

Agenda for a meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on Thursday, 16 September 2021 at 5.00 pm in the Banqueting Hall - City Hall, Bradford

Members of the Committee – Councillors

LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT	INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST
Azam Tait Akhtar D Green Arshad Hussain Nazir	Bibby Riaz	J Sunderland	V Jenkins

Alternates:

LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT
Dearden Hussain T Hussain Salam Shafiq Wood	Birch Nazam	Griffiths

Notes:

- Please note that under the current circumstances only Members and Alternates on the Committee will receive paper copies of the agenda, however the agenda and reports can be viewed on the Councils agenda and minutes website five clear working days in advance of the meeting.
- Given the restrictions on room capacity, any Councillors and members of the public who wish to make a contribution at the meeting are asked to email yusuf.patel@bradford.gov.uk by **mid-day on Tuesday 14 September 2021** and request to do so. You will then be advised on how you can participate in the meeting. **access to the meeting cannot be guaranteed if those wishing to attend do not register given the council must comply with the Covid regulations and guidance.**
- On the day of the meeting please ensure that you comply with the Covid restrictions in place at the current time by wearing a suitable face covering and adhering to social distancing. Staff will be at hand to advise accordingly. Participants may be asked to wait in a separate room if the capacity in the Council Chamber has been reached and they will be escorted back into the meeting as a when their item is considered by the Committee.

From:

Parveen Akhtar, City Solicitor
Agenda Contact: Yusuf Patel
Phone: 07970 411923
E-Mail: yusuf.patel@bradford.gov.uk

To:

A. PROCEDURAL ITEMS

1. ALTERNATE MEMBERS (Standing Order 34)

The City Solicitor will report the names of alternate Members who are attending the meeting in place of appointed Members.

2. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

(Members Code of Conduct - Part 4A of the Constitution)

To receive disclosures of interests from members and co-opted members on matters to be considered at the meeting. The disclosure must include the nature of the interest.

An interest must also be disclosed in the meeting when it becomes apparent to the member during the meeting.

Notes:

- (1) *Members may remain in the meeting and take part fully in discussion and voting unless the interest is a disclosable pecuniary interest or an interest which the Member feels would call into question their compliance with the wider principles set out in the Code of Conduct. Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to the Member concerned or their spouse/partner.*
- (2) *Members in arrears of Council Tax by more than two months must not vote in decisions on, or which might affect, budget calculations, and must disclose at the meeting that this restriction applies to them. A failure to comply with these requirements is a criminal offence under section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.*
- (3) *Members are also welcome to disclose interests which are not disclosable pecuniary interests but which they consider should be made in the interest of clarity.*
- (4) *Officers must disclose interests in accordance with Council Standing Order 44.*

3. MINUTES

Recommended –

That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 202 be signed as a correct record (previously circulated).

(Yusuf Patel - 01274 434579)

4. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

(Access to Information Procedure Rules – Part 3B of the Constitution)

Reports and background papers for agenda items may be inspected by contacting the person shown after each agenda item. Certain reports and background papers may be restricted.

Any request to remove the restriction on a report or background paper should be made to the relevant Strategic Director or Assistant Director whose name is shown on the front page of the report.

If that request is refused, there is a right of appeal to this meeting.

Please contact the officer shown below in advance of the meeting if you wish to appeal.

(Yusuf Patel - 01274 434579)

5. REFERRALS TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

None

B. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ACTIVITIES

6. ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY

1 - 36

The report of the Strategic Director, Corporate Resources, (**Document “F”**), presents a progress update on the District Anti-Poverty Strategy from the District’s Anti-Poverty Coordination Group. This Group leads the strategy, developed the accompanying delivery plan and submits an annual monitoring report to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny. It is a multi-partner group, consisting of representatives from the Council, Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), health, Incommunities and the voluntary and community sector.

Document “F” also outlines the current position on addressing Period Poverty in the Bradford District.

