



At the heart of
creating a fairer,
greener and healthier
Salford

**A strategy for the Voluntary,
Community and Social
Enterprise sector in Salford
- 2026 to 2029**



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Introduction

The first Salford VCSE Strategy was published in 2018 to describe the position and role of the VCSE sector in Salford in terms of how it supports and benefits local people, delivers services and influences city-wide policy and strategy.

Vocal
VCSE forums facilitated by
Salford CVS

Vocal Leaders Forum



This refresh was undertaken by Salford CVS, in conjunction with the Vocal VCSE Leaders Forum and our public sector partners.

Strategy Vision, Purpose and Aims

Vision

A city where voluntary organisations, community groups and social enterprises are at the heart of creating a fairer, greener and healthier Salford

Purpose

The purpose of this strategy is to describe the position and role of the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector in Salford in terms of how the sector supports and benefits local people, delivers services and influences city-wide policy and strategy. It has a city-wide focus and covers the relationships that the VCSE sector has with Salford City Council and NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership.

Aims

The aim of this strategy is to achieve the following outcomes, products and ways of working:

- ★ **A clear position and role** for the VCSE sector in the city's strategic partnerships
- ★ **Recognition** and agreement about how the sector supports and benefits local people, delivers services and influences policy and strategy
- ★ **Shared understanding** between the VCSE sector, Salford City Council and NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership, of the relationship that the VCSE sector has with its key stakeholders, including beneficiaries / service users and clients (current and future), funders and donors, commissioners, delivery partners, and the wider public sector
- ★ **Resources for the VCSE sector** that are appropriate, accessible, and sustainable
- ★ **Consistency of practice and high standards** in the conduct of the relationships between the VCSE sector and the public sector
- ★ **Partnership working** between the VCSE sector, Salford City Council and NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership for the benefit of the people of Salford



Values and Commitments

Shared Values

- ★ **Trust** – within the VCSE sector, and between the public and VCSE sectors
- ★ **Transparency** – in relationships and communication
- ★ **Simplicity, proportionality and fairness** – in operational practice
- ★ **Being inclusive** – in everything that we do

Shared Commitments

The shared commitments are a series of statements which underpin the vision for the VCSE strategy and are in line with the Greater Manchester VCSE Accord 2021.

The commitments of all parties are that we will

- ★ work together to achieve a permanent reduction in inequalities and inequality, addressing the social, environmental and economic determinants of health and wellbeing
- ★ build a financially resilient VCSE sector that is an integral part of a resilient and inclusive economy: where social enterprises, co-operatives, community businesses, charities and micro-social businesses thrive
- ★ build on our existing strengths to build the best VCSE ecosystem in Salford
- ★ put in place meaningful mechanisms to make co-design of local services the norm, including expanding channels for service design to be informed by 'lived experience'
- ★ fulfil the potential for building productive relationships between the VCSE, public and private sectors to address inequity and build back fairer
- ★ put in place a comprehensive workforce programme to support organisational and workforce development for VCSE employers based on and facilitating a more integrated public facing workforce

Background and Context

Background

Salford has a history of partnership working and co-production, and our VCSE Strategy 2018 to 2023 was developed through the joint work of representatives of the VCSE sector and the public sector in Salford and this refresh has also included representatives from the three partners.

This partnership working has had many benefits for the city including but not limited to

- ★ the 10% Better Social Value Campaign
- ★ the promotion of the Real Living Wage Campaign
- ★ the role of the VCSE sector in supporting civil contingency planning, preparedness and response
- ★ Family Hub partnership development with the VCSE sector
- ★ Salford Volunteering Strategy

There is a strong leadership from Salford's VCSE sector through Vocal Leaders Forum, which along with the other strategic Vocal Forums focuses on key issues for the City, mirroring the work of the city's Strategic Partnerships. These forums drive forward collaborative working in Salford and allows effective communication and representation with the city's decision-making structures.

