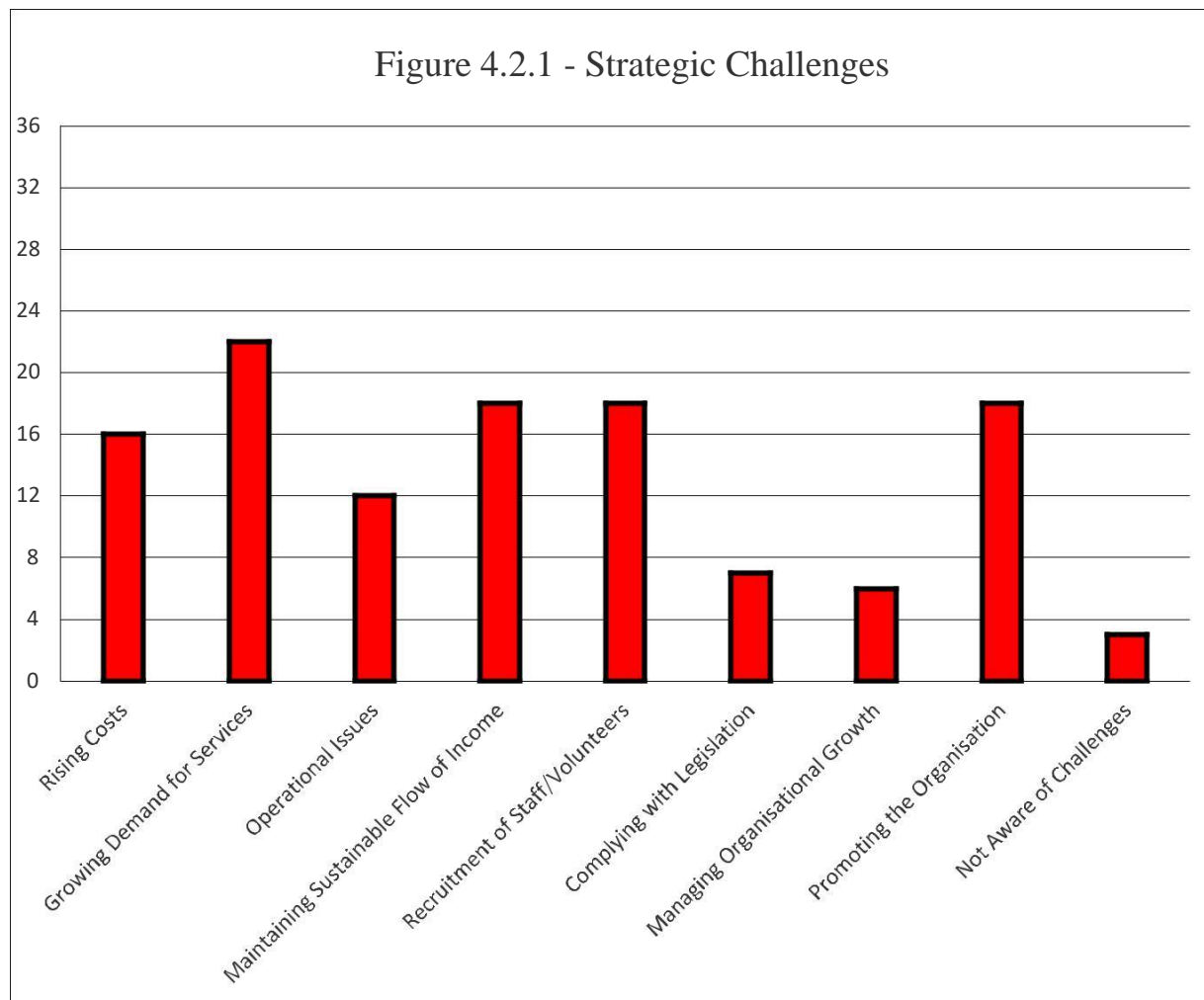
Participants were provided with a definition for the following four types of culture and asked to choose which one best reflected their own organisation.

Clan   – Working Together
Adhocracy   – Dynamic and Innovative
Market   – Results Focused
Hierarchy   – Structured and Controlled

Figure 4.2.2 shows that 53% of staff (19) selected *"Clan"* as their current organisational culture, 19% (7) selected *"Hierarchy"*, 14% (5) selected "*Adhocracy"* and 14% (5) selected *"Market".*

Figure 4.2.2 - Current Culture within Both Organisations
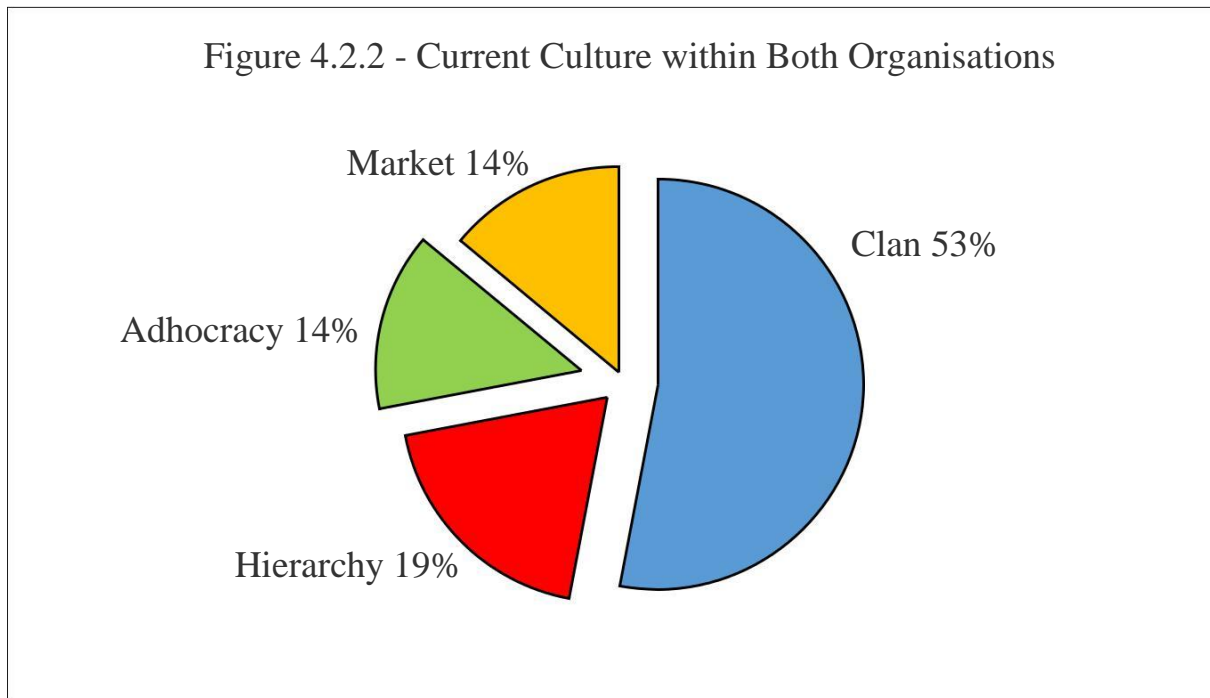
When asked if they believed that this collaboration would change their own organisations culture, 64% (23) of staff believed that it would change the culture, while 36% (13) believed that it would not.

4.3 Objective 2: To examine the views of both workforces on the overall impact of the collaboration

Once staff were informed of this collaboration, 69% (25) stated that it had created a level of uncertainty, while 31% (11) stated that it had not created any uncertainty.

Social supports within organisations are the individuals or groups that employees turn to in times of uncertainty. When asked if they had social supports in their own organisation, 58% (21) of staff said that they had such supports, while 42% (15) of staff did not.

Company X and Company Y held a joint housing first training seminar in July 2016 and staff were asked to highlight their level of satisfaction with the training, using a rating scale of 1-10. A level of 1 indicated *"Not at all satisfied"*, a level of 2-4 indicated *"Not very satisfied"*, a level of 5-6 indicated *"Somewhat satisfied"*, a level of 7-9 indicated *"Very satisfied"* and a level of 10 indicated *"Extremely satisfied"*. 61% (22) of staff responded, and Figure 4.3.1 shows that 27% (6) indicated a satisfaction level of *7*, 18% (4) indicated a level of *8*, 18% (4) indicated a level of *6*, 9% (2) indicated a level of *10*, 9% (2) indicated a level of *5*, 5% (1) indicated a level of *9*, 5% (1) indicated a level of *4*, 5% (1) indicated a level of *3* and 5% (1) indicated a level of *1*.

Figure 4.3.1 - Training Satisfaction

Level 1 - 5%
Level 3 - 5%
Level 4 - 5%
Level 9 - 5%
Level 5 - 9%
Level 10 - 9%
Level 6 - 18%
Level 8 - 18%
Level 7 -27%
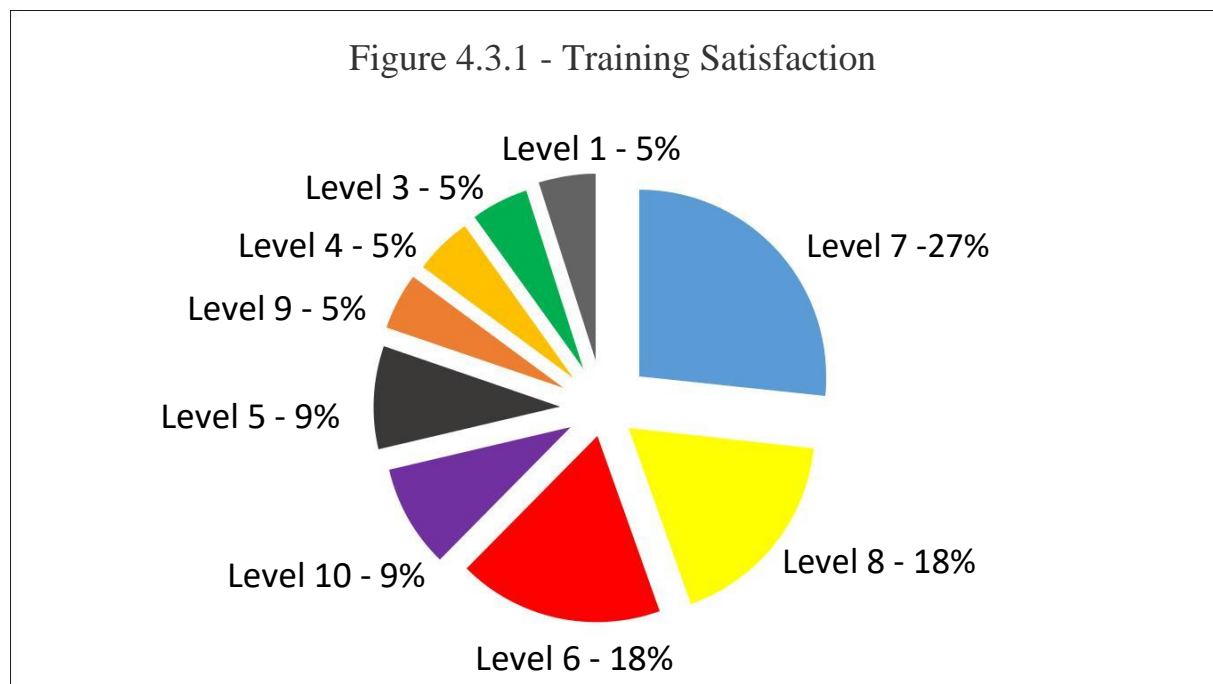
When asked if they would like to see future joint training events, 94% (34) of staff responded, while 6% (2) did not respond. With the 94% (34) of staff that did respond, 91% (31) stated that they would like to see future joint training, while 9% (3) would not.

With future joint training, Figure 4.3.2 shows that 87% (27) would like to see *"Mental health awareness"* training , 68% (21) selected *"Addiction awareness"*, 68% (21) selected *"Working with trauma"*, 61% (19) selected *"Housing first training"*, 61% (19) selected *"Challenging behaviour"*, 58% (18) selected *"Crisis intervention"*, 58% (18) selected *"Alcohol/drug awareness"*, 55% (17) selected *"Stress management"*, 52% (16) selected *"Self-harm awareness"*, 48% (15) selected *"Child protection"* and 45% (14) selected *"Potential aggression"*. Of the 16% (5) of staff that selected *"Other"*, *"Safeguarding vulnerable adults"*, *"Domestic violence"* and *"Managing actual or potential aggression"* were highlighted as possible future joint training events.

Figure 4.3.2 - Future Training Events
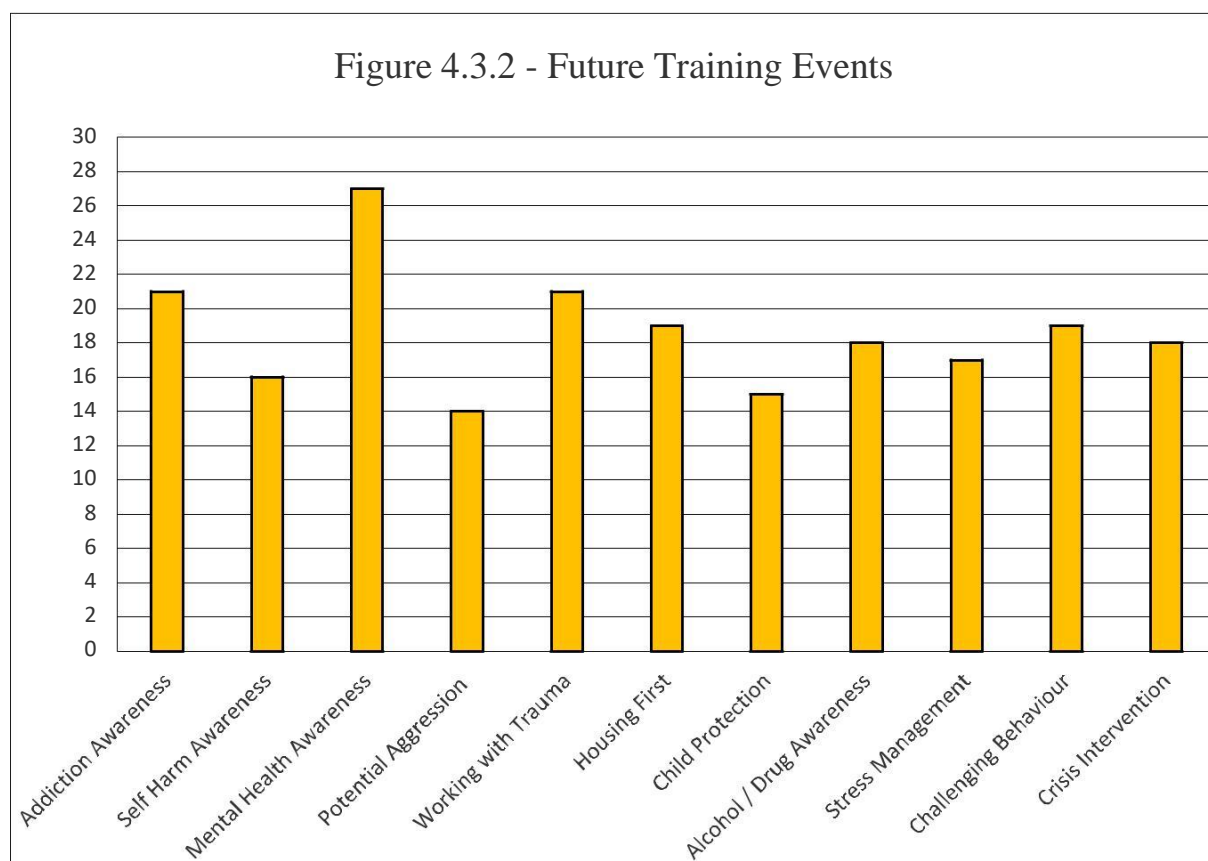
Staff were asked to indicate how well they believed the collaboration agreement had been communicated to them, using a rating scale of 1-10. A level of 1 indicated *"Not at all satisfied"*, a level of 2-4 indicated *"Not very satisfied"*, a level of 5-6 indicated *"Somewhat*

satisfied", a level of 7-9 indicated *"Very satisfied"* and a level of 10 indicated *"Extremely satisfied"*. Figure 4.3.3 shows that 21% (8) of staff indicated a satisfaction level of *7*, 22% (8) indicated a level of *6*, 11% (4) indicated a level of *5*, 11% (4) indicated a level of *4*, 11% (4) indicated a level of *1*, 6% (2) indicated a level of *9*, 6% (2) indicated a level of *8*, 6% (2) indicated a level of *3* and 6% (2) indicated a level of *2*.