Members are asked to consider the report and it is suggested that an update on progress be requested in twelve months’ time.

(Michelle Taylor – 01274 431831)

7. VOLUNTARY COMMUNITY SECTOR AND SOCIAL ENTERPRISE (VCSE) INFRASTRUCTURE PROCUREMENT STRATEGY 37 - 134

The report of the Strategic Director, Place, (**Document “G”**) is provided for information to advise members of the forthcoming procurement of a combined VCSE grant with a value in excess of £2 million in line with the requirements of Contracts Standing Orders (CSO 7.2.1) prior to the commencement of the procurement process.

Recommended -

- 1. That the proposal not to make changes to the current funding support available to the VCSE sector be considered.**
- 2. That the option to review the grant with the input of the VCSE sector and the integration of the funds into one grant to simplify access to funds and avoid duplication, be considered.**

(Ian Day – 01274 433507)

8. CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2021-22 135 - 144

The Chair of the Committee will provide a report (**Document H”**) which presents the Committee’s work programme for 2021/22.

Recommended –

- 1. The Committee may choose to add to or amend the topics included in the 2021-22 work programme for the Committee.**
- 2. That Members consider any detailed scrutiny reviews that they may wish to consider.**

(Mustansir Butt - 01274 432574)



Report of the Anti-Poverty Coordination Group to the meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on 16th September 2021

F

Subject: Anti-Poverty Strategy

Summary statement:

This report presents a progress update on the District Anti-Poverty Strategy from the District's Anti-Poverty Coordination Group. This Group leads the strategy, developed the accompanying delivery plan and submits an annual monitoring report to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny. It is a multi-partner group, consisting of representatives from the Council, Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), health, Incommunities and the voluntary and community sector.

The impact of the pandemic on poverty across the District has been significant. This report therefore provides an overview of the impact and examples of the great work being undertaken across the District to support our poorest and most vulnerable communities through and beyond the pandemic.

This paper also outlines the current position on addressing Period Poverty in the Bradford District.

Equality impact

Anti-poverty work is a key component of realising the Council's equality objectives, combating disadvantage and increasing the life chances of protected groups. Low income groups are one of the protected groups in our equalities strategy.

Report Contact: Kevin Brain
E-mail: kevin.brain@bradford.gov.uk

Portfolio: Neighbourhoods and Community Safety

Report Contact: Michelle Taylor
E-mail: Michelle.Taylot@bradford.gov.uk

Overview & Scrutiny Area: Corporate

1.0 SUMMARY

1.01 This report presents a progress update on the District Anti-Poverty Strategy (APS) and:

- Provides an overview of the APS;
- Reviews the impact of the pandemic on poverty across the District;
- Provides examples of the great work being undertaken across the District to support our poorest and most vulnerable communities through and beyond the pandemic, including work to address Period Poverty.

Bradford District's Anti-Poverty Strategy

1.02 The current APS is based on the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) framework. The strategy was developed by officers following a recommendation by Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (O&S), based on the findings of the Poverty Scrutiny Review. The strategy was approved by Executive in 2019. The APS is organised around the following broad themes:

- Boost income and reduce costs;
- Deliver an effective benefit system;
- Promote long term inclusive growth benefitting everyone;
- Improve education standards and raise skills;
- Strengthen families and communities.

1.03 The last report to this committee on the APS - January 2020 - predates the pandemic. Appendix 1 provides an overview of the APS key themes and accompanying delivery plan actions. Since then, work across the public, private and community sectors has focussed on coping with and recovering from the pandemic. Therefore, this report provides an overview of the full range of anti-poverty work being undertaken across the Council and by key partners. This is presented in Table 1 under the strategic themes of the APS.

1.04 **Work to Address Period Poverty.** In February 2020, a report regarding Period Poverty in the Bradford District was presented to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This year Period Poverty has been integrated into the wider Anti-poverty report, recognising the strong links between those experiencing poverty and Period Poverty.

