

# SALFORD CVS

## SECTOR PULSE REPORT MAY 21



# HEADLINES

## HEADLINE FINDINGS BASED ON VCSE RESPONDENTS IN SALFORD

94%

OF VCSE ORGANISATIONS ARE OPEN AND PROVIDING SUPPORT

67%

ARE STILL PROVIDING SOME ELEMENT OF COVID SPECIFIC DELIVERY OR SUPPORT

72%

ARE EXPERIENCING AN INCREASED DEMAND ON SERVICES

55%

HAVE HAD SIGNIFICANT OR MAJOR CONCERNS ABOUT THE LEVEL OF UNMET NEED IN THEIR AREA.

# KEY FINDINGS

The Salford CVS Pulse Check is an online survey circulated during May 2021. The pulse is designed to gather a real-time snapshot of some of the issues affecting the city. So, first of all, a huge thank you to every single group and organisation who completed it!

## WE ARE STILL SUPPORTING THOSE WHO NEED US

As mentioned in the headline findings **94%** of the organisations that responded are still open to help people in Salford. **67%** are still delivering services specifically in response to Covid.

## UNMET NEEDS IN SALFORD

**55%** of organisations have had significant or major concerns about the level of unmet need in their area which is a slight reduction from Feb 21 and reflects the easing of restrictions. The top three priority concerns came out clearly as:

- Hardship and financial support – **33%**
- Loneliness / Isolation - **56%**
- Mental Health - **56%**

Although Food was still a clear top answer in fourth place. (36%)

In terms of causes of the concerns regarding loneliness / isolation and mental health comments linked this back to the Covid recovery roadmap:

“People are wary of emerging from their home, more because of getting used to a way of living and losing social skills, not so much due to concern about viral infection.”

As well as connecting back to the previous Pulse finding of concerns regarding accessing / being able to access health treatment:

“Our client group is more anxious and at risk of depression than previously. They are also anxious about resuming treatment and lack of access to treatment.”

Hardship and financial support featured strongly but also indirectly linked to food provision

“We have had an increase in referrals to access free food support.....The number of people able to pay for their meals has dropped.”

“People are applying for loans to meet daily living costs - previously was mainly for additional goods/services.”

# KEY FINDINGS

## SPECIFIC COMMUNITIES REQUIRING ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

We asked respondents if they felt that there was a specific community that needed additional support. Responses were varied and often linked to their area of delivery but these could be grouped into three areas:

### Young People

Young people were mentioned in terms of challenges linked to low-level mental health and self-esteem but also crime and potential gang issues.

“There’s a massive undercover issue with knives, drugs, gangs and this is starting with boys as young as 7 being involved”

### Cross-Cutting Issues

- Digital exclusion remains a concern of the sector – specifically data poverty/access to broadband
- Concerns about the impact of recovery as furlough and other financial support provision end (such as Section 21 actions and additional housing allowance) – the need for employment advice, debt advice and other support.
- Ongoing need for culturally appropriate and language-specific information (both Covid and wider topics)

**Older people** were mentioned linked to concerns regarding mental health and isolation but also support for those with life-limiting conditions including access to medical care (as mentioned in the last Pulse) or broader support such as hot meals provisions. However, a number of comments link to strains and pressures on the social care system whether it was more formal support such as "supporting the Integrated Care Organisation with increased demand" through to the more informal such as this case study that was shared:

“Conducting welfare checks during food deliveries and alerting services and family members about concerns. We did not receive an answer from a client and called her daughter who found that she had fallen. If we hadn’t called she didn’t plan to visit for another day or two and her mum could have been stuck all of that time”

# KEY FINDINGS

**The second half of the pulse focused on what support the sector needed over the coming months.**

## ESTATES AND FACILITIES

We asked respondent their organisational position in relation to reopening and received mixed responses:

- **33%** considered their venue fit for purpose
- **22%** of organisations are having to reduced their offer / sessions sizes in order to remain Covid secure
- **16%** of organisations needed or were thinking about moving venues in order to support or expand their delivery.

“With Covid restrictions in place, there is limited scope to bring back all the young people, and we are looking for space/venue to expand to accommodate all the young people we engage within the community.”

“I would really welcome and advice/support on looking for venues to host my team for one day a week and team meetings once a month.”

## VOLUNTEERING

**38% of respondents have experienced a decrease in volunteering levels.**

Reasons behind this include changes in delivery and personal circumstance (including a return to work post furlough). But respondents also highlight the loss of student volunteers due to online learning and corporate volunteering through social responsibility programmes as teams work more remotely / had other priorities during the last twelve months. We will continue to explore this in our future Pulse Checks.

# KEY FINDINGS

## WORKFORCE

A theme in the Pulse has been growing strain on the sector's workforce both in terms of capacity and recruitment. This was mentioned both in the context of funding support but also unmet need.

"The main issue is capacity and needs to skill up other managers who would not normally do this"

Recruitment into sector vacancies also appeared to be a challenge specifically those linked to social care:

"The pandemic brought about an increase in people wanting to work for the NHS, but social care hasn't had the same response. All messages about social care are predominantly negative and that needs to change."

## FUNDING SUPPORT

Funding was a key sector need in the last Pulse so we explored this further with respondents highlighting four key areas of support:

- **44%** - Exploring other sources e.g. Crowdfunding, Social Investment, Sponsorship, etc
- **38%** - Finding suitable grants
- **22%** - Bid writing support
- **22%** - Support around procurement processes

Funding diversification is obviously an area of concern to the sector and this perhaps has been caused by a desire to find more sustainable longer term funding:

"We don't necessarily need funding support. However, finding out the status of our block contract and the extension has been challenging in the past."

"Our service is now struggling to secure further funding and there is a real threat that it will end in June due to lack of investment"

# KEY FINDINGS

## OTHER SUPPORT

There was unsurprisingly a clear need surrounding volunteering with **27% wanting support around recruiting, supporting and retaining volunteers.**

Other requests became more varied including several regarding **business planning and strategic support.** These included topics such as support around innovation and how to cover core costs but also particular requests for **information about the NHS reorganisations and Salford Response to Covid recovery).** **Facilities** including reopening safely and securing venues, **recruiting new Trustees** to enhance Board diversity as well as **training for staff** including HR and IT advice and **general marketing advice.**

## PHYSICAL OR VIRTUAL SUPPORT

Last but not least we asked groups about the format that they would like to receive support from us over the next six months. Unsurprisingly considering the stage of recovery we are in this received a mixed response.

With regards to 1-2-1 support, advice and guidance the majority of groups 50% expected the option to meet either physically or virtually over the next six months with 12% requesting remote only.

Training and Events had a different response with 58% who would like the option to attend physically or remotely, Whilst 16% state a preference towards exclusively remotely, and 11% for exclusively physical events.

## SALFORD CVS AND THE SECTOR'S RESPONSE

We'll shortly be publishing what the Salford CVS and the sector has done in response to this insight. We'll also be re-running the pulse survey in July 2021 so please watch this space!

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT -  
SALFORD COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
THE OLD TOWN HALL  
5 IRWELL PLACE  
SALFORD,  
M30 0FN

TEL: 0161 787 7795

EMAIL: [OFFICE@SALFORDCVS.CO.UK](mailto:OFFICE@SALFORDCVS.CO.UK)