Vocal
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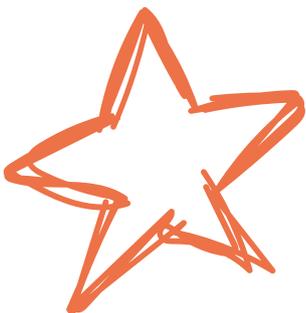
Salford's VCSE sector is also represented on the GM VCSE Leadership Group, which has four clearly articulated contributions that the sector can bring to public life:

We are many. The army of staff, volunteers and supporters across the sector are a **catalyst** for change and a connector of people

Our role is critical for the **economic success** of devolution in Greater Manchester but also for the equally important **cultural and social devolution** that will help build a truly equal region

We can devise, develop and **deliver solutions** to some of the most challenging problems faced by Greater Manchester, breaking down barriers and building community confidence and cohesion, and ensure we move from crisis resolution to anticipation and **prevention**

We **understand our communities**. We can help drive people-powered change, harnessing social action and bridging the gap that can exist between public services and the people they serve



Drivers

There were a number of practical drivers which justified the 2018 publication of a VCSE Strategy for Salford - some of which still exist, including:

- ★ Continued public sector budget reductions and increasing demand, both of which have a direct impact for VCSE organisations
- ★ The need for a clear articulation of the VCSE sector's role in the achievement of the priorities set out by Salford's City Mayor and of the long-term approaches to working (and contracting) with the VCSE sector
- ★ Results of the 'State of the Sector' research 2021 shows that 39% of organisations have had decreased income, 58% have used reserves (41% due to COVID), there also continues to be a reduction in the free reserves available to VCSE organisations to tide them over gaps in funding (**43%** of organisations now have less than three months running costs in reserves)
- ★ Technological innovation in ways of working have amplified due to COVID and is leaving parts of the sector behind
- ★ Challenges in VCSE sector capacity to respond to changes in need and demand for services and activities
- ★ The need for consistency of approach and to relationships between the public and VCSE sectors
- ★ The need for a clear 'business case' for the VCSE sector, given the severe financial pressure under which it finds itself
- ★ The need for clear 'investment principles' as part of a strategic investment plan for the City Council, NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care (and other public bodies) to use in their decision-making with regard to the sector



Context

The Strategy is set in the context of evolving local and city region policy and strategy; social value and 'inclusive growth'. The VCSE sector has a major role to play in the following strategies

- ★ Salford's Locality Plan
- ★ Employment and Skills Strategy
- ★ Inclusive Economy Strategy
- ★ Tackling Poverty Strategy
- ★ Equality and Diversity Strategy
- ★ Community Cohesion Strategy
- ★ Early Help Strategy



The three partners to this Strategy also participate in a number of the formal partnerships who have oversight of the strategies such as the city's Health and Wellbeing Board, Children and Young People's 0-25 Advisory Board, Safeguarding boards and ICS boards.

We are also conscious of the role that the VCSE sector has played alongside public sector transformation work in Salford over the years. It is recognised that we need to think differently about how public services interact with the VCSE sector, and that there needs to be a resource shift to enable the sector to play a continued and in many cases increased role in local neighbourhoods and communities.





Strategic Objectives

The partners have structured this Strategy around the six 'Pillars' of the VCSE Manifesto. For each objective, we have described what we want to achieve together.

Involve

The VCSE Manifesto asks:

That the VCSE sector is involved consistently in decision-making both in the early stages of strategic planning and throughout the ongoing development of new models of service delivery. It also asks for recognition of the Vocal Voice and Influence forums across the city partnerships and ensuring Vocal representation and involvement in their decision-making.

Together we want to:

Ensure continued Vocal representation on the Partners In Salford Boards and NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership Boards

Create opportunities for VCSE voice and influence in decision making through Vocal strategic forums

Create distributive leadership by ensuring and resourcing spaces on decision-making partnerships for a wide range of VCSE sector leaders, via Vocal Forums

We will know that we have been successful when:

By 2029 there will be more effective involvement and influence by the VCSE sector in the leadership and delivery of strategies in Salford through Vocal forums

Include

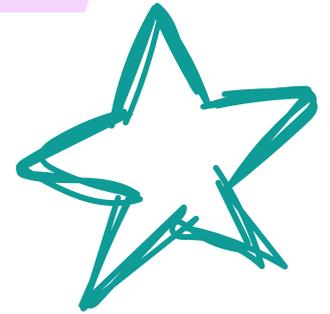
VCSE Manifesto ask:

That we recognise and support the role of VCSE sector in Salford's equality, diversity and human rights work and the development of community cohesion in the context of the city's increasing diversity.