Figure 4.3.3 - Effective Communication
(Collaboration Agreement)

Level 2 - 6%
Level 3 - 6%
Level 8 - 6%
Level 9 - 6%
Level 7 - 21%
Level 5 - 11%
Level 1 - 11%
Level 4 - 11%
Level 6 - 22%

Staff were asked to indicate how well they believed the reasons for collaboration had been communicated to them, using a rating scale of 1-10. A level of 1 indicated *"Not at all satisfied"*, a level of 2-4 indicated *"Not very satisfied"*, a level of 5-6 indicated *"Somewhat satisfied"*, a level of 7-9 indicated *"Very satisfied"* and a level of 10 indicated *"Extremely satisfied"*. Figure 4.3.4 shows that 25% (9) of staff indicated a satisfaction level of *7*, 17% (6) indicated a level of *6*, 14% (5) indicated a level of *5*, 11% (4) indicated a level of *4*, 11% (4) indicated a level of *1*, 8% (3) indicated a level of 3, 6% (2) indicated a level of *9*, 6% (2) indicated a level of *2* and 3% (1) indicated a level of *8.*

Figure 4.3.4 - Effective Communication (Reasons for Collaboration)

Participant 1	6	Participant 10	4	Participant 19	6	Participant 28	4
Participant 2	5	Participant 11	5	Participant 20	7	Participant 29	9
Participant 3	7	Participant 12	2	Participant 21	1	Participant 30	7
Participant 4	5	Participant 13	6	Participant 22	3	Participant 31	1
Participant 5	7	Participant 14	6	Participant 23	7	Participant 32	7
Participant 6	7	Participant 15	9	Participant 24	3	Participant 33	3
Participant 7	1	Participant 16	4	Participant 25	4	Participant 34	6
Participant 8	7	Participant 17	7	Participant 26	5	Participant 35	6
Participant 9	5	Participant 18	1	Participant 27	8	Participant 36	2

Staff were asked to indicate how well they believed they had been kept informed of the collaboration`s progress, using a rating scale of 1-10. A level of 1 indicated *"Not at all satisfied"*, a level of 2-4 indicated *"Not very satisfied"*, a level of 5-6 indicated *"Somewhat satisfied"*, a level of 7-9 indicated *"Very satisfied"* and a level of 10 indicated *"Extremely satisfied"*. Figure 4.3.5 shows that 29% (11) of staff indicated a satisfaction level of *6*, 17% (6) indicated a level of *7*, 15% (5) indicated a level of *5*, 11% (4) indicated a level of *1*, 8% (3) indicated a level of *4*, 8% (3) indicated a level of *2*, 6% (2) indicated a level of *3*, 3% (1) indicated a level of *10* and 3% (1) indicated a level of *8*.
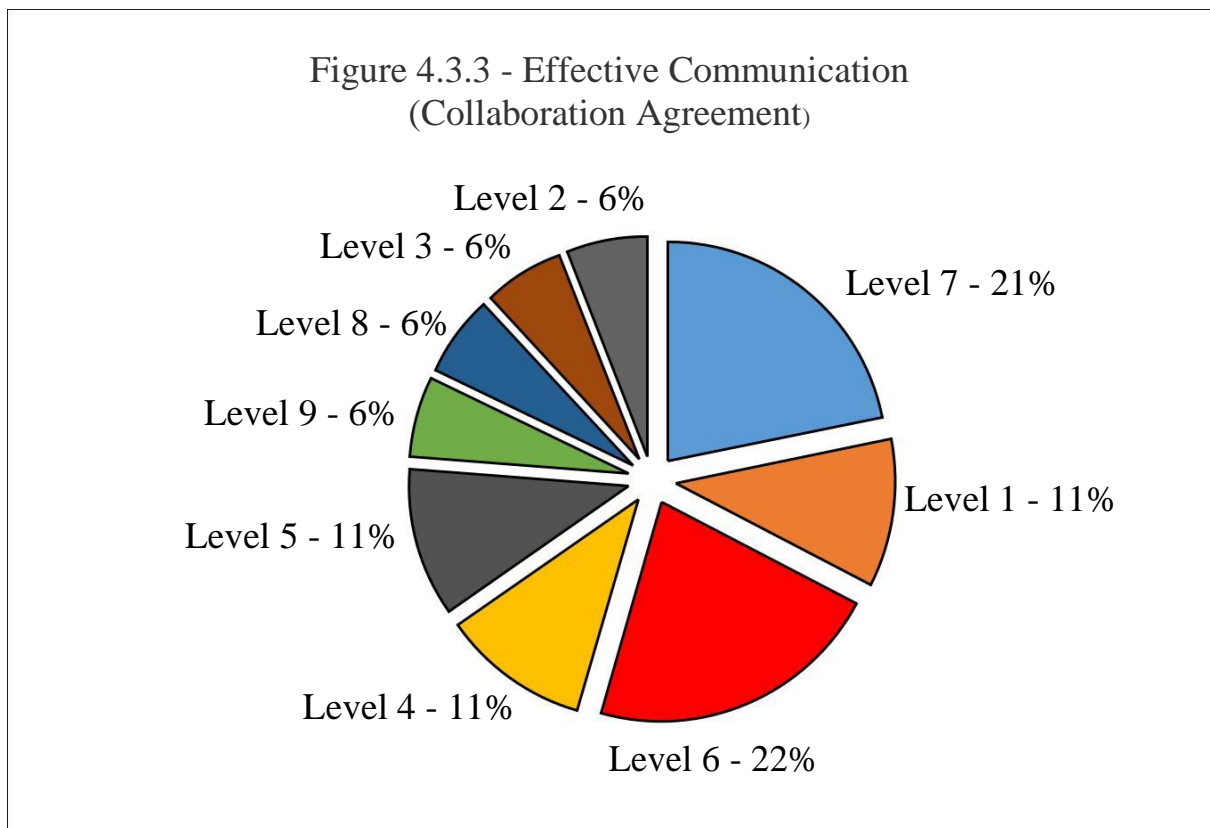
Figure 4.3.5 - Effective Communication (Collaborative Progress)

Participant 1	6	Participant 10	2	Participant 19	5	Participant 28	2
Participant 2	7	Participant 11	6	Participant 20	1	Participant 29	7
Participant 3	7	Participant 12	6	Participant 21	6	Participant 30	1
Participant 4	1	Participant 13	7	Participant 22	2	Participant 31	5
Participant 5	6	Participant 14	1	Participant 23	6	Participant 32	8
Participant 6	6	Participant 15	10	Participant 24	3	Participant 33	3
Participant 7	4	Participant 16	6	Participant 25	7	Participant 34	6
Participant 8	6	Participant 17	5	Participant 26	7	Participant 35	4
Participant 9	5	Participant 18	6	Participant 27	4	Participant 36	5

When asked if they would like to see Company X and Company Y merge into one organisation in the future, 75% (27) of staff chose to respond, while 25% (9) did not respond. With the 75% (27) that did respond, 63% (17) stated that they would like to see a merger take place, while 37% (10) do not want to see this happen.

4.4 Objective 5: To investigate the extent to which the collaboration can facilitate a shared service

When asked if they would like to see both organisations sharing a finance department, 92% (33) of staff responded, while 8% (3) did not respond. Of those that did respond, 67% (22) stated that they would like to see a shared finance department, while 33% (11) did not want to see this.

Staff who stated that they would like to see a shared finance department were then asked if this would be difficult to implement. Figure 4.4.1 shows that of the staff that would like to see both organisations sharing a finance department, 68% (15) believed this would be *"Somewhat difficult to implement"*, 18% (4) believed this would be *"Very difficult to implement"* and 14% (3) believed this would be *"Not at all difficult to implement"*.
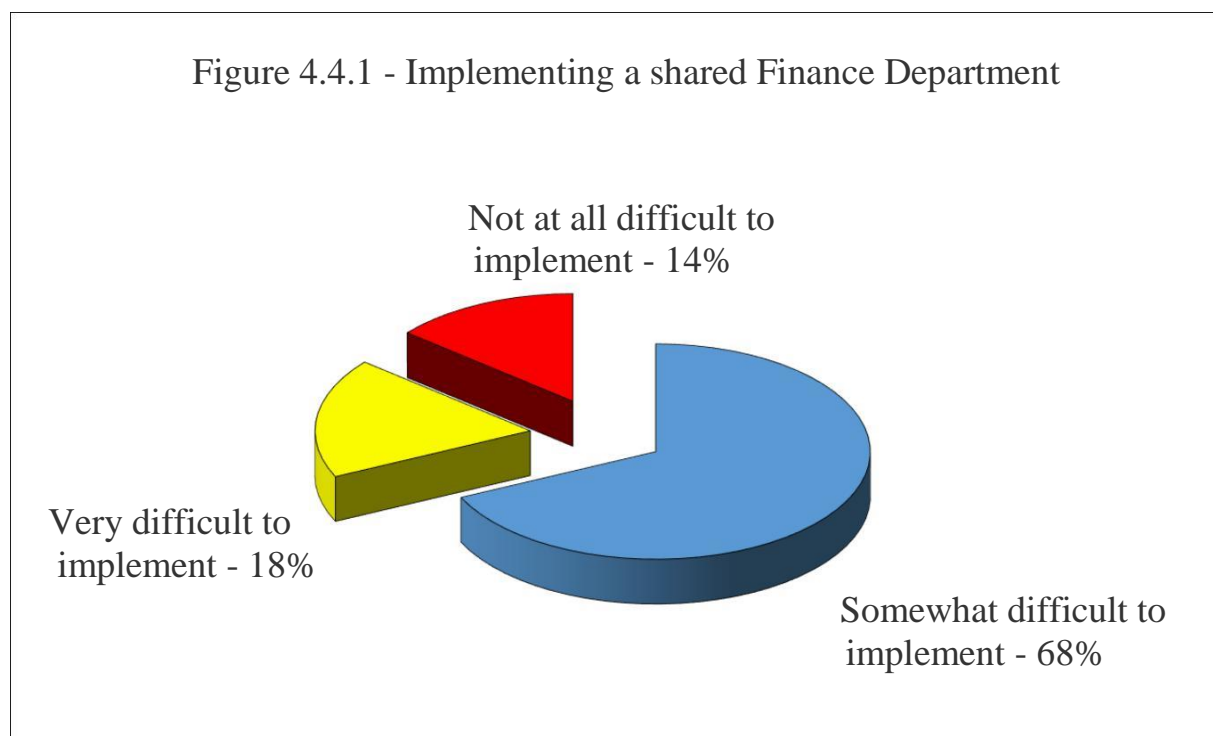
Figure 4.4.1 - Implementing a shared Finance Department

Not at all difficult to implement - 14%

Very difficult to implement - 18%

Somewhat difficult to implement - 68%

Staff who stated that they would like to see a shared finance department were then asked if this would make their own role easier. Figure 4.4.2 shows that of the staff that would like to see both organisations sharing a finance department, 60% (13) believed this would make *"No difference to their own role"*, 35% (8) believed that this *"Would make their own role easier"* and 5% (1) believed it *"Would not make their own role easier"*.

Figure 4.4.2 - Sharing of a Finance Department - Potential Impact

Would not make their own role easier - 5%

Would make their own role easier - 35%

No difference to their own role - 60%
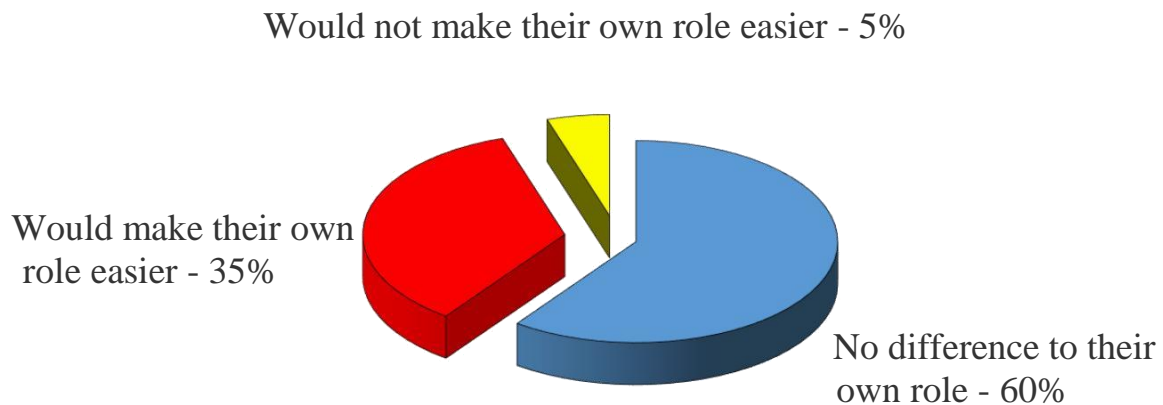
When asked if they would like to see both organisations sharing a HR department, 64% (23) of staff stated that they would like to see a shared HR department, while 36% (13) did not want to see this.

Staff who stated that they would like to see a shared HR department were then asked if this would be difficult to implement. Figure 4.4.3 shows that of the staff that would like to see both organisations sharing a HR department, 61% (14) believed this would be *"Somewhat difficult to implement"*, 26% (6) believed this would be *"Not at all difficult to implement"* and 13% (3) believed this would be *"Very difficult to implement"*.

Figure 4.4.3 - Implementing a shared HR Department
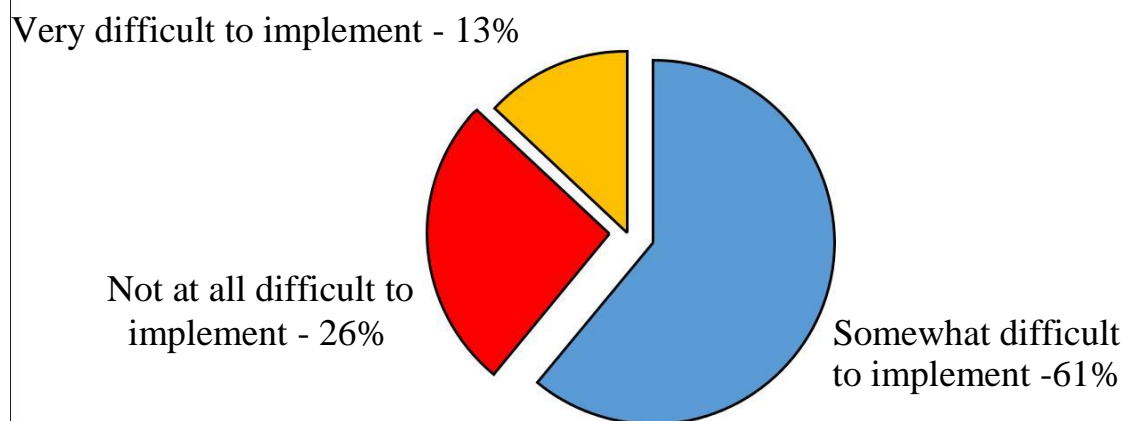
Very difficult to implement - 13%

Not at all difficult to implement - 26%

Somewhat difficult to implement -61%

Staff who stated that they would like to see a shared HR department were then asked if this would make their own role easier. Figure 4.4.4 shows that of the staff that would like to see both organisations sharing a HR department, 52% (12) believed that this *"Would make their own role easier"*, 43% (10) believed that this *"Would make no difference to their own role"* and 5% (1) believed that it *"Would not make their own role easier"*.

Figure 4.4.4 - Sharing of a HR Department - Potential Impact

Would not make their own role easier – 5%

No difference to their own role – 43%

Would make their own role easier –52%
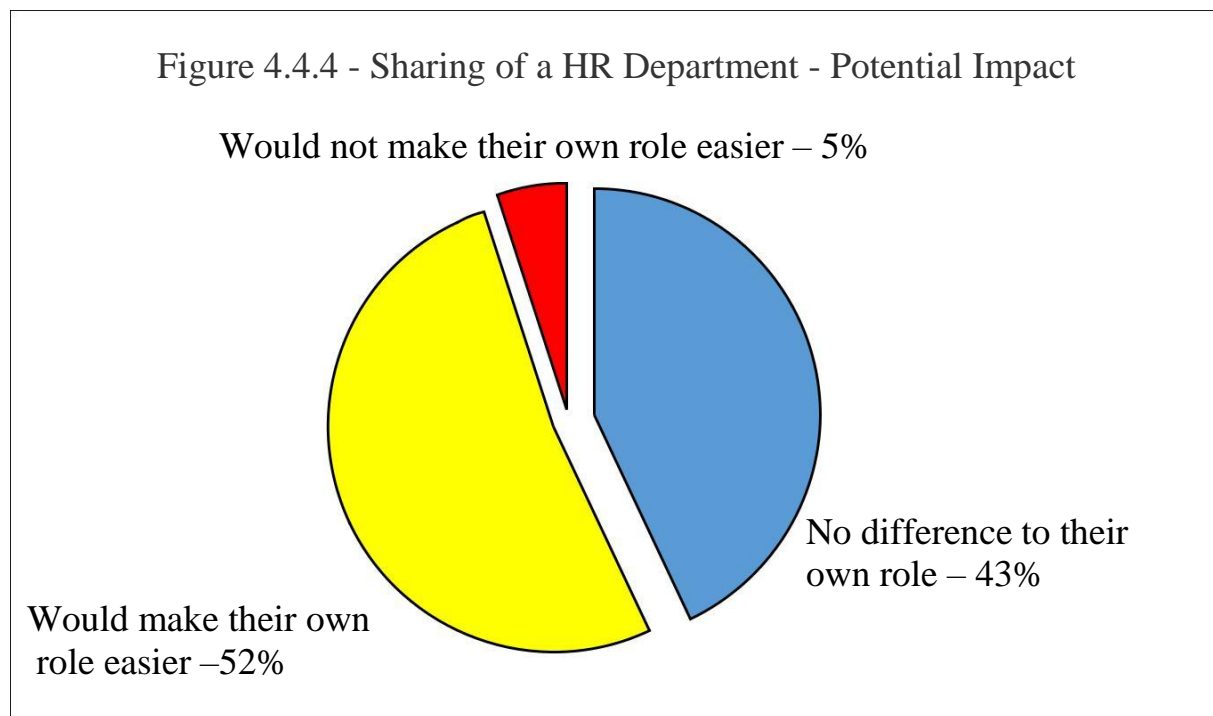
When asked if they would like to see Company Y share some of the services provided by Company X in the Midlands region, 81% (29) of staff responded, while 19% (7) did not respond. Of those staff that did respond, 79% (23) stated that they would like to see a sharing of services, while 21% (6) stated that they would not like to see this.