1.05 For the purposes of this report, Period Poverty is defined as; *'being unable to access sanitary products and having a poor knowledge of menstruation often due to financial constraints in the UK'* This definition has been adopted by the United Kingdom and the Scottish Government, the National Assembly for Wales and others. Section 3 provides a fuller report on Period Poverty.

Cross Council Work on Poverty and the Impact of the Pandemic

- 1.06 Addressing the needs of people most in need, particularly those facing deprivation and poverty, is a key part of everyone's job in the authority and in the work of our partners.
- 1.07 The impact of the pandemic has seen a shift of focus as the Council and partners on the APCG worked across the public, business and community sectors to address the immediate impact of the pandemic and plan for the District's recovery to build back better. District wide strategies and plans have been refreshed and renewed to build back better from the pandemic. A full outline of this work is provided in Table 1.
- 1.08 The economic strategy and skills strategy have been refreshed and renewed and a new economic recovery plan launched. There is a developing health inequalities strategy, focused on the factors which exacerbate health and wellbeing inequalities across the District and our communities, driving a programme of community engagement and supporting the key Living Well approach. The new Council Equalities strategy specifically identifies low income as a protected characteristic and an integral part of all equality impact assessments. Born in Bradford (BiB) and programmes sitting under BiB, such as Act Early, are providing both a rich evidence base and supporting policy development locally, regionally and nationally around levelling up, tackling deprivation and inequality.
- 1.09 It is clear from the data that the pandemic has hit our poorest and most vulnerable communities hardest. As a wide range of national, regional and local research shows, the most vulnerable groups have not only faced the highest sickness and mortality rates, they have also borne the costs of the wider economic, educational, social and cultural impacts of the pandemic. This has deepened the challenges we were already facing. Further detail of this impact is outlined later in this report.
- 1.10 The response to the pandemic across the public, private, voluntary and community sectors has shown the central importance and strength of Bradford's local partnership working and how the District excels at coming together to pool resources at times of great pressure, delivering provision jointly across a wide range of needs. Examples of this work include:
- Neighbourhood and Community Services altering the way that they work. The service has moved to 7 day working and developed the existing Area Office infrastructure to mobilise 5 district hubs to provide and respond to immediate needs of families: connecting to foodbanks and other providers, providing food direct through food parcels, connecting to befriending and offering a range of services to help those isolated such as dog walking support.
 - £220m has been provided to keep local business afloat; £150 discount on Council Tax to low income families; and £2.5m provided to help 5,800 working families on low income to isolate if infected or a contact. Care leavers aged 18-21 can be exempt from Council Tax and from 21-25 can receive a 50% discount.
 - The Council and Public Health working on understanding the impact of the pandemic on health inequalities, including: a rapid assessment of mental health needs in response to the pandemic; new work around living well and community

development and developing joint work with the area offices to support community asset building; and access into Living Well and programmes such as the social prescribing networks.

