Higher profile needed for Good Governance code

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The aim of Good Governance – a code for the Voluntary and Community Sector ('the Code') was always to be of practical help to charities, assisting them in developing their own good governance code but recent responses to a consultation held concerning an updating and refreshing of the Code suggests it was not as widely known about as had been hoped.

Background

The Code was developed and published in 2005 by a Steering Group representing NCVO, ACEVO, Charity Trustees Network and ICSA and last year's report by the not-for-profit organisation, nfpSynergy, highlighted that 42% of organisations surveyed had used the Code, and another 29% were aware of it, but more recently the picture seems to have changed.

Re-fashioning

It was decided after this review that although the six principles which make up the Code did not need to be changed per se it would be helpful to charities if they were refreshed or 'refashioned' to make them easier to understand and more universally applicable. The refashioned principles can be viewed at the Charity Commission website.

Consultation

Once the steering group, which is chaired by Lindsay Driscoll, had drafted the new principles a consultation was initiated.

The consultation which closes on 24 November 2009 had received 120 responses by 20 October and whereas it has clearly shown that the majority of those responding prefer the refashioned principles (88%), more than one quarter of respondents (27%) indicated that they had not been aware of the original.

Clearly in order for this Code, refashioned or otherwise, to make the impact on the charitable sector desired by those who formed it, it will need to be given a higher profile in future.

For more information about the Code for the Voluntary and Community Sector or the consultation please contact Chris Priestley.