Staff were then asked what they believed the key benefits of sharing a service were. 92% (33) of staff responded, while 8% (3) did not respond. Figure 4.4.5 shows that of the staff that did respond, 73% (24) selected *"Development of new ideas"*, 67% (22) selected *"Information sharing"*, 61% (20) selected *"Cost sharing"*, 58% (19) selected *"Faster access to services"*, 58% (19) selected *"Better use of resources"*, 52% (17) selected *"Development of new policies"* and 30% (10) selected *"Better decision-making"*.

Figure 4.4.5 - Benefits of a Shared Service
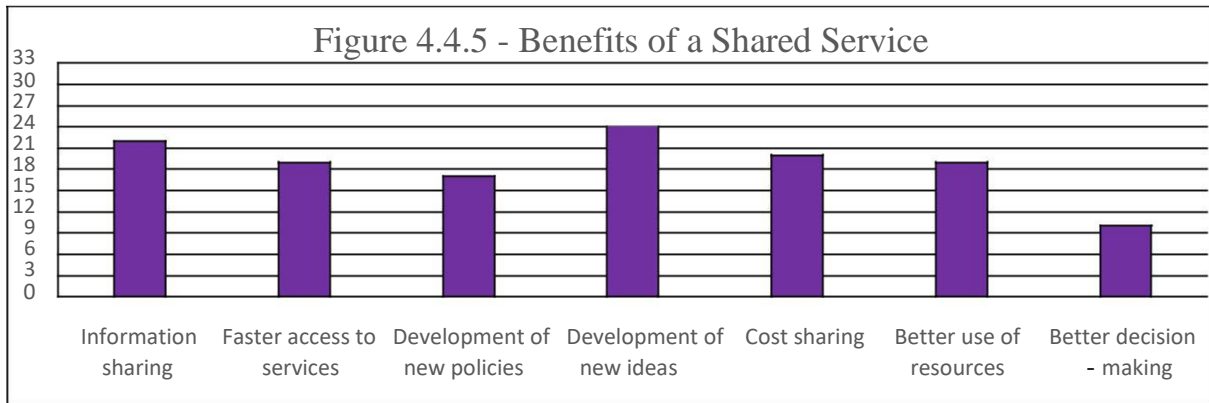
When asked if they would like to see a joint service developed by both organisations, 83% (30) of staff responded, while 17% (6) did not respond. Of those that did respond, 94% (28) stated that they would like to see a joint service developed, while 6% (2) stated that they would not like to see this.

Staff were then asked to select the type of joint service they would like to see developed. Figure 4.4.6 shows that 79% (22) selected *"Long-term housing"*, 61% (17) selected *"Dedicated mental health service"*, 54% (15) selected *"Outreach team"*, 50% (14) selected *"Emergency accommodation service"*, 50% (14) selected *"Addiction service"*, 50% (14) selected *"Independent living"*, 50% (14) selected *"Drop-in service"*, 39% (11) selected *"Youth service"*, 36% (10) selected *"Rough sleeper team"* and 32% (9) selected *"Regional support"*.

Figure 4.4.6 - Potential Joint Services
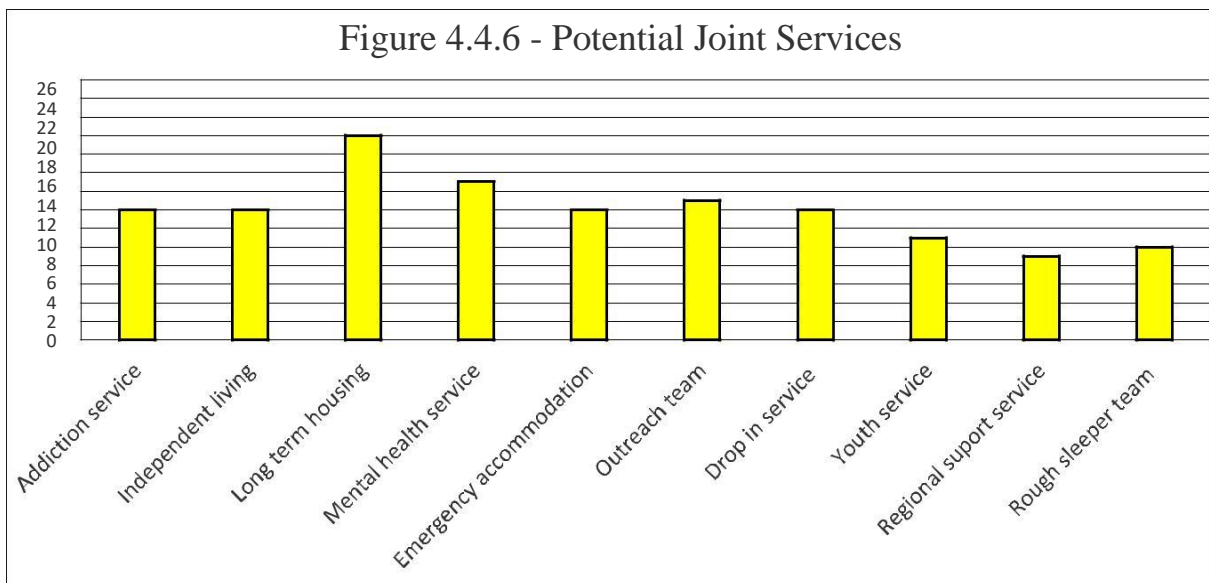
Staff were also asked if there would be any potential barriers to a new joint service. Figure 4.4.7 shows that 80% (24) highlighted *"Communication between staff"* as a potential barrier,

63% (19) selected *"Communication between boards"*, 60% (18) selected *"Differing work practices"*, 50% (15) selected *"Unwillingness to change amongst staff"*, 50% (15) selected *"Different expectations"*, 33% (10) selected *"Differing cultures present"*, 33% (10) selected *"Lack of support from local authorities"* and 30% (9) selected *"Different standards in quality"*.

Figure 4.4.7 - Potential Barriers
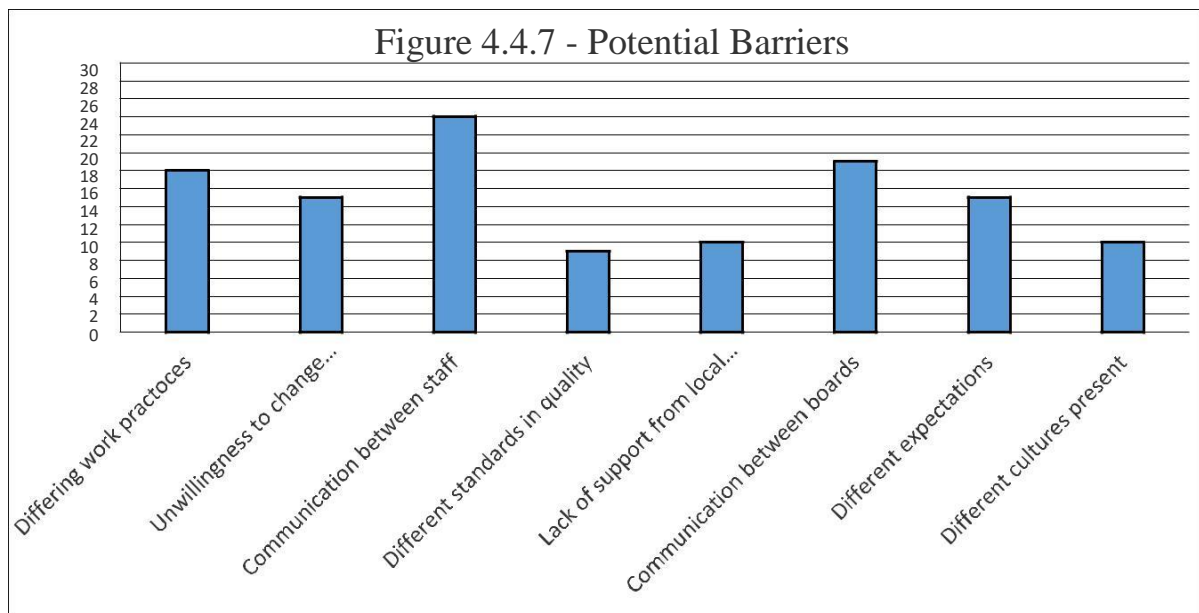
With regards to further collaboration, Figure 4.4.8 shows that 74% (23) of staff would like to see *"Joint training"*, 58% (18) selected *"Sharing information"*, 52% (16) selected *"Joint fundraising"*, 45% (14) selected *"Joint funding applications"*, 42% (13) selected *"Joint campaigning"*, 39% (12) selected *"Tendering support"*, 32% (10) selected *"Sharing workspace"*, 32% (10) selected *"Sharing staff"* and 19% (6) selected *"Sharing equipment"*.

Figure 4.4.8 - Other forms of Collaboration
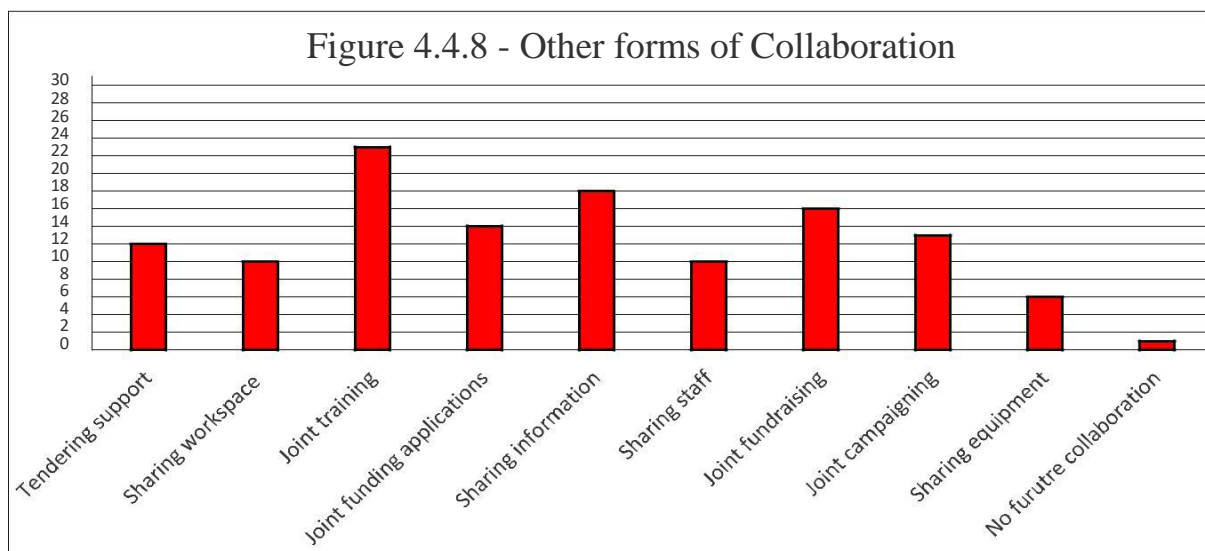
4.5 Objective 5 (Continued): To investigate the extent to which the collaboration can facilitate a shared service

Note: The four members of the joint working group will be referred to as M1, M2, M3 and M4.

Joint service

All four members of the joint working group stated that a joint service was something that was being examined. *"With Project 1, we are looking to use Company Y`s knowledge and capacity to purchase the property, with Company X running the service"* – Joint CEO and M2. M1 sees a transitional service being developed, stating that "*Company X could provide emergency accommodation and a regional support service and then Company Y could provide the transitional housing required for service users"*. M3 stated how Company Y was already looking at several projects in the Midlands and believed that Company X needed to be involved, stating, "*It would make sense for Company X to come on board with this project, as they know what's happening on the ground in the Midlands and they know the different stakeholders"*. M4 discussed the potential of Project 2 and explained why Company X had to be involved, "*It will be set up jointly but it won't be run jointly. It would be run by Company X because the Midland counties are their known territory and Company Y is not a known brand in that area and has no desire to become a known brand in that area. In terms of potential fundraising and public relations it makes sense to attribute this to Company X"*.

4.6 Objective 1: To explore the views of the members within the joint working group, on the effectiveness of the collaboration and their decision-making process

Strategic challenges

M1 believed that the views of funders presented a major challenge, stating that "*because this type of collaboration is new, it may make funders uneasy. There might be a perception within the sector that the smaller of the two organisations might be taken over by the bigger organisation"*. A lack of resources was also suggested. "*We`re not getting enough money through state funding. This leads to cash flow problems but it also places a burden on our fundraising department"*– M2. M3 believed that one of their main challenges was their geographic location, stating that "*We currently have no services based in the Midlands"*.

Forming the collaboration

All four members of the joint working group made reference to the formation of the collaboration. "*I was at one stage the Chairperson of the national federation of Company X and at the same time I was working with the founders of Company Y. I had served my term as Chairperson of the national federation of Company X and I was then invited to join the board of Company Y. I had retained my friendship with the CEO of Company X and I was always interested to hear how their organisation was doing. This led to discussions between Company X and Company Y over common interests*" – M4. M2 stated that "*in order to look at collaborative working, we needed to have the agreement of both boards of directors. Once we did, we then set up a joint working group whose role was to review proceedings and discuss areas of further improvement*". However, M3 explained how the dynamics quickly changed. "*One key development that occurred was that the former CEO of Company Y resigned and suddenly a gap opened. Our board instantly saw an opportunity. At this stage we had already been speaking to Company X about the possibility of collaborative working, but when the CEO of Company X also became the CEO of Company Y, the collaborative process gathered pace*" – M3. M1 believed that the collaboration was still forming and highlighted areas for further improvement, stating that "*I believe both boards of directors could meet, in order to develop the relationship and learn more about the differences and similarities of each organisation*".

Key skills

All four members of the joint working group made reference to the key skills that were required, such as communication, awareness, planning and having a shared belief, "*a collective belief that the system and the process can work*" – M4. Another skill highlighted was the concept of understanding change. "*A strong knowledge of the change process is required*" and "*an openness to exploring other possibilities*" – M4 and M1. Both M2 and M4 believed in focusing on the ultimate organisational goal, stating that "*it's important that everyone looks at the overall benefits of working together and the expanding of the staff`s learning base will ultimately benefit the service user*". M1 also highlighted the importance of understanding each other and stated that "*another key area will be trust*" and "*a strong understanding of people and an acceptance that we won't have all the answers*".

4.7 Objective 3: To examine the views of the joint CEO of both organisations, on the factors that will determine the collaboration`s effectiveness

Strategic challenges

Financial sustainability was seen as the key issue for Company X, but a different challenge appeared for Company Y. "*For Company X, the key challenge is financial sustainability. Company X has to raise €360,000 in its shops or through its own fundraising methods. The target that we need to reach each year is not sustainable. Another major challenge facing Company X is being able to comply with the different regulatory codes and standards, but it does not have the resources to do so. For Company Y, the challenges are different. With fundraising, Company Y only has to raise €200,000 annually and this is nationally. One of the other challenges for Company Y is to realise the potential and the opportunities that it has. At the moment Company Y is involved in eight different development projects and there are no barriers in place that will prevent them from delivering on these developments, so therefore they just need to remain focused and maintain the drive to follow through on the projects*" – Joint CEO.

Forming the collaboration

The joint CEO explained that before the collaboration began Company X were involved in a strategic review process, "*this review looked at all aspects of the organisation including services, staff, finances and HR*". It was the results of this review that led to Company X looking at collaborative options, "*there was a major challenge in terms of financial sustainability. It was clear that we could not continue on our own and there needed to be some way of reducing costs or sharing costs*" – Joint CEO. Company X were already in contact with Company Y regarding possible areas of joint interests and it was this strategic review that seemed to bring them together. "*It was clear that Company Y were a very like-minded organisation with shared values and a complementary service model also. This led to both boards looking at the possibility of collaborative working and when the decision was taken by both boards to go down this route, the collaboration agreement effectively began*" – Joint CEO.

Key skills

The joint CEO believed that one key skill required was that both boards needed to further develop their belief in the collaborative process, stating that "*there needs to be an acceptance that the two organisations could grow stronger together, which might involve sharing the*

limelight. When asked about the importance of communication, the joint CEO acknowledged its importance but also urged caution, stating that "*both organisations were setting off on a journey together and did not know how it would develop. Therefore, we were building the road a few feet ahead of us as we went along. We acknowledge that there is massive risk-taking here, which is a skill in itself, but you can only communicate something when you know what it is that you are communicating*".