- Developing a District Sustainable Food Strategy. Whilst one of the priorities is addressing food insecurity and poverty, others around healthy eating culture, community food growing and sustainable food system will also contribute.
- Providing investment and support for emergency food programmes. Commissioning through Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations has helped to maintain food supplies to the crisis food sector and provide grants to extend food support with BAME communities. Free school meals have been provided throughout the holidays and weekend hunger programmes have been run.
- Expanding credit union membership by 700 and introducing a nationally acclaimed Covid Loan and Recovery Scheme.
- Administering the various business grant schemes, including support to the large SME and family-run sectors in the District that are more vulnerable to loss of income.
- Housing Options dealing with over 8,000 enquiries related to homelessness or the threat of homelessness. Under the Everyone In programme, 435 individuals have been supported off the street, with 283 being supported to suitable moving on options.
- Maintaining welfare advice services: locality based and district wide services have continued to operate throughout the pandemic. Although access systems moved to predominately online and via telephone they have still supported over 10,500 people and managed over 28,900 queries in 2020/21.
- Developing the Warm Homes, Healthy People Service.
- Providing over 3,000 laptops to support pupils' home learning, including providing laptops and digital learning to all our children in care.
- Investing £3.7 million in Skills House to provide locality based support for 24,000 people to access the labour market and reskill and upskill to secure and maintain employment. This will be key as we see the potential impact on jobs, businesses and households as furlough is removed.
- Developing a tuition programme for over 600 year 11 pupils to raise attainment in maths.
- Developing a poverty proofing the school day pilot, to be started in 22 schools from September 2021.
- Introducing a 0-5 early help and intervention service which helps offset the lasting impact of poverty experienced in early childhood.
- Act Early, in collaboration with a range of partners, developing a neighbourhood renewal programme for Holmewood (a Well Bradford area) which, if successful, could provide a model for how to support our most vulnerable communities across the District.
- This year, and for the past 2 years, the Council has paid the Real Living Wage to relevant employees.
- Planning for investment of national grants into suicide prevention, improving public mental health and reducing obesity, focusing on inequalities and vulnerable communities.
- Providing the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) Programme 2021. This is a Department For Education (DFE) funded programme for Easter, Summer and Christmas 2021. It provides sporting and enrichment activities for Free School Meal

children and families. Over summer, 23,000 young people were engaged in the programme. Alongside the activities, a free meal is provided and advice and guidance can be provided to families around a range of support needs.

- 1.11 The impact of, and response to, the pandemic has created a new poverty landscape. The pandemic has deepened existing inequalities, highlighted emerging ones such as digital exclusion and a debt crisis, and resulted in a wide range of strategies and policies being renewed and redeveloped. Changes to the organisation of resources and activity in the District have been taking place, with more being done at community level. These changes are set to accelerate and become ever more embedded in system's culture. At the same time, changes to the health and social care infrastructure are rapidly underway, with the move to the Integrated Care Systems (ICS) and Integrated Care Partnerships (ICP) placing greater emphasis on population-wide outcomes and equality of access to healthcare and health outcomes. The national and regional picture has also changed dramatically. For example, devolution and the creation of a West Yorkshire mayoral authority. A priority for the Mayor is creating a regional "Good Work" Charter to address issues such as low pay.
- 1.12 The last report to this committee noted that 9 of 25 actions in the APS action plan were being focussed on but that a great deal of anti-poverty work took place outside the action plan, lines of reporting were multiple and the link between the APS, work of the APCG and wider bodies, such as the Health and Well Being Board, needed review.
- 1.13 Over time, the work to address poverty in the District needs to evolve. Work is already underway with the APCG and other partners to review, map out and align anti-poverty work across the District, in light of the impact of the pandemic and the developing anti-poverty work across the District. We are focusing on:
- Mapping and joining up anti-poverty work across the Council and partners to identify gaps and opportunities to join up work;
 - Reviewing and refreshing priorities in light of the impact of the pandemic;
 - Reviewing the role, remit and membership of the APCG and its relationship to other key partnerships;
 - Developing the voice and participation of those who experience poverty.

2.0 Background

- 2.01 The current Anti-Poverty Strategy is based on the JRF framework. The strategy was developed by officers following a recommendation by Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (O&S), based on the findings of the Poverty Scrutiny Review. The strategy was approved by Executive in 2019.
- 2.02 The strategy is a partnership strategy for the District. It is led by the Anti-Poverty Coordination Group (APCG) who also developed and monitored the accompanying delivery plan. The APCG is a multi-partner group, consisting of representatives from the Council, Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), health, Incommunities and the voluntary and community sector.

- 2.03 The APCG has overall responsibility for the strategy and for submitting an annual monitoring report to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny. It is chaired by Councillor Jabar. Recent consultation with members suggests a need to review membership, role and remit of the APCG and how the APCG and APS link in with wider poverty work across the District and the partnerships overseeing this work.