Together we will:

Ensure that the VCSE sector is acknowledged for its reach into communities of geography, identity, experience and interest

Ensure that there is investment and support for an asset-based approach that involves communities, people with lived experience and the VCSE sector in planning, delivery and evaluation of public services



We will know that we have been successful when:

By 2029 the VCSE sector will have a lead role in making Salford a fairer place, where people from different backgrounds and cultures feel included

Collaborate

VCSE Manifesto ask:

That alliances within the VCSE sector and between the sector and public agencies are created to deliver on key initiatives and ensure that models of working and commissioning that undermine the local VCSE sector are avoided.

Together we want to:

Collaborate to deliver child-friendly Salford

Work together strategically in prevention, early intervention and delivering community support in all our city's neighbourhoods

Ensure fairness and transparency in contract management of VCSE sector commissioned organisations

Collaborate to develop innovative solutions to public sector challenges

Codesign how we deliver the city's shared priorities and shape future investment decisions

We will know that we have been successful when:

By 2029 collaboration between the public and VCSE sector will be fair and equal and focused on achieving the best possible outcomes for the people of Salford

Value

VCSE Manifesto ask:

That individual residents, communities and volunteers are valued. It also asks that volunteering is resourced and recognised as vital to the life of our city and lies at the core of community cohesion and resilience.

Together we will:

Implement Salford's Volunteering Strategy 2024 which aims for Salford to be a place where:

- ★ Volunteering is properly valued and resourced
- ★ Shared values for volunteering are understood and implemented
- ★ There is a range of good quality, diverse and accessible volunteering opportunities for all
- ★ Barriers to participation in volunteering are actively challenged and addressed
- ★ There is an excellent standard of volunteering which creates positive experiences for people who volunteer
- ★ It is recognised that volunteering helps address the priorities of the city and contributes to addressing key challenges such as reducing social isolation, improving mental health and wider wellbeing, improving skills and ameliorating the effects of poverty and worklessness
- ★ Volunteering creates Social Value and contributes to the city's 10% Better Campaign

We will know that we have been successful when:

By 2029 volunteering within the city will be appreciated by individuals, communities, organisations and policy makers as helping to enrich lives and create cohesive and resilient communities



Invest

VCSE Manifesto ask:

For investment in a local VCSE sector that provides innovative solutions to local needs, builds capacity in and is accountable to local communities.

Together we will:

- ★ Gain strategic support to maintain a sustainable level of investment into the VCSE sector and work together to explore other funding options, including a community infrastructure levy. Any investment decisions with the VCSE sector should focus on supporting Salford's priorities in an affordable way so as to have the greatest impact.
- ★ Expedite the delivery of the Greater Manchester VCSE Commissioning and Delivery Plan in Salford
- ★ Use a 'local, social and ethical' approach to maximise the role of local businesses in VCSE investment in Salford, for example through Salford4Good
- ★ Involve VCSE in the codesign of future neighbourhood and community facing grant programmes
- ★ Any investment decisions with the VCSE should focus on supporting Salford's priorities in an affordable way to have the greatest impact

We will know that we have been successful when:

By 2029 the activities of the VCSE sector in Salford will be supported through an appropriate level of investment (both financial and non-financial) from both the local public sector and third-party funding agencies

End Inequality

VCSE Manifesto ask:

That we work together to stop people dying unacceptably young, living in poor health and in poverty.

Together we will:

- ★ Recognise the role the VCSE sector plays in helping to tackling poverty in Salford

We will know that we have been successful when:

By 2029 Salford's VCSE sector will play a lead and effectively resourced role in stopping people dying unacceptably young and living in poor health and in poverty.

Governance

Governance of this strategy will be through Vocal VCSE Leaders and our public sector partners.

Vocal

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