4.8 Objective 4: To identify the cost-sharing benefits of collaboration between the two charities

Cost-sharing in other areas

M1 of the joint working group focused on cost-sharing through joint events, stating that "*both organisations could look at joint training*", while all four members believed that both organisations could look at the sharing of back office functions. "*Company Y have a dedicated finance section, a HR section and a property management section and I feel there is scope for Company X to share a number of these functions*" – M2. The joint CEO stated that cost-sharing could take place through the sharing of another post, "*another idea is that if we created a new managerial post to oversee services in both organisations*". M4 also suggested cost-sharing through a means of information sharing, stating that "*there is a lot of administration requirement around the new regulations such as policies, procedures, risk registers and risk management, and by having a focus on this I think it is possible to do this once and use it twice*". M3 stated that costs could be shared by tapping into each other's expertise and experience, "*there are a number of potential Midlands-based projects that Company Y is looking at and we will require Company X`s experience here as they are more familiar with the region*". M1 also believed that cost-sharing could be achieved in the area of service provision. "*There is also an opportunity to share costs in the area of services and the provision of supports to service users*" – M1.

4.9 Objective 6: To examine the extent to which the collaboration can enhance the overall service provided to service users

Service enhancement

All four members of the joint working group believed that sharing costs would lead to improved services. "*By sharing the cost of items, whether it is posts, services or back office functions,*

this will free up money to spend on services. It will definitely speed up the process in terms of a faster access to services" – M4. The joint CEO believed that the enhancement of services would come through the provision of new housing, stating that "*Company X and Company Y, together, could build 100 houses in the next five years. There is an application in for funding to develop 30 properties with Project 1, local authority approval to carry out a feasibility study for 30 properties in Project 2, potentially 18 properties with Project 3 and at least another 20 properties planned for Project 4"*. M1 suggested that financial stability and increased resources were key to improving services, stating that "*more financial freedom will allow us to provide the staff with greater resources"*. M3 stated that improvements would come from the combined expertise of staff, "*with both organisations working together there is greater knowledge and expertise available, which will benefit the service user in their recovery"*, while M2 focused on the recovery model being used and stated that "*because both organisations are following the Housing-First model of care, service users are being supported by organisations that follow a model that has been proven to work. Now with the two organisations working together, this can only enhance the support provided"*.

5.1 Discussion - Introduction

This chapter examines the results of both the quantitative and qualitative research that was undertaken, in relation to the six core objectives of the study. This section highlights a number of key trends that appear, while also comparing the new data to existing research.

Objective 1 examines the views of the joint working group on the effectiveness of the collaboration, while objective 2 focuses on the impact that the collaboration has had on staff from both organisations. Objective 3 focuses on the joint CEO and the factors that will determine the collaboration`s effectiveness from their point of view, while objective 4 identifies the cost-sharing benefits of the collaboration. Objective 5 investigates how the collaboration could facilitate a shared service, while objective 6 examines how the collaboration can enhance the overall service provided to service users.

The triangulation method of research is then evaluated, which also highlights the limitations of the research. This is followed by a brief conclusion to the chapter.

5.2 Objective 1: To explore the views of the members within the joint working group, on the effectiveness of the collaboration and their decision-making process

All four members of the joint working group believe that the effectiveness of the collaboration will be determined by how the partnership can address both organisations` strategic challenges. Members one and two highlighted the challenge of Company X as financial sustainability, while members three and four highlighted the challenge of Company Y as securing funding. These correlate with the principle challenges faced by Irish charities in the non-profit sector (The Wheel, 2012). If the collaboration between Company X and Company Y was to resolve these challenges, the partnership could then be considered effective. However, in order to address these challenges, the members of the joint working group believe that a number of key skills are required by all stakeholders.

Members one, two and three of the joint working group highlighted the importance of communication between boards, and stakeholders being aware of what was going on at all times. This supported the argument by IVAR (2012) that during times of organisational change, clear communication between the board, CEO and staff was essential. Member four suggested that a collective belief in the process was required by both boards, which mirrored Wilcox (2009, p.79-81), who argued that both boards must have a shared vision if the collaboration is to succeed. Member two expanded further by suggesting that this vision was even more relevant if it could not be achieved by either organisation individually. Cairns et al (2005, p.878-879) also believed that a shared vision was key to any collaboration.

Member one stressed the importance of strong management, accountability and transparency by both organisations. Given that this type of collaboration is new to the non-profit sector, good governance by both organisations is essential, because the leadership and governance of some organisations was viewed as a concern (The Big Lottery Fund, 2011). Stanford Graduate School of Business (2014) also found that 69% of non-profit organisations had faced one or more serious governance related issues in the last decade, while 40% said that they were unable to meet their fundraising target. This points to a lack of forward-planning, and members two and three made numerous references to the importance of forward-planning. This supported Gray (2000, p.243-260), who believed that a solid strategic plan must be in place, while the Charity Commission (2010, p.11-37) also found that 29% of charities reported a lack of strategic planning as the main reason for their unsuccessful collaboration.

All four members referred to the importance of the collaboration document that was signed by both boards. Having this type of document in place was recommended by NCVO (2006), as it outlined the terms of reference for the partnership, while Tapper et al (1997, p.176-188) believed that a written agreement gave structure to a collaboration.

Takahashi and Smutney (2002, p.166-175) outlined that a strategy regarding conflict management was a necessity, but this was not mentioned by any member of the joint working group. It is possible that this may have been in existence, but it may not have been highlighted because it had not been required to date. Members two and four also highlighted the importance of both boards focusing on the ultimate organisational goal, which in this case is the abolition of homelessness. This supported Kail and Abercrombie (2013), who recommended that within any service, the client must always remain the top priority.

5.3 Objective 2: To examine the views of both workforces on the overall impact of the collaboration

Hirsh (1985, p.86-87) believed that a collaboration affected 25-50% of staff once it commenced, but in the case of Company X and Company Y, 69% of staff stated that it created uncertainty. According to Marks and Mervis (1986, p.34-40), when organisational change occurs, it is likely that staff will communicate their concerns to their social supports. These supports provide the employee with advice that empowers them to face the change. However, in this study, only 58% of staff reported that they had social supports in place. This may be due to the nature of their roles, as many of these staff members work out in the community and may only have the opportunity to interact with colleagues on a weekly basis.

Over 52% of staff believed their organisations culture was already one of "working together", which is a positive sign for Company X and Company Y. However, the remaining staff believed their organisations culture was a mix between "structured and controlled" (19%), "results focused" (14%) and "dynamic and innovative" (14%). None of these culture types should be viewed as negative, but when it refers to the collaboration of organisations, the culture needs to be consistent. This correlated with Takahashi et al (2001, p.141-153), who believed that when the culture was strong and consistent, the organisation was better prepared to handle difficult situations.

Company X and Company Y can be pleased with their joint training achievements so far, as almost 60% of staff chose a satisfaction level of 7 or above when rating the previously held joint housing-first seminar. This indicated that they were "very satisfied" with the training provided. 87% of staff indicated that they would like to receive "mental health awareness" training in the future. To have such a high number of staff so sure of their training needs showed that they are very aware of the needs of the service user also. This knowledge is a major advantage to both organisations and it is important for both boards and the joint CEO to utilise this expertise when planning for the future. This supported Blessington White (2006), who believed that engaging with staff was essential, as this would result in greater commitment to the organisation.

When asked about the communication involving this collaboration, 66% gave a satisfaction level of 5 or above, which indicated "somewhat satisfied" or "very satisfied". Given the major change that collaboration can bring, it was important for this to be communicated effectively to staff. This supported IVAR (2012), who believed that decisions regarding collaboration should be shared with staff as soon as they are made, as it gave them the opportunity to ask questions regarding their own role.

Almost 45% of staff indicated a satisfaction level of 5 or 6 when asked how well they had been kept informed of the collaboration`s progress. This highlighted that they were "somewhat satisfied", while 33% reported a satisfaction level of 4 or below, indicating that they were "not very satisfied". Only 23% of staff were "very satisfied" with how well they had been kept informed of the collaboration`s progress. The joint CEO had stated that it was difficult to provide a progress report to staff, as the collaboration had only been in existence for seven months, but it is also important to keep staff informed. Whittle (2002) found that staff who were not kept informed of an organisation`s progress tended to respond in a despondent and withdrawn manner.

5.4 Objective 3: To examine the views of the joint CEO of both organisations, on the factors that will determine the collaboration`s effectiveness

The joint CEO highlighted a collaborative vision and purpose as key skills that stakeholders needed to have in order to improve the collaboration`s effectiveness. This supported the view

of Hardy et al (2005, p.58-77), who believed that a shared vision gave concrete meaning to a collaboration. The joint CEO also referred to the importance of personal relationships with stakeholders, explaining how member four, currently a board member with Company Y, had been previously involved with the national federation of Company X, and had developed a friendship with the CEO of Company X. This correlated with Mattessich et al (1992, p.40-44), who believed that personal relationships were key to collaborative effectiveness, while it also supported Austin (2000, p.78-82), who stated that personal relationships are what bring organisations together in the first place.

The joint CEO stated that communication concerning the collaboration could be improved, but argued that one must be careful that one is communicating something with substance. His argument was that the collaboration was only in existence for seven months and therefore it was difficult to provide a meaningful progress report. According to the joint CEO, the collaboration was being developed gradually and one should only communicate something when one knows exactly what is being communicated. The joint CEO acknowledged the risk factors associated with this approach, but strongly believed that it was necessary. This approach was in contrast to the Charity Commission (2010, p.11-37), who found that 29% of collaborating charities reported a lack of communication as one of the main factors behind their unsuccessful collaboration. However, given that this collaboration is incorporating a shared CEO, a brand new concept in the Irish non-profit sector, it could be argued that a gradual approach is not only necessary, but innovative.

According to the joint CEO, task groups involving staff members from both organisations was also an area that was being examined. The primary purpose of these groups would be information sharing and idea generation in relation to potential joint projects that both boards were considering. Given the different services, structures and geographic locations of both organisations, introductory phases would be required, but this could be the first step in bringing staff from both organisations together in an official capacity. This theory supported Xu (2014), who believed that the best way for a CEO to bring two organisations together was by developing a strategy that makes harmony the top priority. It could also help the collaboration to develop its own culture, which coincided with Rodgers et al (2006), who stated that organisational success relied on a culture that connected its staff, regardless of the hierarchy or geography involved.

5.5 Objective 4: To identify the cost-sharing benefits of collaboration between the two charities

The main strategic challenge of Company X, as highlighted by members one, two and the joint CEO, was financial sustainability. Sharing overall costs was a key factor when deciding to pursue a collaborative partnership. This coincided with the Charity Commission (2003), who found that cost reduction was one of the most common reasons given for entering into a collaboration. This also supported the Foundation for Social Improvement (2016), who found that 64% of collaborative charities were taking part in cost-sharing ventures.

When asked what type of cost-sharing ventures they would like to see developed, all four members recommended the combining of back office functions, which supported Orsi (2010), who believed that organisations could reduce their costs by sharing their administration, finance, HR and IT departments. The joint CEO also suggested that a managerial post for services could be shared, which would allow both organisations to contribute 50% to one salary, as opposed to both organisations paying for two separate salaries. This supported The Wheel (2014), who reported that 36% of Irish charities spent 60% of their annual expenditure on salaries. Main (2014, p.8-10) also argued that the sharing of salaries would give state funders the opportunity to support even more organisations.

Members one and three suggested that joint training could also be examined. This coincided with the Charity Commission (2010, p11-37), who believed that charities could share their training events in order to reduce their core costs. The joint CEO explained how both organisations had already taken part in a joint housing-first training seminar and as a result, cost reductions were made.

Members three and four suggested that both organisations could share their costs by sharing information and tapping into each other's expertise, while member one believed that cost-sharing could take place through the joint provision of services. Both of these suggestions correlated with Duncan (2015), who explained how four homeless service providers collaborated based on their geographic location. By sharing information regarding their organisations requests for support, they were able to link the service users with the most appropriate service that was available.

There are a number of cost-sharing options available to Company X and Company Y, and the sharing of further costs could mean that both organisations may no longer need to invest larger amounts individually, but instead invest smaller amounts collectively.

5.6 Objective 5: To investigate the extent to which the collaboration can facilitate a shared service

All four members of the joint working group spoke of their interest in sharing back office functions. This view was shared by staff, as 67% would like to see a shared finance department, while 64% would like to see a shared HR department. This supported the Charity Commission (2003), who found that joint service delivery was one of the most common reasons given for entering into a collaborative agreement.

A number of potential joint project developments were discussed by the four members of the joint working group and the joint CEO. While over 70% of staff would like to see both organisations share one of their current services, 94% would like to see a new joint service developed. Some of the benefits of a joint service selected by staff included the "development of new ideas" (73%), "information sharing" (67%) and faster access to services (58%), while the joint CEO also believed that sharing services would provide a better return for the use of limited public funding. This supported Darlington and Feeney (2008, p.178-198), who believed that the main benefits to be gained from collaboration included the development of new policies, better decision-making, faster access to services and a more effective use of limited resources.

Long-term housing was the most common joint service that staff would like to see developed (79%), which corresponded with the type of joint service recommended by the joint CEO and members one and four of the joint working group. This was a positive sign as it indicated that both the boards and staff members were thinking similarly and clearly understood the supports that were needed. However, it is important that should the joint projects come to fruition, terms of reference must be developed in order to guide the decision-making process. This supported Head (2008, p.733-749), who argued that when sharing a service, it was crucial for both organisations to adopt clear regulations, so that they could avoid potential barriers.

Over 79% of staff selected "communication between staff" as the most likely barrier to a joint

service. Therefore, it is essential that staff from both organisations are given the opportunity to integrate. Member three spoke of the importance of staff sitting down together and discussing the potential of any joint project, which coincided with Katz and Hetherington (2006, p.429-439), who argued that before any joint project was developed, joint training must be organised, not only for staff to familiarise themselves with their new role, but with their new colleagues also. Over 60% of staff selected "communication between boards" as the second most likely barrier to a joint service. Member one spoke of the importance of both boards coming together and having a strong understanding of the change process. This supported Dunlop and Holosko (2004, p.1-18), who believed that board members must create a readiness for change before any joint project begins, and once it does begin, they must immediately address any lack of trust that may appear between staff.

5.7 Objective 6: To examine the extent to which the collaboration can enhance the overall service provided to service users

The joint CEO and all four members of the joint working group believed that the quality of service provided to the service user was the most important priority. This supported Miles and Rouse (2011), who argued that in order for a collaboration to enhance a service, senior management must place the service user experience at the forefront of the service.

Members one, three and four focused on the possibility of a joint service being delivered by both organisations. This would mean that new ideas would be generated and a stronger expertise would be available to service users, which would enhance greatly the service provided. This supported Fitzgerald's (2017) research on how Focus Ireland and the Fr Peter McVerry Trust collaborated to provide a new joint housing-first programme, which provided seventy-one people with long-term housing in its first year. Both Company X and Company Y adopt a housing-first service model and member two reported how 84% of service users that were supported by Company X using this model, were still in their homes one year later. This evidence suggests that the housing-first model works and given that two organisations that use the model are now working together, there is potential for even greater service enhancement. The joint CEO emphasised that without this collaboration, Company X would not have the resources to improve their services and that the collaboration could provide financial sustainability, which would therefore improve the service provided. This view correlated with Austin (2000, p.69-97), who believed that cross-sector collaboration improved the

sustainability and social impact of organisations. With Company Y, Company X is now jointly examining four potential projects in the Midlands region, which could lead to the development of one hundred properties, specifically designed to provide and improve homeless services. These projections support the findings of the CGA (2009), who found that of the 46% of charities that were collaborating, 50% highlighted an improved service as the main benefit. The Charity Commission (2010, p.11-37) also found that one of the main outcomes reported by 43% of collaborating charities was improved services.

Member one believed that service enhancement could also come from the financial freedom provided by the collaboration. More readily available finance would mean that staff could be provided with greater resources, which would lead to an improvement in the service provided. This supported Whittle (2002), who argued that the support given to staff during a collaboration was a major factor when trying to improve a service.

Member four also believed that the collaboration could provide faster access to services for service users. This view correlated with Darlington and Feeney (2008, p.187-198), who believed that faster access to supports would be a major enhancement to any service.

5.8 Evaluation of Method

The triangulation method proved very successful as it allowed for the aim and objectives of the research to be examined thoroughly, which resulted in the provision of in-depth data. There were no major issues when conducting the research, although one particular limitation was that all four members of the joint working group were also involved with other organisations, so organising a suitable date and time for interview was difficult to schedule. Additionally, despite the assurance of anonymity, staff may still have been uncomfortable answering questions about their own organisation. Therefore, it must be considered whether the answers given represented the staff member's true opinion.

5.9 Conclusion

The collaboration between Company X and Company Y is still in the development stage, but to date, both boards of directors and the joint CEO have handled the change process very well. The sharing of a CEO between two Irish charities is a brand new concept and both organisations

should be recognised for their innovative thinking. Future challenges are inevitable as the partnership grows and the sharing of services commences, but these challenges can be anticipated through forward planning and consistent communication between all stakeholders.