Why We Need an Anti-Poverty Strategy

- 2.04 Bradford has one of the youngest and most diverse populations and an economy worth £9.5 billion, the 11th largest in England. It has a strong, broad-based, innovative and entrepreneurial business community. And we are one of the most internationally connected cities in the UK. Our cultural and historical assets together with our beautiful landscapes attract over 10 million visitors a year. In Born in Bradford, we house a world leading research programme. We have award winning youth and social cohesion projects and integrated careers and vocational skills programmes. The University of Bradford's is ranked top for promoting social mobility. Fantastic programmes such as Better Start Bradford, Act Early, JU:MP and the Bradford Outcome Area are all working on improving the health, well-being and life chances of our people.
- 2.05 Bradford is also the 5th most income deprived City in England. Over a third of our children live in families classed as being in poverty. Not only is poverty a huge cost to those individuals and families living in poverty, it is also a huge cost to our wider economy and society. It blights lives and destroys potential.

Social Mobility Commission 2021

Bradford has some of the worst outcomes for disadvantaged young people in the country, with earnings of £9,500 per year and one of the largest pay gaps between young people from working class and better off backgrounds, even with the same levels of education. In comparison, disadvantaged people from neighbouring Harrogate earned £18,000 per year – almost twice as much – with a smaller pay gap.

- 2.06 The poorer you are the lower your life expectancy, the poorer your overall health, the less likely you are to achieve in school, secure good jobs with good wages in adult life, secure access to good housing and participate in the full social, economic and cultural life of your community.
- 2.07 The poorer you are the more likely you are to live in neighbourhoods with higher crime and anti-social behaviour, have less access to green spaces and play areas, suffer high risk of exposure to pollution, accidents and injury, live in poor housing, pay more for basic essentials such as food, water and energy (this is known as the **poverty premium**), often facing difficult choices between whether or not to eat or pay a bill, experience lack of access to basic services such as health care (this is known as the **inverse care law**), and spend a larger part of your adult life coping with illness or disability. The stresses and anxiety of living in poverty impose huge

strains on individuals and families. The can lead to family breakup, homelessness, higher rates of drug and alcohol use.

- 2.08 Poverty is an enormous waste of people's lives and potential. It is also a brake on our ability to develop a strong, diverse and inclusive economy and society. Poverty means that people have little income to spend. This reduces demand in the economy so that businesses cannot grow and develop. Low wages, insecure jobs and low skill levels reduce productivity, slowing economic innovation and development. Dealing with the consequences of poverty imposes huge strains on public services and the public purse - around £1 in every £5 of public spending is spent dealing with the effects of poverty. At the same time, high levels of poverty reduce tax revenues and income, reducing the ability to provide services that meet need and develop the economic, social and cultural wealth of our communities.
- 2.09 In short, we cannot hope to achieve the potential of our District and ensure that all our citizens live long, happy and fulfilling lives unless we can reduce the impact of poverty on life chances.

Poverty Across the District

2.10 Before the pandemic hit, progress was being made on key fronts. For example:

- The median wage rate across the District had risen from £449 in 2015 to £536 in 2020;
- Unemployment had fallen from 11% in 2013 to 5.2% in 2019;
- There were improvements in educational attainment;
- There was a reduction in the number of NEETs (not in education, employment or training).

2.11 Yet even before the pandemic hit, there were signs that poverty was increasing across the District, reflecting national trends, and the pandemic has highlighted and deepened the impact of poverty. Appendix 2 provides a fuller analysis. In brief:

- **Deprivation:** The 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation shows Bradford District as the 13th most deprived local authority in England. The 2015 Indices ranked it as 19th. So it has fallen six places. 14 of Bradford's 30 wards are in the 10% most deprived wards in England.
- **Child Poverty:** Research conducted by Loughborough University shows that in 2020, 37 % of the District's children lived in families classed as being in poverty; up from 30.1% in 2015. Bradford West and Bradford East constituencies are in the top 20 constituencies with the highest rates of child poverty (after housing costs).
- **Low income:** In 2019/20, over 51,000 families in Bradford were living with absolute low income; 69% were in-work; 28% were headed by a lone parent. As of April 2021, Bradford had the second highest number of families (5,000) hit by the two child limit of all local authorities (after Birmingham). 12.4% of the total householders in the District are in fuel poverty.
- **Health:** By 2020, increases in life expectancy had stalled in the Bradford District. The poorest child in the District can expect to live 10 years less than the wealthiest

and our poorest citizens can expect to spend far more of their adult life coping with ill health and disability.

