

Select Committee

Our Voluntary and Community Sector

16th February 2022

Mark Taylor
Deputy Chief Executive

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One City – Our Voluntary and Community Sector

Our aims for the session

Key facts about the Voluntary and Community sector (VCS) and how it operates

Update on our journey so far with the sector and outcomes of the sector led research including;

- A baseline of key themes that are important to the sector in the context of commissioning, procurement and support for the sector
- What are the priorities that the sector see going forward.
- Impact and recovering from Covid

One City – our journey so far

- Deputy Chief Executive as Voluntary Sector Champion Officer
- Councillor Clare Simm and subsequently Councillor Gillian Wildman as Voluntary Sector Councillor Champion
- Establishment of the Cross Sector Forum and action plan representing the sector
- Continued proactive engagement with various groups e.g. Wolverhampton Equalities and Diversity Partnership, Third Sector Partnership, Learning Communities, Faith groups.
- Chief Operating Officer and Director of Public Health and officers both contribute to and chair various partnerships and carry out proactive engagement with the VCS.
- Engagement with individual organisations to help organisations to achieve
- Ward funds established to support communities to tackle issues in their areas, building resilience and reducing demand on services
- Our principles and approach for City for Everyone is embedded in our Council Plan
- Our improved engagement and consultation has shaped our city priorities including the new Council Plan

One City – our journey so far

We've continued to build on our relationships and have delivered better outcomes for our residents and city during Covid including;

- Established a Food Bank forum to work with food banks across the city
- Worked with the VCS to implement the One City Fund to raise funds for VCS groups in the city working with our most disadvantage groups during Covid
- Worked in partnership to support those who were self isolating to provide food, medicines and mental health support
- Our VCS have provided on the ground support in communities to ensure people are safe and get what they need.
- Supporting our approach to place based, working in partnership to encourage those hardest to reach to access testing, vaccine and support.

WOLVERHAMPTON'S VOLUNTARY SECTOR



There are a number of well-known
VS organisations that have been in the city
100+ years

Lots more have
been operating for
50+ years



11,900+

volunteers in the city
within the voluntary sector



4,400+

paid employees
across the city



Ratio of
3 volunteers
to every
1 paid employee



Received in the sector through council funding

£11.1 MILLION

(2017/2018)



Total income for the sector is approximately

£140 MILLION

(2017/2018)



For every **£1 received** from the council the sector **generates £13**



Volunteering contributes between

£18 to £36 MILLION

per year to the economy*



Support provided in the city:

**CARE
ADVICE & GUIDANCE
HEALTH, MONEY
EMERGENCY PROVISION**



Volunteering could include:

**SELF-SUPPORT
WORK EXPERIENCE
UPSKILLING**

*based on between half a day and a full day per week

One City – our journey so far

A Cross Sector Forum with representatives from the Voluntary Sector and Council was established in 2019 to develop and deliver an action plan against three themes. These included;

- **Stronger relationships** – Recognition, respect and trust will underpin the relationship between the Voluntary and Community Sector and City of Wolverhampton Council, creating a culture of mutual respect and awareness of each other.
- **Quality communication** – Building opportunities for communication across the Voluntary and Community Sector and City of Wolverhampton Council to increase awareness and create opportunities to share knowledge, best practice and engagement.
- **Co-ordinated commissioning** – Develop and implement a co-ordinated commissioning process, establishing co-production and co-design between the Local Voluntary and Community Sector and City of Wolverhampton Council and other public bodies as appropriate.

Achievements

The Cross Sector Forum has been critical in influencing and facilitating activity across the system including;

- Raising the profile of the Voluntary and Community sector in the city
- Developing a framework to embed co-production in everything we do
- Contributed to the development of training programmes for VCS groups to access opportunities to bid for funding
- Contributed to the development of Social Value principles and the Wolverhampton Pound framework

The Cross Sector Forum is currently completing a report that will be shared with the Voluntary Sector Alliance and inform future objectives.

One City – our journey so far

Building on the outcomes of the action plan the Cross Sector Forum recently commissioned the University of Wolverhampton to complete a consultation exercise to establish a baseline of the Voluntary and Community sector to inform future priorities.

The consultation included :

- Informing the priorities of the sector
- Commissioning approaches
- How they will respond to future demands in the City
- Identify inequality and remedies to address it
- What the sector needs to achieve
- Identifying risks and challenges
- How they envisage the future

Emerging themes from the baseline research

Building better cross-sector relationships to support organisations for positive and delivery of services

Funding practices that enhance transparency and effectiveness in local commissioning

The future role of local VCS leadership and an environment for successful local infrastructure

The impact of Covid on the local sector: demand for VCS services has increased, but capacity has not increased in line with demand.

Working collaboratively to access regional and national commissioning, e.g. Integrated Care Partnership

Ensuring Wolverhampton Voluntary and Community Sector benefits from the Wolverhampton Pound.

Reflections from Cross Sector Forum members

Introduction:

Laura Thomas (Cross Sector Forum member)
CEO, Citizens Advice Dudley and Wolverhampton



About us:

- Established in 1939, the day after World War 2 broke out
- Deliver legal advice up to Tribunal in 11 different advice enquiry areas
- We have nearly 20 different contracts across Dudley, Wolverhampton, the wider Black Country
- Last year we supported over 15,000 people per annum
- We deal with over 47,000 advice issues per annum
- We answered 24,000 calls through our Contact Centre in Dudley and Wolverhampton alone
- Last year, we brought in £13.7 million in income for clients
- Last year, we addressed £7 million in debt for clients and;
- Tackled 118 discrimination cases
- Demand is out stripping capacity 3:1!

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Reflecting on outcomes: Being new to Wolverhampton

- There is excellent buy in from WC Council to the VCS role and value in making the City great
- The VC sector is diverse – this presents both challenges and opportunities
- Building resilience can only be achieved by leadership, from ‘within’ the VCS, supported by the Council
- VCS infrastructure needs to be transformative
- Establishing an appetite for risk is critical for a successful VCS
- Collaboration and co-production will lead to successful outcomes

***“Citizens Advice didn’t hold my hand, they strengthened my grip”
(anonymous client)***

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Cross sector forum member reflections

Introduction:

Clare Roberts-Molloy (Chair, Cross Sector Forum)
Lead Bid and Tender Writer, YMCA Black Country Group



About us:

- YMCA is the largest and oldest charity working with young people in the world.
- We are part of a Worldwide movement that helps more than 58 million people in 119 countries
- YMCA BCG is an independent local charity, and has supported Young People in Wolverhampton for over 100 years
- We deliver across Wolverhampton, Walsall, West Bromwich and Dudley & Redditch
- Our services include Accommodation, Training & Education, Family Work (Nurseries), Support & Advice, and Health & Wellbeing
- We bring community transformation by helping people to believe in themselves and realise their potential – supporting them to grow and develop in Mind, Body & Spirit
- We currently support more than 14,000 people per year

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Reflecting on outcomes: Established member of Wolverhampton

- Wolverhampton has a vibrant and enthusiastic VCS that goes above and beyond to support residents and communities in the city
- Many examples of best practice delivered via numerous partnerships, forums and boards supporting the sector and service delivery across the city
- Despite delivering positive impact, the sector faces some internal disruptors and there is currently no clear process for managing disruptive and negative behaviours
- VCS focus is on larger organisations and smaller, grassroots organisations are often 'left out'.
- Huge scope for capacity building and leveraging the resources and talents within the sector for the benefit of the city
- Sector has a large appetite for co-production and partnership bids
- Frustration faced by the sector around national providers delivering/duplicating services in city with little benefit to the sector

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