6.1 Conclusion

This study explored the effectiveness of service collaboration between two Irish charities providing homeless support services. The results of the study have shown that despite entering into what was a brand new type of collaboration for the Irish non-profit sector, both Company X and Company Y are managing this venture very effectively to date. There was a large element of risk in forming this partnership, as the concept of a shared CEO had not been tried and tested before. Both organisations had no basis on which to compare their venture and should therefore be commended, not only for their innovative thinking, but more importantly for breaking new ground in the provision of homeless support services in the state.

6.2 Recommendations

Based on the results of this research, as well as the findings of previous research, the following actions are being recommended for this collaboration agreement.

6.2.1 Board of Directors

While the joint working group consists of the joint CEO and board members from both organisations, both boards of directors have yet to meet in an official capacity. Members one and four of the joint working group spoke of their desire to see this take place in the coming months. During the development stage of the collaboration, it was practical to have this working group represent both organisations, but as the partnership grows and more collaborative options are examined, there are going to be decisions that will require greater input from both boards of directors.

Therefore, it is recommended that both boards are brought together to learn more about each other's respective organisations, particularly the structure, vision and values.

6.2.2 Staff Members

Results showed that the majority of staff members from both organisations were supportive of the collaboration. When asked about the possibility of further joint training, not only was there substantial interest from staff (87%), but the interest was specifically focused on training in the area of mental health awareness. This showed that staff from both organisations had a clear

understanding of the current environment, but in order to provide better supports to service users, they want further training in the area of mental health awareness. The results also showed that while staff were satisfied with the levels of communication at the beginning of the collaboration, they want to be better informed of how the collaboration is progressing.

Therefore, it is recommended that a two-day joint mental health awareness training seminar is organised for the third quarter of 2017. It is also recommended that a progress report is provided to staff in the form of a quarterly internal newsletter.

6.2.3 Joint CEO

All four members of the joint working group spoke of the possibility of a joint service development. If this was to commence, it would not be realistic for the joint CEO to take on further managerial responsibilities, because currently, a large number of staff in both organisations already report directly to him. Therefore, it is recommended that both boards of directors investigate the possibility of sharing a post of Services Manager. By having a shared Services Manager in place, whose role is to oversee services in both organisations, the reporting structure into the joint CEO would significantly decrease and he would then be in a position to focus solely on the running of both organisations.

It is also recommended that both boards of directors investigate the possibility of sharing a post of Assistant to the joint CEO. By having a shared Assistant to the joint CEO in place, there is a staff member providing direct support to the joint CEO on both sides of the collaboration. This staff member would have knowledge of the joint CEO`s daily diary and could act as a communication link between the joint CEO and all services/departments of both organisations.

6.2.4 Cost-sharing

So far the major cost-sharing action that has taken place is the sharing of the post of CEO. All four members of the joint working group and the joint CEO spoke of the possibility of sharing back office functions such as administration, finance, HR and IT. There was also a strong interest among staff when asked about other potential forms of collaboration. Joint training, joint fundraising and joint campaigning were all suggested. By sharing these functions, not only would both organisations be reducing their costs, but more resources could then be allocates to services.

Therefore, it is recommended that a task group, made up of staff members from both organisations and chaired by the joint CEO, be created as soon as possible to investigate other areas of potential cost-sharing. This group would then be asked to bring their findings to their respective boards for review and possible implementation.

6.2.5 Shared Service

Both the joint CEO and all four members of the joint working group highlighted the potential of projects 1, 2, 3 and 4, as previously mentioned in chapter five. If these projects do come to fruition, it is essential that both boards have a written agreement in place that governs the decision-making process. There must be clear guidelines regarding ownership and structure, as failure to implement this could result in barriers being created.

Therefore, it is recommended that if a joint service is developed between Company X and Company Y, both boards have in place detailed terms of reference that clearly outlines how the service will be funded, managed and governed.

6.2.6 Service Enhancement

While any new homeless support service is welcome, it is essential that the service user and their recovery remains the most important priority. The service should be based around the needs of the service user. Therefore, any joint service development should seek the input of previous service users, as they have a greater understanding of the specific supports that are required.

Consequently, it is recommended that if a joint service is developed between Company X and Company Y, both boards should speak to previous service users about the type of supports that the service should have on offer.

6.3 Final Thoughts

As this collaboration agreement continues to develop, new challenges will begin to emerge for both organisations. Such challenges will include both internal and external factors, but Company X and Company Y can anticipate these challenges with strong strategic planning and by incorporating an open and consistent line of communication between all stakeholders. However, the most important element of this collaboration is that by coming together, more people will receive support and less people will be at risk of homelessness.

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Appendix 1 – Covering Letter to Staff Members

Note: Names and company logos have been removed to protect anonymity

10th of April 2017

Dear Staff Member,

My name is Declan O Connor and I work as Governance and Compliance Support Worker with Company X. I am currently studying for a Masters of Business Studies in Advanced Business Practice in Athlone Institute of Technology and I am completing a Research Thesis under the supervision of Ms Brigid Delamere. The title of my thesis is *"An exploration into the effectiveness of service collaboration between two Irish charities providing homeless support services"*. The objectives of my research are as follows:

1. To explore the views of the members within the joint working group, on the effectiveness of the collaboration and their decision-making process.
2. To examine the views of both workforces on the overall impact of the collaboration.
3. To examine the views of the joint CEO of both organisations, on the factors that will determine the collaboration`s effectiveness.
4. To identify the cost-sharing benefits of collaboration between the two charities.
5. To investigate the extent to which the collaboration can facilitate a shared service.
6. To examine the extent to which the collaboration can enhance the overall service provided to service users.

In order to examine Objectives 2 and 5 respectively, I would like to distribute an online questionnaire to all service staff members of Company X and Company Y, based on the current collaboration between both organisations. Your views on the collaboration will be of great value to my research.

I will email this online questionnaire to all service staff members on Tuesday the 18th of April 2017 and if you choose to take part, you will have two weeks to complete the questionnaire. Completion of this questionnaire will take approximately 15-20 minutes of your time.

Participation is completely voluntary and you are free to opt out at any time. If there are any questions that you would prefer not to answer you may skip them. Also, if you would like to provide further feedback, there is an opportunity to do so at the end of the questionnaire.

You will not be identified before, during or after the questionnaire or in any further publication based on this report. All information provided will be kept in the strictest confidence and all results gathered from the questionnaire will be reported as statistical data only.

Thank you very much in advance for your co-operation and support.

Yours sincerely,

Declan O Connor

AiT
Institiúid Teicneolaíochta
Bhaile Átha Luain
Athlone Institute
of Technology

Appendix 2 – Covering Letter to Members of the Joint Working Group

Note: Names and company logos have been removed to protect anonymity

5th of April 2017

Dear XXX,

Thank you for taking my call earlier. This letter is to confirm the Research Interview for **Wednesday the 19th of April 2017 at 3:15pm.**

As I explained, I am currently studying for a Masters of Business Studies in Advanced Business Practice in Athlone Institute of Technology and I am completing a Research Thesis under the supervision of Ms Brigid Delamere. The title of my thesis is *"An exploration into the effectiveness of service collaboration between two Irish charities providing homeless support services"*. The objectives of my research are as follows:

1. To explore the views of the members within the joint working group, on the effectiveness of the collaboration and their decision-making process.
2. To examine the views of both workforces on the overall impact of the collaboration.
3. To examine the views of the joint CEO of both organisations, on the factors that will determine the collaboration`s effectiveness.
4. To identify the cost-sharing benefits of collaboration between the two charities.
5. To investigate the extent to which the collaboration can facilitate a shared service.
6. To examine the extent to which the collaboration can enhance the overall service provided to service users.

This interview will help to examine Objectives 1, 4, 5 and 6 respectively, and I believe your knowledge on the collaboration and your experience within the non-profit sector will be of great value to this research.

Completion of this interview will take approximately 30-40 minutes of your time. Participation is completely voluntary and you are free to opt out at any time. If there are any questions that you would prefer not to answer you may skip them.

You will not be identified before, during or after the interview or in any further publication based on this report. All information provided will be kept in the strictest confidence and all results gathered from the interview will be reported as thematic data only.

Thank you once again for your support with this research. If you wish to contact me at any stage, please feel free to do so on 087 9723480.

Yours sincerely,

Declan O Connor

Institiúid Teicneolaíochta
Bhaile Átha Luain
Athlone Institute
of Technology

Appendix 3 – Covering Letter to the Joint CEO

Note: Names and company logos have been removed to protect anonymity

6th of April 2017

Dear XXX,

Thank you for taking my call earlier. This letter is to confirm the Research Interview for **Thursday the 11th of May 2017 at 1:00pm**.

As you are aware, I am currently studying for a Masters of Business Studies in Advanced Business Practice in Athlone Institute of Technology and I am completing a Research Thesis under the supervision of Ms Brigid Delamere. The title of my thesis is *"An examination into the effectiveness of service collaboration between two Irish charities providing homeless support services"*. The objectives of my research are as follows:

1. To explore the views of the members within the joint working group, on the effectiveness of the collaboration and their decision-making process.
2. To examine the views of both workforces on the overall impact of the collaboration.
3. To examine the views of the joint CEO of both organisations, on the factors that will determine the collaboration`s effectiveness.
4. To identify the cost-sharing benefits of collaboration between the two charities.
5. To investigate the extent to which the collaboration can facilitate a shared service.
6. To examine the extent to which the collaboration can enhance the overall service provided to service users.

This interview will help to examine Objectives 3, 4, 5 and 6 respectively, and I believe your knowledge on the collaboration and your experience within the non-profit sector will be of great value to this research.

Completion of this interview will take approximately 30-40 minutes of your time. Participation is completely voluntary and you are free to opt out at any time. If there are any questions that you would prefer not to answer you may skip them.

You will not be identified before, during or after the interview or in any further publication based on this report. All information provided will be kept in the strictest confidence and all results gathered from the interview will be reported as thematic data only.

If you wish to contact me at any stage, please feel free to do so on 087 9723480.

Yours sincerely,

Declan O Connor

AIT
Institiúid Teicneolaíochta
Bhaile Átha Luain
Athlone Institute
of Technology

Appendix 4 – Collaboration Questionnaire

Note: Names and company logos have been removed to protect anonymity

Section 1 – General

Q1. Please indicate which organisation you currently work for

Company X   □   Company Y   □

Q2. What strategic challenge(s) do you believe your organisation has faced over the last five years, if any? *Please tick all that apply*

Recruitment/retention of staff/volunteers	□	Complying with legislation	□
Maintaining sustainable flow of income	□	Operational issues	□
Growing demand for services	□	Rising costs	□
Managing organisational growth	□	Promoting the organisation	□
Not aware of challenges	□	Other	□

If you stated **Other**, please specify:

_____

Section 2 – Culture

An organisations culture are the shared beliefs, values and assumptions that dictate how employees behave in their role. There are four types of organisational culture:

Clan   – Working Together
Adhocracy   – Dynamic and Innovative
Market   – Results Focused
Hierarchy   – Structured and Controlled

Q3. Based on the above information, in your opinion, what type of culture best fits your organisation? *Please tick one box only*

Clan   □   Adhocracy   □   Market   □   Hierarchy   □

Q4. In terms of your organisations culture, do you believe collaborating with another organisation would change that culture?

Yes   □   No   □

Q5. Do you believe that the announcement of the collaboration created a level of uncertainty within your organisation?

Yes   □   No   □

Q6. Social supports within organisations are the individuals or groups that employees turn to in times of uncertainty. Do you have social supports within your organisation?

Yes   □   No   □

Section 3 – Training

Q7. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 indicating the lowest rating and 10 indicating the highest rating, as a staff member, how beneficial was the Housing First Training Seminar between Company X and Company Y in July 2016? (*Please only answer if you were in attendance*)

<--------1--------2--------3--------4--------5--------6--------7--------8--------9--------10-------->

Q8. Would you like to see more joint training events organised between Company X and Company Y?

Yes   □   No   □

If you answered **Yes** to Question 8, please answer Question 9. If you answered **No** to Question 8, please move on to Question 10.

Q9. What type of joint training events would you like to see organised? *Please tick all that apply*

Housing First Training □	Potential Aggression □	Addiction Awareness □
Mental Health Awareness □	Crisis Intervention □	Stress Management □
Alcohol/Drug Awareness □	Challenging Behaviour □	Working w/ Trauma □
Self-Harm Awareness □	Child Protection □	Other □

If you stated **Other**, please specify:

_____

Section 4 – Communication

Q10. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 indicating the lowest rating and 10 indicating the highest rating, as a staff member, how well do you believe the collaboration agreement was communicated to staff in your organisation?

<--------1--------2--------3--------4--------5--------6--------7--------8--------9--------10-------->

Q11. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 indicating the lowest rating and 10 indicating the highest rating, as a staff member, how well do you believe the reasons for the collaboration were effectively communicated to staff in your organisation?

<--------1--------2--------3--------4--------5--------6--------7--------8--------9--------10-------->

Q12. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 indicating the lowest rating and 10 indicating the highest rating, as a staff member, how well do you believe you have been kept informed of the collaboration`s progress?

<--------1--------2--------3--------4--------5--------6--------7--------8--------9--------10-------->

Section 5 – Shared Services

At present, the major form of collaboration between Company X and Company Y is the sharing of the post of CEO, but in the future there may be potential for other areas of joint working.

Q13. In terms of other areas of joint working, would you like to see both organisations sharing a finance department?

Yes   □   No   □

If you answered **Yes** to Question 13, please answer Questions 14 and 15. If you answered **No** to Question 13, please move on to Question 16.

Q14. If both organisations chose to share a finance department, would this be difficult to implement? *Please tick the box that best describes your opinion on the subject.*

Not at all difficult   □   Somewhat difficult   □   Very difficult   □

Q15. If both organisations chose to share a finance department, would this make your own role easier? *Please tick the box that best describes your opinion on the subject.*

Yes   □   No   □   No difference   □

Q16. In terms of future areas of joint working, would you like to see both organisations sharing a HR department?

Yes   □   No   □

If you answered **Yes** to Question 16, please answer Questions 17 and 18. If you answered **No** to Question 16, please move on to Question 19.

Q17. If both organisations chose to share a HR department, would this be difficult to implement? *Please tick the box that best describes your opinion on the subject.*

Not at all difficult   □   Somewhat difficult   □   Very difficult   □

Q18. If both organisations chose to share a HR department, would this make your own role easier? *Please tick the box that best describes your opinion on the subject.*

Yes   □   No   □   No difference   □

Q19. Would you like to see Company Y share some of Company X`s services in the counties of Laois, Longford, Offaly and Westmeath?

Yes   □   No   □

Please explain your answer

_____

Q20. What do you believe are the key benefits of sharing a service? *Please tick all that apply*

Development of new policies   □   Faster access to services   □   Cost Sharing   □

Better decision making   □   Better use of resources   □   No benefits   □

Development of new ideas   □   Information sharing   □   Other   □

If you stated **Other**, please specify:

_____

Section 6 – New Service

Q21. Would you like to see both organisations develop a new joint service in the Midlands?

Yes   □   No   □

If you answered **Yes** to Question 21, please answer Question 22. If you answered **No** to Question 21, please move on to Question 23.

Q22. What services would you like to see developed in the Midlands between the two organisations? *Please tick all that apply*

Emergency accommodation	□	Addiction service	□	Youth service	□
Community nursing service	□	Independent living	□	Outreach team	□
Mental health service	□	Rough sleeper team	□	Drop-in service	□
Regional support service	□	Long-term housing	□	Other	□

If you stated **Other**, please specify:
_____

Q23. In terms of Company X and Company Y developing a new joint service, are there potential barriers that you believe both organisations may have to overcome? *Please tick all that apply*

Communication between staff	□	Communication between boards	□
Differing work practices	□	Unwillingness to change amongst staff	□
Differing cultures present	□	Lack of support from Local Authorities	□
Different standards in quality	□	Different expectations	□
Other	□		

If you stated **Other**, please specify:
_____

Q24. Apart from a joint service, are there other potential forms of collaboration that you would like to see both organisations undertake? *Please tick all that apply*

Joint fundraising	□	Joint training	□	Joint funding applications	□
Joint campaigning	□	Joint purchasing	□	Tendering support	□
Sharing workspace	□	Sharing information	□	Sharing equipment	□
Sharing staff	□	Other	□	No future collaboration	□

If you stated **Other**, please specify:

_____

Conclusion

Q25. As a staff member, would you like to see Company X and Company Y merge into one organisation in the future?

Yes   □   No   □

Please explain your answer

_____

Please feel free to add any feedback you may have.

_____
_____
_____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Appendix 5 – Interview Questions with Members of the Joint Working Group

Note: Names and company logos have been removed to protect anonymity

This interview is based on **Objectives 1, 4, 5 and 6** respectively. They will aim to examine the views of the members within the joint working group, on the effectiveness of the collaboration and their decision-making process (1), the cost-sharing benefits of collaboration between the two charities (4), the extent to which the collaboration can facilitate a shared service (5) and the extent to which the collaboration can enhance the overall service provided to service users (6).

1. To explore the views of the members within the joint working group, on the effectiveness of the collaboration and their decision-making process.