- **Education and Skills:** Before the pandemic the poorest and most disadvantaged children were 18 months behind their peers in educational attainment by the age of 16. The pandemic has widened this gap. In 2020, for Bradford pupils on free school meals (FSM) the Attainment 8 score was 36.9; for Bradford pupils not on FSM it was 50.7. The adult skills base remains relatively low and young people enter labour markets where job opportunities are often limited and in poorly paid and unskilled sectors. 14% of the adult population have no qualifications and only 26% have qualifications at level 4 or above; nationally, the figures are 7% and 26% respectively.

Poverty and The Pandemic

2.12 The pandemic has had a profound impact on poverty and inequality. It is the poorest and most vulnerable groups who have been hardest hit by the pandemic. In particular, children and young people have been very heavily hit by the wider social, educational and economic consequences of the pandemic.

2.13 National, regional and local research by Born in Bradford all show this impact. Again, Appendix 2 provides more details. In brief:

- **Unemployment:** both the adult and youth claimant count have doubled since June 2019. The unemployment claimant count in June 2021 was 9%; for 18-24 year olds it was 13.%. Bradford is the 3rd highest city for unemployment and 12th highest local authority. For youth unemployment, it is the 2nd highest city and 5th highest local authority. 21 of Bradford's 30 wards had unemployment rates higher than the national average.
- **Job Retention Scheme (Furlough scheme):** as of March 2021, 79,100 applications had been made for the furlough scheme. Furlough will end this October.
- **Health:** from March 2020 – February 2021, 50% of Covid fatalities occurred in the 20% most deprived areas of Bradford. For the 20% least deprived areas of Bradford it was 7% of fatalities. Particular groups have been hardest hit: minority ethnic communities, people with disabilities and those in deprived neighbourhoods.
- **Homelessness:** over the past year, the Housing Options Service has received 8,250 applications for help with homelessness or the threat of it. 1,890 requests relating to conditions in the private rented sector have been made – the highest ever figure and a 5% rise in one year.
- **Council Tax Reduction:** the number of people claiming Council Tax reduction rose during the pandemic from 27,000 to 32,300¹ due mainly to the increase in people becoming unemployed.

¹ Document DS, Report to Bradford Council Executive 6 April 2021

- **Food Bank Use:** across the District, this has soared over the past year. From a base line of 15,796 meals being provided in February 2020 to 54,468 by February 2021.
- **Free School Meals:** nationally, the number of children eligible for FSM has risen by 20% and Bradford reflects this. Currently 25.3 % of secondary pupils in Bradford are eligible for FSM, up from 21.9% in 2019/20.
- **Income and Debt:** the pandemic has allowed the more privileged to save money. The poorest have not only been more likely to experience job loss or furlough, they have also not been able to minimise costs, for example, through home working. A recent (June 2021) Cities for Growth report pointed out that in cities like Bradford one in every two neighbourhoods were likely to have been pushed into debt. For every £1 reduction in spending for the poorest neighbourhoods, there has been a £12 reduction for those in the wealthiest. The richest have saved much more. People in the bottom 20% of the income scale were twice as likely to see a drop in income as those in more affluent neighbourhoods.