> **Q. What do you believe are the current strategic challenges for the organisation that you are aligned to?** Company X / Company Y

> **Q. As a member of the joint working group, what were the key stages of the decision-making process during the formation of the collaboration agreement?**

> **Q. What key skills are required by the boards of directors, the joint CEO and both workforces in order to make this collaboration a long-term success?**

4. To identify the cost-sharing benefits of collaboration between the two charities.

> **Q. While the sharing of the post of CEO is the major cost-sharing benefit of the collaboration so far, what other areas of the collaboration could you see cost-sharing take place?**

5. To investigate the extent to which the collaboration can facilitate a shared service.

> **Q. Both organisations are currently providing separate services. Do you see this collaboration facilitating a joint service or jointly developing a new service in the future?**

6. To examine the extent to which the collaboration can enhance the overall service provided to service users of both organisations.

> **Q. How can this collaboration enhance the overall service provided to service users of both organisations?**

Appendix 6 – Interview Questions with the Joint CEO

Note: Names and company logos have been removed to protect anonymity

This interview is based on **Objectives 3, 4, 5 and 6** respectively**.** It will aim to examine the factors that will determine the collaboration`s effectiveness from the CEO`s point of view (3), the cost-sharing benefits of collaboration between the two charities (4), the extent to which the collaboration can facilitate a shared service (5) and the extent to which the collaboration can enhance the overall service provided to service users (6).

3. To examine the views of the joint CEO of both organisations, on the factors that will determine the collaboration`s effectiveness.

> **Q. What do you believe are the current strategic challenges for both Company X and Company Y?**

> **Q. As a member of the joint working group, what were the key stages of the decision-making process during the formation of the collaboration agreement?**

> **Q. What key skills are required by the joint CEO, the boards of directors and both workforces in order to make this collaboration a long-term success?**

4. To identify the cost-sharing benefits of collaboration between the two charities.

> **Q. While the sharing of the post of CEO is the major cost-sharing benefit of the collaboration so far, what other areas of the collaboration could you see cost-sharing take place?**

5. To investigate the extent to which the collaboration can facilitate a shared service.

> **Q. Both organisations are currently providing separate services. Do you see this collaboration facilitating a joint service or jointly developing a new service in the future?**

6. To examine the extent to which the collaboration can enhance the overall service provided to service users of both organisations.

> **Q. How can this collaboration enhance the overall service provided to service users of both organisations?**

Appendix 7 – Transcript of Interview with Member 1 of the Joint Working Group (Company X Representative)

Note: Names and company logos have been removed to protect anonymity

This interview is based on Objectives 1, 4, 5 and 6.

Objective 1. To explore the views of the members within the joint working group, on the effectiveness of the collaboration and their decision-making process.

Author: *What do you believe are the current strategic challenges for the organisation that you are aligned to, in this case Company X?*

Joint Working Group Member: *It's all very positive but no change is without its challenges. I would feel that one of the main challenges would be the views of funders from both sides. I know a lot of work has been done with them to date and they have been consistently communicated to, but I believe because this is new and one of the first collaborations of its kind, the fact that it has not been done before may make funders or other organisations uneasy about the process. I think that there might be a perception within the sector that with collaboration`s such as this, the belief is that the smaller of the two organisations might be taken over by the bigger organisation. I believe that other organisations looking at this collaboration might do so with a bit of jealousy. I believe that Company X and Company Y have been very courageous in taking this step and I believe that the CEO has taken on a huge challenge by overseeing both organisations.*

Author: *As a member of the joint working group, what were the key elements of the decision-making process during the formation of the collaboration agreement?*

Joint Working Group Member: *Obviously we trusted the CEO to manage the development and the joint working group are overseeing the process, but one of the things that I believe could also happen is that both boards of directors could meet in order to develop the relationship and learn more about the differences and similarities of each organisation. I believe this is an option going forward and it could be very important in terms of relationship building for the collaboration. I believe the Housing-First training seminar that was held between both organisations last summer was very important as it gave both boards and staff*

members the opportunity to meet. I remember during the meal some of the board members of Company Y sat with us and this was useful as it gave us an opportunity to get to know each other. Going forward I believe that the joint working group must continue to meet and at some stage both boards could also meet.

Author: *What key skills are required by the boards of directors, the joint CEO and both workforces in order to make this collaboration a long-term success?*

Joint Working Group Member: *I suppose the skills that are required by all involved in the collaboration include strong management, a strong knowledge of the change process, a strong understanding of people, an acceptance that we won't have all the answers, openness, accountability and transparency. I believe that communication is very important between both boards and the CEO has been excellent in facilitating this. I also believe that as board members we must communicate this successful collaboration process to others and let people know just how well it is going. Apart from skills, another key area will be trust.*

Objective 4. To identify the cost-sharing benefits of collaboration between the two charities.

Author: *While the sharing of the post of CEO is the major cost-sharing benefit of the collaboration so far, what other areas of the collaboration could you see cost-sharing take place?*

Joint Working Group Member: *I think there are a lot of areas where there could be a sharing of costs. I believe both organisations could look at the sharing of their HR and finance functions. Both organisations could look at joint training as well as something as simple as information sharing. For example, rural homelessness is very different to urban homelessness and vice versa, so there could be a huge benefit in having both workforces speak to each other. Discussions about the differences, challenges, similarities and working strategies could be a major development. There is also an opportunity to cost share in the area of services and the provision of supports to service users. For example, a lot of the service users that are in emergency accommodation are ready to move on but they have nowhere to move on to. The savings from the collaboration could provide the finance to source the housing that would allow this to take place.*

Objective 5. To investigate the extent to which the collaboration can facilitate a shared service.

Author: *Both organisations are currently providing separate services. Do you see this collaboration facilitating a joint service or jointly developing a new service in the future?*

Joint Working Group Member: *Yes definitely. I think it is about both organisations playing to their strengths. The strength of Company X is in their emergency accommodation service and the regional support service, while the strength of Company Y is in their ability to provide long-term housing. In terms of a shared service I am not sure as it has not been discussed at length, but I do believe that by focusing on their strengths, both organisations could provide a continuum of care. Company X could provide emergency accommodation and a regional support service and then Company Y could provide the transitional housing required for service users.*

Objective 6. To examine the extent to which the collaboration can enhance the overall service provided to service users of both organisations.

Author: *How can this collaboration enhance the overall service provided to service users of both organisations?*

Joint Working Group Member: *One of the key benefits of this collaboration is that it will provide greater financial stability, which will have a knock on effect towards the supports offered to the service user. Not only will there be more finances to allocate towards the services, but more financial freedom will also allow us to provide the staff with greater resources. Additional staff would mean that new ideas were being generated and stronger expertise was being brought into the organisation which can only benefit the service user more. Greater financial freedom could also mean that more houses were being made available for service users. The availability of move on facilities is a major issue at present.*

Appendix 8 – Transcript of Interview with Member 2 of the Joint Working Group (Company X Representative)

Note: Names and company logos have been removed to protect anonymity

This interview is based on Objectives 1, 4, 5 and 6.

Objective 1. To explore the views of the members within the joint working group, on the effectiveness of the collaboration and their decision-making process.

Author: *What do you believe are the current strategic challenges for the organisation that you are aligned to, in this case Company X?*

Joint Working Group Member: *The biggest challenge we are facing is a lack of resources. We are not getting enough money through state funding to match the services we want to provide. This can not only lead to cash flow problems, but it also places a major burden on our fundraising department to try to make up the difference. This also means that we don't have enough money to recruit more staff which is needed and it also means that we are unable to reward our staff with wage increases. Financial challenges is the best way to sum it up. If we had the resources we could do so much more.*

Author: *As a member of the joint working group, what were the key elements of the decision-making process during the formation of the collaboration agreement?*

Joint Working Group Member: *Well for a start we needed to have the agreement of both boards of directors. This was the first step. We then set up the joint working group, which was made up of representatives from each organisation. The role of this group was to review proceedings, discuss areas of further improvement and then report back to their respective boards. Initially when we were looking at what we could do together we were focusing primarily on property development, or more the access to property that Company Y had that Company X didn't have. This changed unexpectedly when the position of CEO within Company Y became vacant and then both boards looked at the option of sharing a CEO. After much discussion the decision was taken for the CEO of Company X to become the CEO of Company Y also. This obviously changed the dynamic of the collaboration and has become the central part of the agreement.*

Author: *What key skills are required by the boards of directors, the joint CEO and both workforces in order to make this collaboration a long-term success?*

Joint Working Group Member: *First of all, all stakeholders must be open to the collaboration. Any ideas discussed must be a win-win situation for both organisations. Another key skill is communication and both organisations voicing their views on what it is they want, and by bringing both views together the idea is to create an even bigger win collectively. So yes communication is vital and so is forward planning. Being able to continually see the big picture will be very important. Both organisations have to be able to lift themselves above the day to day things and see the bigger picture at play. The bigger picture is what this collaboration is going to mean to those affected by homelessness. The service users of both organisations are the main priority.*

Objective 4. To identify the cost-sharing benefits of collaboration between the two charities.

Author: *While the sharing of the post of CEO is the major cost-sharing benefit of the collaboration so far, what other areas of the collaboration could you see cost-sharing take place?*

Joint Working Group Member: *Well one of the main things for Company X is that Company Y has a more highly resourced administration and back office structure. Our administration structure is very thin and we have just one staff member looking after a number of key areas and this is not sufficient. Company Y have a dedicated finance section, a HR section and a property management section and I feel there is scope for Company X to share a number of these functions. If both organisations are able to share the CEO, then I believe these back office functions can be shared down the line also.*

Objective 5. To investigate the extent to which the collaboration can facilitate a shared service.

Author: *Both organisations are currently providing separate services. Do you see this collaboration facilitating a joint service or jointly developing a new service in the future?*

Joint Working Group Member: *Yes, I think there would be scope for both organisations to look at potential housing developments together. For example, Company Y has access to properties in the region of Company X and are currently looking at "Project 1" and "Project 2". So as a collaborative measure, perhaps Company Y could provide the properties, while Company X could manage them and provide the supports to the service user. I wouldn't see Company X moving outside their region, but Company Y are nationally based and own properties in many areas around the country, so they may see an opportunity to collaborate with another service provider in another region and this would also be very positive. I'm not sure how it will go and we will just have to wait and see how it develops, but the attraction from a Company X point of view is that Company Y has access to property in our region and this is a big pull factor for us because we don't have such access.*

Objective 6. To examine the extent to which the collaboration can enhance the overall service provided to service users of both organisations.

Author: *How can this collaboration enhance the overall service provided to service users of both organisations?*

Joint Working Group Member: *I think that because both organisations are following the Housing-First model of care, service users are being supported by organisation`s that follow a model that has been proven to work. Many service users suffer from repeat homelessness and many present with complex needs. In order to have a real chance of remaining in their property, they will require intensive support and that's where we come in. The Housing-First model provides for this intensive support and now with the two organisations working together, this can only enhance the support provided from both sides and the overall goal is to eliminate chronic homelessness in the region. What the local authorities are now saying is that the people we are supporting through the Housing-First model were originally re-presenting to them numerous times, but that's not happening now. From what I recall, 84% of the service users who have been supported using the Housing-First model have been in their property for over a year now. I'm not saying there are not a lot of challenges, but this is obviously working and the service users are benefiting. More collaboration going forward is only going to improve this situation further because the more resources we have, the more people that we can support.*

Appendix 9 – Transcript of Interview with Member 3 of the Joint Working Group (Company Y Representative)

Note: Names and company logos have been removed to protect anonymity

This interview is based on Objectives 1, 4, 5 and 6.

Objective 1. To explore the views of the members within the joint working group, on the effectiveness of the collaboration and their decision-making process.

Author: *What do you believe are the current strategic challenges for the organisation that you are aligned to, in this case Company Y?*

Joint Working Group Member: *Well one of the strategic challenges Company Y has faced is securing funding. Another challenge would be that we currently have no services based in the Midlands. A number of years ago we were considering a property development in a Midlands town and we were travelling up and down from Dublin frequently, but because we did not have an original service based in the Midlands, the perception was that we were just another blow-in from Dublin. The project eventually fell through for a number of reasons. However, the collaboration with Company X has now provided us with an opportunity to again look at developments in the Midlands and we will definitely be picking the brains of Company X with regards to services in the Midlands as they are experienced in this region. The collaboration means that we can meet these challenges.*

Author: *As a member of the joint working group, what were the key elements of the decision-making process during the formation of the collaboration agreement?*

Joint Working Group Member: *One key development that occurred was that the former CEO of Company Y resigned and suddenly a gap opened. Our board instantly saw an opportunity. At this stage we had already been speaking to Company X about the possibility of collaborative working, but when the CEO of Company X became the CEO of Company Y also, the process gathered pace. Our board had already thought very highly of the board of Company X and the CEO. The local authority also thought that this was a very positive move and explained that these type of collaborative working relationships was what was needed. I also think we need to meet more often as the collaboration grows. The joint working group is currently meeting*

probably once every two months and we then report back to our respective boards.

Author: *What key skills are required by the boards of directors, the joint CEO and both workforces in order to make this collaboration a long-term success?*

Joint Working Group Member: *Some of the key skills required are awareness and communication and it is very important that both organisations are aware of exactly what's going on at all times. I would really like the staff of both organisations to get to know each other better as I am all for more collaboration. I think forward thinking and planning are also skills that stakeholders will require.*

Objective 4. To identify the cost-sharing benefits of collaboration between the two charities.

Author: *While the sharing of the post of CEO is the major cost-sharing benefit of the collaboration so far, what other areas of the collaboration could you see cost-sharing take place?*

Joint Working Group Member: *I would really love to see more joint training events between both organisations and I think the sharing of back office functions is also something that can definitely be looked at. This will be important going forward as there are a number of potential Midlands based projects that Company Y is looking at and we will require Company X`s experience here as they are more familiar with the region.*

Objective 5. To investigate the extent to which the collaboration can facilitate a shared service.

Author: *Both organisations are currently providing separate services. Do you see this collaboration facilitating a joint service or jointly developing a new service in the future?*

Joint Working Group Member: *As it happens, Company Y potentially has some very significant projects coming up in the Midlands. This will involve "Project 1", "Project 2" and "Project 3" and Company Y has also had a meeting recently where another organisation has*

offered them a property within the Midlands to develop further homeless services. It would make absolute sense for Company X to come on board with this project, as they know what's happening on the ground in the Midlands and they know the different stakeholders involved. Company X know the services that are required. For example, from what I understand there are very few services available for single people in the Midlands who are at risk of homelessness. Wouldn't it be great if Company X and Company Y were able to provide such a service? In relation to these Midlands based projects, what I would love to see is staff from both organisations sitting down together and discussing the potential of the service and what it could look like.

Objective 6. To examine the extent to which the collaboration can enhance the overall service provided to service users of both organisations.

Author: *How can this collaboration enhance the overall service provided to service users of both organisations?*

Joint Working Group Member: *With these new developments there are going to be more services available for the service users. With both organisations working together there is greater knowledge and expertise available which will benefit the service user in their recovery.*

Appendix 10 – Transcript of Interview with Member 4 of the Joint Working Group (Company Y Representative)

Note: Names and company logos have been removed to protect anonymity

This interview is based on Objectives 1, 4, 5 and 6.

Objective 1. To explore the views of the members within the joint working group, on the effectiveness of the collaboration and their decision-making process.

Author: *What do you believe are the current strategic challenges for the organisation that you are aligned to, in this case Company Y?*

Joint Working Group Member: *Well I would be inclined to see them as more opportunities than challenges. I see opportunities in both organisations philosophy and value system. I think that this collaboration presents us with an opportunity to develop both organisations. By having two similar organisations working together there is the element of what you could call "constructive challenge" and I really think that this can be healthy for both organisations.*

Author: *As a member of the joint working group, what were the key elements of the decision-making process during the formation of the collaboration agreement?*

Joint Working Group Member: *Thinking about it, I played a kind of matchmaker role in the process. I was at one stage the Chairperson of the national federation of Company X and at the same time I was working with the founders of Company Y, not in relation to Company Y but in relation to another service that they were involved in. This brought about opportunities of information sharing within social conversations in relation to Company X and Company Y. As time went on I had served my term as Chairperson of the national federation of Company X, but I was still involved in the other project with the Company Y members. I was then invited to join the board of Company Y and later became Chairperson of Company Y. During this time I had retained my friendship with the CEO of Company X and I was always interested to hear how the organisation was doing. This led to discussions between Company X and Company Y over common interests, specifically the Housing-First model of care which both organisations were utilising. The joint collaboration was something that we saw as a possibility and it first required the agreement of both organisations to set up the joint working group to explore areas*

of common interest. By forming, the joint working group put the flesh on the bones of the collaboration. This group meets quarterly but of course there may be telephone conversations and discussions in between meetings also. In terms of the sharing of the CEO, this action was not planned. The previous CEO of Company Y moved on to another organisation and therefore a vacancy arose, so the organisation looked at the options available to them. One of the ideas brought up was that here we have two organisations doing essentially the same thing and they were both relatively manageable. They had already started working together and discussing collaborative options so could there be opportunity to have a joint CEO, and this is how the joint CEO came about.

Author: *What key skills are required by the boards of directors, the joint CEO and both workforces in order to make this collaboration a long-term success?*

Joint Working Group Member: *I think a key skill is the collective belief that the system and the process can work. It's a shared commitment that this is a good way to go. Another skill required is an openness to exploring other possibilities also. In terms of the skills required by staff, I think it's important they look at the overall benefits of working together such as the sharing of approaches and resources and most importantly the expanding of the learning base, as this will ultimately benefit the service users. Both organisations held a very successful joint training seminar last summer and I think what this demonstrated was that both organisations were already very similar and were already working along the same lines. I think it's also important to note that the future of this will not involve the joint working group doing all the thinking. Ideally the process should become organic and natural and this would mean that there is an input from all levels of both organisations, because unless it is shared by those who are delivering the services it is not going to work. It has to become the way we do things.*

Objective 4. To identify the cost-sharing benefits of collaboration between the two charities.

Author: *While the sharing of the post of CEO is the major cost-sharing benefit of the collaboration so far, what other areas of the collaboration could you see cost-sharing take place?*

Joint Working Group Member: *Well there's many of them. On the business side, there is a lot of administration requirement around the new regulations such as policies, procedures, risk registers and risk management, and by having a focus on this I think it is possible to do this once and use it twice. I'm not saying that there are going to be the same policies or procedures for both organisations, but there is definitely scope for investigating a working process that incorporates both organisation's needs. There are opportunities around procurement policies and there are opportunities around the financial systems and reporting systems being used by both organisations. There may be something that Company Y could provide for both organisations and there may be something that Company X could provide for both organisations. It's about being sure-footed enough to know that this is the most efficient way of doing things.*

Objective 5. To investigate the extent to which the collaboration can facilitate a shared service.

Author: *Both organisations are currently providing separate services. Do you see this collaboration facilitating a joint service or jointly developing a new service in the future?*

Joint Working Group Member: *Yes I do, and I think what is most important is the shared element of setting up a service, as opposed to jointly delivering a service. It is about both organisations bringing their best qualities to the table and having a collective benefit. For example, Company Y has stronger resources in relation to developing facilities, while Company X has extensive experience of working within the Midlands. Both organisations are currently looking at "Project 1" and there is a joint approach to this in terms of all the administration required including the application and grant process. There is also a recognition that when "Project 2" is up and running in the Midlands, it will have been set up jointly but it won't be run jointly. It would be run by Company X because the Midlands counties are their known territory and Company Y is not a known brand in that area and has no desire to become a known brand in that area. In terms of potential fundraising and public relations, it makes sense to attribute this to Company X. More importantly, Company X has excellent knowledge of the region and already delivers an excellent service, so there is no need to change that. To put it simply, if it's perceived that Company Y can make a contribution then that would happen. A shared service makes good business sense but ultimately what you are doing is*

freeing up finance that can be spent on the services offered to service users and I think it's very important to always keep this bigger picture in mind.

Objective 6. To examine the extent to which the collaboration can enhance the overall service provided to service users of both organisations.

Author: *How can this collaboration enhance the overall service provided to service users of both organisations?*

Joint Working Group Member: *Well the whole idea of the collaboration, the joint service and the sharing of learning can be expanded even further and this can only benefit those being supported by our services. With the collaboration up and running, things will begin to happen more quickly now in terms of the provision of accommodation. It will definitely speed up the process in terms of a faster access to services. By sharing the cost of items, whether it is posts, services or back office functions, this will free up more money to spend on the services being provided to the service users.*

Appendix 11 – Transcript of Interview with the Joint CEO

Note: Names and company logos have been removed to protect anonymity

This interview is based on Objectives 3, 4, 5 and 6.

Objective 3. To examine the views of the joint CEO of both organisations, on the factors that will determine the collaboration`s effectiveness.

Author: *What do you believe are the current strategic challenges for both organisations?*

Joint CEO: *From Company X`s perspective, the key challenge is financial sustainability. Company X has to raise €360,000 (50%) of its total income through its shops or its own fundraising methods. Raising €360,000 in the Midlands is extremely difficult as we are being asked to raise a huge amount of money in an area where there is not significant wealth. In my view, and this is also the view of the Finance Sub Committee, the target that we need to reach each year is not sustainable. Another major challenge facing Company X is being able to comply with the different regulatory codes and standards that it is now obliged to comply with, from housing regulation to standards in services. While high quality has always been a hallmark of Company X, it is now having to comply with extra standards, but it does not have the resources to do so. Bigger organisations are able to comply with these standards as they have in place Quality Assurance Managers and HR Managers, while Company X has none of these, so there is definitely a problem with economies of scale. For Company Y, the challenges are different. In terms of fundraising, Company Y only has to raise €200,000 and this is on a national basis. One of the other main challenges for Company Y is to realise the potential and the opportunities that it has. At the moment Company Y is involved in eight different development projects and there are no barriers in place that will prevent them from delivering on these developments, so therefore they just need to remain focused and maintain the drive to follow through on the projects. So clearly there are very different challenges facing both organisations. The reality is though, without a collaboration, Company X would not be able to continue. In the strategic review that was carried out by the board of directors, they spent a full day analysing the data that was coming in from HR, finance, services and stakeholders and while the quality and the reputation of the service being provided was excellent, the financial sustainability was continually in question and there was no way of addressing this problem unless we looked at collaborating with another organisation. Its very survival is dependent on sharing back office supports which will help make the organisation financially viable.*

Author: *As a member of the joint working group, what were the key elements of the decision-making process during the formation of the collaboration agreement?*

Joint CEO: S*o the first thing that occurred was that before the collaboration became a possibility, Company X was already involved in a strategic review in 2016. The review led to Company X looking at the possibility of working with Company Y, but not to the level that eventually occurred in quarter four of 2016. This review looked at everything in Company X, from services, to finances, to HR to consultations with external stakeholders. What came out of that review was that morale at the time amongst staff in Company X was high, the quality of standards was high and our reputation among other service providers was high, but there was a major challenge in terms of the financial sustainability of Company X. It was clear that Company X could not continue on their own and that there needed to be some way of reducing costs and sharing costs. Then an opportunity came along to work more closely with Company Y. It was clear that they were a very like-minded organisation with shared values, a shared ethos and a complimentary service model also. This led to both boards looking at the possibility of collaborative working and when the decision was taken by both boards to go down this route, the collaboration agreement effectively began. A joint working group was then formed to oversee the collaboration and carry out a quarterly review. It was after this that the CEO of Company Y stepped down and the board of Company Y approached the CEO of Company X about a joint role.*

Author: *What key skills are required by the boards of directors, the joint CEO and both workforces in order to make this collaboration a long-term success?*

Joint CEO: *I think firstly there needs to be a collaborative vision from both boards. I think it's already there but it needs to be fostered and developed further. This means that there needs to be an acceptance that the two organisations could grow stronger together, which might involve sharing the limelight and sharing areas of growth together. Secondly, I think that the structures of both organisations need to align. For example, I think that there needs to be a new joint appointment which would be based in the Midlands. This post would involve the regional management of services and they would be working directly for one of the organisations, but it would be seen as a joint appointment. This post would involve the Line Management for services of Company X, but it could oversee one or two of the services of Company Y also. This would provide another resource for both organisations at senior level.*

I also think that the finance functions of both organisations need to align, where the finance function of Company X would be run by the finance department of Company Y. I think there are other appointments that could be made that would develop the collaboration further, such as a HR Manager, who would oversee the HR functions of both organisations. There is also scope for a property management role between both organisations. In both organisations staff are having to spend valuable time looking after maintenance issues within properties. It would be more effective and efficient if this had its own separate department. In terms of communication throughout both organisations, I agree that it could be improved, but you have to be very careful when you are developing something new, such as this collaboration. You need to ensure that you are communicating something that is going to stick. A former Chairperson of Company X has often used the term that "we build the road as we walk it". So for example, both organisations were setting off on a journey together and we did not know how it would develop. Therefore, we were strangely building the road a few feet ahead of us as we went along. Critics would argue that this is not a positive strategy and this is not the way to build an organisation, but if we were to wait until the road was built we would not have got anywhere. We acknowledge that there is massive risk taking here, and this in itself is a skill, but you can only communicate something when you know what it is that you are communicating. The collaboration and its development is a standing item on both boards agenda`s and they are consistently being updated by the joint working group. However, when you are only seven months into a collaboration, it is very difficult to communicate specific details to staff on how it is progressing. It takes time for these things to develop. For example, something that is coming out of the joint working group now and that we may communicate to staff is that we would create staff task groups, made up of staff from both organisations. The thinking is that one of these groups may be asked to look at one of the sites that is being developed by Company Y in the Midlands and then report back to the CEO on what model of service they believe should be developed on this particular site, the required number of staff, required costs etc.

Objective 4. To identify the cost-sharing benefits of collaboration between the two charities.

Author: *While the sharing of the post of CEO is the major cost-sharing benefit of the collaboration so far, what other areas of the collaboration could you see cost-sharing take place?*

Joint CEO: *Well I think there is scope for cost-sharing to take place within the finance function. Not only could it be done cheaper but it could be done better. There are things that both organisations should be doing but are not doing because they cannot afford to. The only way they can afford to do these things is by coming together. HR is another area where cost-sharing could take place. Another idea is that if we were to create a new managerial post to oversee services in both organisations. This is something that we could not do without the collaboration. Company X used to have this type of post in place but had to let go of it because we could not afford it.*

Objective 5. To investigate the extent to which the collaboration can facilitate a shared service.

Author: *Both organisations are currently providing separate services. Do you see this collaboration facilitating a joint service or jointly developing a new service in the future?*

Joint CEO: *The best way of looking at that is to give an example of what we are trying to do with "Project 1" in the Midlands. Here we are looking to use Company Y`s knowledge and capacity to purchase a property, with Company X running the service. I want to really emphasise that there is no way that Company X would have the individual resources to purchase a similar property. It is going to cost Company Y €10,000 to simply investigate the property between architects fees, evaluations fees and feasibility studies. Will the organisations ever come together and fully merge? I don't know at this stage. There is a very strong investment from all stakeholders in this collaboration. Blood, sweat and tears have gone into building up both organisations and understandably there would be a reluctance to give that up. If you were to give that up through a merger, there may be a fear that people are giving up ownership of their respective organisation. Therefore, the collaboration must develop slowly and patiently.*

Objective 6. To examine the extent to which the collaboration can enhance the overall service provided to service users of both organisations.

Author: *How can this collaboration enhance the overall service provided to service users of both organisations?*

Joint CEO: S*o one of the board members of Company X has put this well. You don't put two companies together in the business world to produce less of a product and two builders don't get together to build less houses. So what is the goal here? I think we're on the verge of something fantastic and this is something that is driving me and motivating me through all of the difficult periods of the work. Company X and Company Y, together, could build one hundred houses in the next five years. This is not wishful thinking. There is an application in for funding to develop 30 properties with "Project 1", Company Y have been given approval by a local authority to carry out a feasibility study for a further 30 properties in "Project 2", there are potentially 18 further properties with "Project 3" and there are at least another 20 properties planned for "Project 4". To be able to provide 100 houses for people who are homeless over the next five years is a massive achievement and this is not a fairy tale. These are all real projects that can happen. The collaboration is all about making projects like this a reality.*

Appendix 12 – Correlation of Questionnaire Results

Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Participant														
1	X	Recruitment/retention of Staff/Volunteers, Maintaining sustainable flow of income, Operational issues, Growing demand for services, Rising costs	Clan	Y	Y	Y	7	Y	Housing first training, Mental health awareness, Alcohol/Drug awareness, Challenging behaviour, Self-harm awareness	5	6	8	Y	Somewhat difficult
2	X	Not aware of challenges	Clan	Y	Y	Y	7	Y	Mental health awareness, Crisis intervention, Alcohol/Drug awareness, Working with trauma, Self-harm awareness, Child protection	6	6	6	Y	Very difficult
3	X	Recruitment/retention of Staff/Volunteers, Maintaining sustainable flow of income, Growing demand for services	Adhocracy	Y	N	Y	7	Y	Addiction awareness, Mental health awareness, Challenging behaviour, Working with trauma	6	6	6	Y	Very difficult
4	X	Recruitment/retention of Staff/Volunteers, Maintaining sustainable flow of income, Growing demand for services	Adhocracy	N	Y	Y	N/A	Y	Mental health awareness, Stress management, Challenging behaviour	7	7	6	Y	Somewhat difficult
5	X	Recruitment/retention of Staff/Volunteers, Growing demand for services, Rising costs	Clan	N	Y	Y	9	Y	Housing first, Potential aggression, Addiction, Mental health, Crisis intervention, Stress management, Alcohol/Drug awareness, Challenging behaviour, Working with trauma, Self-harm awareness, Child protection	9	9	7	N	N/A
6	X	Complying with legislation, Maintaining sustainable flow of income, Operational issues, Promoting the organisation	Clan	Y	Y	Y	6	Y	Potential aggression, Addiction awareness, Mental health awareness, Crisis intervention, Working with trauma	6	7	6	N	N/A
7	X	Recruitment/retention of staff/volunteers, Complying with legislation, Maintaining sustainable flow of income, Operational issues, Growing demand for services, Rising costs, Managing organisational growth, Promoting the organisation	Clan	Y	N	N	8	Y	Housing first training, Mental health awareness, Child protection, Working with Trauma, Potential aggression	8	7	10	Y	Not at all difficult

Question	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Participant											
1	Y	Y	Not at all difficult	Y	Y	Better decision making, Development of new ideas, Cost sharing, Information sharing	Y	Dedicated mental health service, Drop-in service, Long term housing, Addiction service	Communication between staff, Communication between boards, Unwillingness to change amongst staff, Different expectations	Joint training, Joint purchasing, Sharing workspace, Sharing staff, Sharing information	Y
2	N/D	Y	Very difficult	N/D	Y	Faster access to services, Better use of resources, Cost sharing	Y	Emergency accommodation service, Youth service, Independent living, Long term housing	Communication between staff, Communication between boards, Unwillingness to change amongst staff	Joint fundraising, Joint training, Joint funding applications, Sharing information	Y
3	Y	Y	Not at all difficult	Y	Y	Faster access to services, Better decision making, Better use of resources, Development of new ideas	Y	Dedicated mental health service, Drop-in service, Long term housing, Outreach team	Communication between staff, Communication between boards, Unwillingness to change amongst staff	Joint training, Joint purchasing, Joint fundraising, Sharing workspace	Y
4	N/D	Y	Somewhat difficult	N/D	Y	Faster access to services, Better use of resources, Development of new ideas	Y	Emergency Accommodation Service, Outreach team, Rough sleeper team, Drop-in service, Long term housing	Differing work practices, Unwillingness to change amongst staff, Different expectations	Joint training, Joint funding applications, Sharing staff, Sharing information	Y
5	N/A	Y	Somewhat difficult	N/D	Y	Better use of resources, Development of new ideas, Cost sharing, Information sharing	Y	Emergency Accommodation Service, Independent living, Outreach team, Dedicated mental health service, Rough sleeper team. Regional support service, Long term housing	Differing work practices, Communication between boards, Unwillingness to change amongst staff, Different standards in quality, Different expectations	Joint training, Joint funding applications, Joint purchasing, Tendering support, Sharing workspace, Sharing equipment, Sharing information	Y
6	N/A	Y	Very difficult	Y	Y	Better decision making, Better use of resources, Information sharing	Y	Youth service, Outreach team, Dedicated mental health service, Drop-in service, Long term housing	Communication between staff, Communication between boards, Differing work practices	Joint training, Joint funding applications, Joint campaigning, Joint purchasing, Sharing workspace,	Y
7	Y	Y	Not at all difficult	Y	Y	Faster access to services, Better decision making, Better use of resources, Cost sharing,	Y	Addiction service, Independent living, Outreach team, Dedicated mental health service, Rough sleeper team, Drop-in service	Communication between staff, Communication between boards, Differing work practices	Joint fundraising, training, funding applications, campaigning, Tendering support, Shared workspace, staff, information	Y

Question Participant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
8	X	Maintaining sustainable flow of income, Operational issues, Promoting the organisation	Market	N	Y	N	5	Y	Stress management, Challenging behaviour,	8	8	5	Y	Somewhat difficult
9	X	Growing demand for services, Rising costs, Operational issues	Adhocracy	Y	N	Y	8	Y	Mental health awareness, Addiction awareness, Alcohol/Drug awareness, Working with trauma, Self-harm awareness, Challenging behaviour	7	7	7	Y	Not at all difficult
10	X	Maintaining sustainable flow of income, Growing demand for services, Rising costs	Clan	N	N	N	10	Y	Addiction awareness, Mental health awareness, Challenging behaviour, Working with trauma, Housing first training, Potential aggression, Crisis intervention, Stress management, Alcohol/Drug awareness, Self-harm awareness	9	9	5	Y	Somewhat difficult
11	X	Recruitment/retention of Staff/Volunteers, Complying with legislation, Maintaining sustainable flow of income, Operational Issues, Growing demand for services	Market	Y	Y	6	6	Y	Mental health awareness, Stress management, Addiction Awareness, Crisis Intervention, Working with trauma, Child protection	7	7	7	Y	Somewhat difficult
12	X	Recruitment/retention of Staff/Volunteers, Growing demand for services, Rising costs, Promoting the organisation, Operational issues, Maintaining sustainable flow of income, Complying with legislation	Clan	Y	Y	Y	10	N	N/A	4	4	4	Y	Very difficult
13	X	Rising costs	Adhocracy	Y	Y	Y	7	N	N/A	5	7	6	Y	Somewhat difficult
14	X	Recruitment/retention of staff/volunteers, Complying with legislation, Maintaining sustainable flow of income, Operational issues, Growing demand for services, Rising costs, Managing organisational growth, Promoting the organisation	Market	Y	Y	N	4	N	N/A	2	2	2	Y	Somewhat difficult

Question	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Participant											
8	Y	Y	Not at all difficult	Y	Y	Development of new policies, Better use of resources, Development of new ideas, Cost sharing, Information sharing	Y	Emergency accommodation service, Youth service, Addiction service, Long term housing	Communication between boards, Differing work practices, Different expectations	Joint training, Joint fundraising, Sharing staff, Sharing information	Y
9	Y	Y	Somewhat difficult	Y	Y	Better use of resources, Better decision making, Development of new ideas	Y	Emergency accommodation service, Addiction service, Independent living, Rough sleeper team, Drop-in service, Regional support service, Outreach team, Dedicated mental health service	Differing work practices, Different expectations, Standards in quality, Unwillingness to change amongst staff	Joint fundraising, Joint training, Joint campaigning, Tendering support, Sharing workspace, Sharing information	Y
10	N/D	N	N/A	N/A	N	Faster access to services, Development of new policies, Cost sharing, Information sharing, Development of new ideas	Y	Dedicated mental health service, Drop-in service, Long term housing, Emergency accommodation service, Youth service, Addiction service, Community nursing service, Independent living, Outreach team, Rough sleeper team,	Communication between staff, Between boards, Differing work practices, Differing cultures present, Lack of support from local authorities, Different standards in quality,	Joint training, Joint campaigning, Tendering support, Sharing information, Sharing equipment	N
11	Y	Y	Somewhat difficult	N/D	Y	Cost Sharing, Development of new ideas	Y	Emergency Accommodation Service, Dedicated mental health service, Addiction service, Drop-in service, Long term housing	Communication between staff, Communication between boards, Different expectations, work practices	Joint training, Joint purchasing, Joint funding applications, Tendering support	Y
12	N/D	Y	Somewhat difficult	N/D	N	Faster access to services, Development of new ideas, Cost sharing,	Y	Addiction service Dedicated mental health service, Long term housing	Communication between staff, Communication between boards, Unwillingness to change amongst staff, Different standards in quality, Differing cultures, Lack of support from L.A`s	Joint funding applications, Joint fundraising, Tendering support, Sharing equipment	N
13	N/D	N	N/A	N/A		Cost sharing	Y	Community nursing service, Long term housing	Communication between staff,		Y
14	N	N	N/A	N/A	Y	Development of new policies, Faster access to services, Cost sharing,	Y	Addiction service, Independent living, Dedicated mental health service, Drop-in service	Communication between staff, Communication between boards, Differing work practices	Joint fundraising, training, funding applications, campaigning, Tendering support	N

Question / Participant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	X	Maintaining sustainable flow of income, Recruitment/retention of staff/volunteers, Promoting the organisation	Market	N	Y	N	6	Y	Housing first training	7	7	7	Y	Somewhat difficult
16	X	Growing demand for services, Rising costs, Recruitment/retention of staff/volunteers, Promoting the organisation	Hierarchy	Y	Y	Y	N/A	Y	Mental health awareness, Addiction awareness, Alcohol/Drug awareness, Working with trauma, Self-harm awareness, Challenging behaviour, Housing first, Potential aggression, Crisis intervention, Stress management	6	6	6	Y	Somewhat difficult
17	Y	Promoting the organisation, Growing demand for services,	Clan	Y	N	Y	N/A	Y	Addiction awareness, Mental health awareness, Challenging behaviour, Working with trauma, Housing first training, Crisis intervention, Stress management	7	7	7	N	N/A
18	Y	Growing demand for services	Clan	N	N	N	N/A	Y	Mental health awareness, Housing first, Addiction awareness, Alcohol/drug awareness, Self-harm awareness, Child protection	6	5	5	N	N/A
19	Y	Growing demand for services,	Clan	Y	Y	N	N/A	Y	Mental health awareness, Housing first, Addiction awareness, Crisis intervention, Self-harm awareness, Child protection	4	4	4	Y	Somewhat difficult
20	Y	Not aware of challenges	Clan	N	N	Y	8	Y	Mental health awareness, Addiction awareness, Alcohol/Drug awareness, Working with trauma, Self-harm awareness, Challenging behaviour, Housing first, Potential aggression, Crisis intervention, Stress management, Child protection	3	3	6	N	N/A
21	Y	Growing demand for services, Rising costs	Hierarchy	Y	Y	N	N/A	Y	Mental health awareness, Addiction awareness, Working with trauma, Self-harm awareness, Challenging behaviour, Potential aggression,	7	4	2	Y	Somewhat difficult

Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Participant														
22	Y	Maintaining sustainable flow of income, Operational issues, Growing demand for services, Rising costs, Promoting the organisation	Clan	N	Y	N	5	Y	Housing first training, Mental health awareness, Addiction awareness, Alcohol/Drug awareness, Working with trauma, Self-harm awareness, Challenging behaviour, Potential aggression, Crisis intervention, Stress management, Child protection	5	5	5	N	N/A
23	X	Growing demand for services,	Clan	N	N	Y	8	Y	Mental health awareness, Addiction awareness, Alcohol/Drug awareness, Working with trauma, Self-harm awareness, Challenging behaviour, Housing first training, Potential aggression, Crisis intervention, Stress management, Child protection	7	7	7	Y	Very difficult
24	Y	Recruitment/retention of staff/volunteers, Complying with legislation, Maintaining sustainable flow of income	Hierarchy	Y	Y	Y	7	Y	Addiction awareness, Mental health awareness, Challenging behaviour, Working with trauma, Crisis intervention, Stress management, Alcohol/drug awareness, Child protection, Self-harm awareness	4	4	4	N	N/A
25	Y	Recruitment/retention of staff/volunteers, Rising costs, Managing organisational growth, Promoting the organisation	Clan	Y	Y	Y	N/A	Y	Housing first, Working with trauma, Alcohol/drug awareness, Crisis intervention	1	1	1	Y	Somewhat difficult
26	Y	Recruitment/retention of staff/volunteers, Operational issues, Promoting the organisation	Market	Y	N	N	N/A	Y	Housing first training, Mental health awareness, Addiction awareness, Alcohol/Drug awareness, Working with trauma, Self-harm awareness, Challenging behaviour, Potential aggression, Crisis intervention, Stress management, Child protection	1	1	1	Y	Somewhat difficult
27	Y	Recruitment/retention of staff/volunteers,	Hierarchy	Y	Y	Y	1	Y	Mental health awareness, Addiction awareness, Alcohol/Drug awareness, Crisis intervention, Child protection	3	3	1	N	N/A
28	Y	Recruitment/retention of staff/volunteers, Promoting the organisation	Clan	N	Y	N	N/A	Y	Housing first training, Mental health awareness, Addiction awareness, Alcohol/Drug awareness, Working with trauma, Self-harm awareness, Challenging behaviour, Potential aggression, Crisis intervention, Stress management	5	5	5	N	N/A

Question Participant	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
22	N/A	Y	Somewhat difficult	Y	N	Development of new policies			Communication between boards & staff, Differing work practices, cultures, standards, expectations, L.A`s, Unwillingness to change amongst staff	Joint training, Joint fundraising, Tendering support	N
23	N/D	N	N/A	N/A	Y	Development of new policies, Development of new ideas, Information sharing, Faster access to services, Better decision making, Better use of resources, Cost sharing	Y	Emergency Accommodation Service, Addiction service, Youth service, Independent living, Rough sleeper team, Long term housing, Outreach team, Dedicated mental health service, Drop in service, Regional support service, Long term housing	Differing work practices, Different expectations, Different cultures present, Communication between staff & boards, L.A`s	Joint campaigning, Joint funding applications, Sharing staff, sharing information	Y
24	N/A	N	N/A	N/A	Y	Development of new policies, Cost sharing, Information sharing,	Y	Addiction service, Independent living, Outreach team, Dedicated mental health service	Communication between staff, Different work practices, Different cultures	Joint training, Sharing information, Sharing staff	N
25	N/D	Y	Not at all difficult	Y	Y	Cost sharing, Better use of resources, Development of new ideas, Information sharing	Y	Long term housing, Independent living	Communication between staff, & boards, Unwillingness to change amongst staff, Differing work practices, L.A`s	Sharing information, Joint fundraising, Joint training, Joint funding applications	Y
26	N/D	Y	Somewhat difficult	N/D		Faster access to services, Development of new policies, Information sharing, Better use of resources					
27	N/A	N	N/A	N/A	Y	Development of new policies, Development of new ideas, Faster access to services, Better use of resources	Y	Dedicated mental health service, Rough sleeper team, Drop-in service, Regional support service, Long term housing			
28	N/A	N	N/A	N/A	N	Faster access to services, Better use of resources, Development of new ideas, Information sharing			Communication between boards, Differing work practices, Unwillingness to change amongst staff	Joint training, Joint fundraising, Joint campaigning, Sharing information	N

Question Participant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
29	Y	Maintaining sustainable flow of income, Rising costs, Promoting the organisation	Adhocracy	Y	Y	N	6	Y	Housing first training, Mental health awareness, Addiction awareness, Alcohol/Drug awareness, Working with trauma, Challenging behaviour, Potential aggression, Crisis intervention, Stress management, Child protection	1	1	1	Y	Somewhat difficult
30	Y	Not aware of Challenges	Clan	N	N	Y	N/A	Y	Housing first, Mental health awareness, Addiction awareness, Alcohol/Drug awareness, Stress management	7	3	3	N	N/A
31	Y	Recruitment/retention of staff/volunteers, Maintaining sustainable flow of income, Rising costs, Promoting the organisation, Managing organisational growth, Operational issues, Growing demand for services	Clan	N	Y	N	3	N	N/A	1	1	1	N	N/A
32	Y	Growing demand for services	Clan	Y	N	N	N/A	Y	Housing first, Working with trauma	6	6	6	Y	Not at all difficult
33	Y	Maintaining sustainable flow of income, Rising costs, Promoting the organisation, Managing organisational growth, Operational issues, Growing demand for services	Clan	Y	Y	Y	N/A	Y	Mental health awareness, Working with trauma, Challenging behaviour, Potential aggression, Crisis intervention, Stress management, Child protection	4	5	3	N	N/A
34	Y	Recruitment/retention of staff/volunteers, Complying with legislation, Maintaining sustainable flow of income, Rising costs, Promoting the organisation, Managing organisational growth, Operational issues, Growing demand for services	Hierarchy	N	N	Y	7	Y	Housing first training, Mental health awareness, Addiction awareness, Alcohol/Drug awareness, Working with trauma, Challenging behaviour, Potential aggression, Stress management, Child protection, Self-harm awareness	6	5	6	Y	Somewhat difficult
35	Y	Maintaining sustainable flow of income, Growing demand for services, Promoting the organisation	Hierarchy	Y	Y	Y	N/A	Y	Mental Health Awareness, Housing first training,	2	2	2	N	N/A
36	Y	Recruitment/retention of staff/volunteers, Promoting the organisation	Hierarchy	Y	Y	Y	N/A	N	N/A	6	6	6	N	N/A

Question Participant	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
29	N/D	N	N/A	N/A	Y	Development of new policies, Development of new ideas, Cost sharing, Faster access to services, Information sharing	Y	Emergency Accommodation Service, Addiction service, Youth service, Independent living, Long term housing	Communication between staff, Differing cultures present and expectations	Joint fundraising, Joint campaigning, Shared workspace, Shared staff, Shared information	N
30	N/A	N	N/A	N/A		Development of new ideas, Information sharing					
31	N/A	Y	Somewhat difficult	N		Development of new ideas, Cost sharing, Better decision making	Y	Dedicated mental health service	Communication between staff, Different work practices, Different cultures, Different expectations	Joint training, Joint campaigning, Joint purchasing, Tendering support	
32	Y	Y	Not at all difficult	Y	Y	Better use of resources, Development of new ideas & policies, Information sharing, Better decision making, Faster access to services	Y	Long term housing, Emergency Accommodation Service, Addiction service, Youth service, Independent living, Outreach team, Rough sleeper team, Drop in service, Regional support service	Communication between staff, Unwillingness to change amongst staff, Differing work practices, cultures, expectations standards, L.A`s	Sharing information, staff, equipment, workspace, Joint fundraising, training, funding applications, campaigning, purchasing, Tendering support	Y
33	N/A	Y	Very difficult	Y	Y	Better use of resources, Development of new policies, Faster access to services			Communication between staff, Unwillingness to change amongst staff, Differing work practices, cultures, standards in quality, expectations,	No future collaboration	
34	N/D	N	N/A	N/A		Development of new ideas, Information sharing, Better decision making, Faster access to services	Y	Long term housing, Regional support service, Independent living, Emergency Accommodation service, Youth service	Communication between boards, Lack of support from local authorities	Sharing information, Sharing staff	N
35	N/A	N	N/A	N/A		Development of new policies, Development of new ideas, Information sharing			Communication between staff, Unwillingness to change amongst staff, Different standards in quality, expectations	Joint training, Tendering support, Sharing information	
36	N/A	Y	Somewhat difficult	Y	Y	Better use of resources, Development of new ideas, Information sharing,	Y	Long term housing, Youth service, Independent living, Outreach team, Drop in service, Regional support service		Joint training, fundraising, funding applications, campaigning, Sharing information	Y

Appendix 13 – Feedback provided during Staff Questionnaire

Note: Names and company logos have been removed to protect anonymity

1. What strategic challenge(s) has your organisation faced over the last five years, if any?

a)   *Lack of relief staff.*

b)   *Possible internal resistance to growth of organisation.*

2. What type of joint training events would you like to see organised?

a)   *Supervision (if responsible for supervising students on placement).*

b)   *Domestic Violence.*

c)   *Maybe even something that is management focused or working as a team.*

d)   *MAPA Training.*

e)   *Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults.*

3. Would you like to see Company Y share some of Company X`s services in the Midlands?

a)   *No. Personally I would hope there would be more expansion in the Midlands.*

b)   *Yes. If both organisations are to collaborate then there would be a necessity for this.*

c)   *Yes. Sharing would enhance and develop new ways of working.*

d)   *No. Not at the expense of existing Company Y projects*

e)   *Yes. Due to the service demand.*

f)   *Yes. It would help the expansion of both companies.*

4. What do you believe are the key benefits of sharing a service?

a)   *Possibly cost-sharing, but that does not appear to have come to light as of yet.*

5. What service(s) would you like to see developed in the Midlands between the two organisations?

a)   *Dedicated mother and baby facility for new mothers experiencing homelessness.*

b)   *Family support services*

6. What service(s) would you like to see developed in the Midlands between the two organisations?

a)   *Dedicated mother and baby facility for new mothers experiencing homelessness.*

b)   *Family support services.*

7. In terms of Company X and Company Y developing a new joint service, are there potential barriers that you believe both organisations may have to overcome?

a)   *Loss of identity.*

8. As a staff member, would you like to see Company X and Company Y merge into one organisation in the future?

a)   *Yes. If it means we can provide better services for those in need, then there is no doubt we should merge.*

b)   *No. Company X has always been unique in terms of its values and ethos i.e. working with service users, and I believe our organisational structure and selection of staff has contributed to this. Merging with a larger organisation may have financial benefits but it may result in Company X becoming more results and outcome focused.*

c)   *Unsure, I don't have enough information to answer this.*

d)   *No. As a staff member I had no idea about this collaboration.*

e)   *Yes. I think it will benefit all and may provide greater opportunities for staff and service users. I think the collaboration is potentially a good idea but I feel communication in relation to this has been very poorly managed and hence there is a negative attitude among the staff in relation to this as a result. There must be a strategic vision and plan for this collaboration, so it would be good for the board and management to be more transparent in relation to this to help unnerve the staff and assist in any change management in the future.*

f)   *Yes. I believe the collaboration of both services would be very beneficial for individuals who need support. I believe it would be beneficial to support individuals experiencing homelessness in the Midlands as there are a lack of services in the Midlands which can provide adequate and flexible supports to people. Therefore, I think the collaboration between Company X and Company Y is an innovative concept from two dedicated services to tackle the homelessness crisis. It is also proactive to support many individuals who do not have the appropriate services in the Midlands to meet their needs.*

g)   *No. Unsure at present. It would be dependent on the implications this would have both financially and with service provision on a national level.*

h)   *No. As a front line worker in Company Y, I do not know enough about Company X to have an overall opinion, such as their organisational culture, their values, their staff etc.*

i)   *No. This could cause confusion in terms of PR for both organisations. It could also cause difficulties if one organisation has more resources than the other i.e. one organisation may lose out.*