What Our Families Are Experiencing

2.14 The Born in Bradford Families Survey provides detailed local data on the impact of the pandemic. The survey of over 2,000 families, conducted in June 2020, found:

- **Poverty is increasing compared to pre-Covid baselines:** fewer families are living comfortably (33% to 20%). More families are 'just about getting by' (27% to 19%) or finding it difficult to manage (11% to 7%).
- **Vulnerabilities are multiplying:** 6% of respondents reported poor general health. Respondents where the main earner was unemployed or lived in poor quality housing were twice as likely to be in poor health (14%). Families living in private rented accommodation were more likely to live in poor housing conditions (33% report problems of damp, 20% problems with vermin; 14% need major repairs; compared to 25%, 13% and 12% respectively for owner occupiers).
- **Food security is decreasing:** 23% of respondents reported that food often didn't last and they couldn't afford to buy more; 10% had to skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food.
- **Physical health behaviours are worsening:** 41% of parents who smoked reported smoking more. 37% of those who drank alcohol were drinking more.
- **Mental ill health is becoming rife:** two-fifths of respondents have depression or anxiety.
- **Physical activity levels are decreasing:** only 27% of children met the physical activity guidelines during lockdown. 29% of children didn't leave their home to do physical activity during the first lockdown, especially children of Pakistani heritage (39% compared to 18% of white British heritage).
- **Digital inequalities are limiting access to remote education:** South Asian heritage children were more likely to have had access to computer equipment only some of the time (25%) compared to children from White British (19%) and other ethnic groups (20%). South Asian heritage children were also more likely to only have access to the internet some of the time (14%, compared to 8% of White British) and to books (17% compared to 5% White British children).

- **Classroom inequalities are increasing:** in a survey conducted across all Bradford schools, teachers expressed concern over the disproportionate effect of Covid-19 on vulnerable children and children with SEND. Key issues included: the lack of access to specialist services, such as children’s social services, Speech and Language Therapy (SALT), and counselling.

What We Are Doing: Reasons to Be Positive

2.15 As noted above, since the last report, work across the public, private, voluntary and community sectors has been dominated by responding to the pandemic. The pandemic has shown the central importance and strength of Bradford’s public services and local partnership working and how Bradford excels in partnership working and provision.

2.16 A huge amount of work has been undertaken, both in providing an immediate response to the pandemic to support our most vulnerable communities and in developing a longer term recovery plan. The breadth of this work is captured in Table 1.

2.17 In summary, this work has focussed on:

- Dealing with the immediate impact of the pandemic;
- Supporting vulnerable groups;
- Building back better.

2.18 Highlights include:

- Neighbourhood and Community Services transforming the way that they work. They moved to 7 day working and mobilised 5 district hubs to provide and respond to immediate needs of families: connecting to foodbanks and other providers, providing food direct through food parcels, connecting to befriending and offering a range of services to help those isolated such as dog walking support.
- £220m provided to keep local business afloat; £150 discount on Council Tax to low income families; and £2.5m provided to help 5,800 low income working families isolate if infected or a contact. Care leavers from 18-21 can be exempt from Council Tax and from age 21-25 can receive a 50% discount. Bradford Council has also provided grants to eligible home-based and mobile self-employed businesses, such as driving instructors and mobile hairdressers, who have not been able to apply for the other Government grants. Bradford Council has also provided a one-off support grant for all the District’s taxi drivers. The funding will allow all the District’s licensed taxi drivers to claim £600 in support.
- The Council and Public Health working on understanding the impact of the pandemic on health inequalities, including: a rapid assessment of mental health needs in response to the pandemic; new work around living well and community development and developing joint work with the area offices to support community asset building; and access into Living Well and programmes such as the social prescribing networks.

- Developing a District Sustainable Food Strategy. Whilst one of the priorities is addressing food insecurity and poverty, others around healthy eating culture, community food growing and sustainable food system will also contribute.
- Providing investment and support for emergency food programmes. Commissioning through VCS organisations has helped to maintain food supplies to the crisis food sector and provide grants to extend food support with BAME communities. Free school meals have been provided throughout the holidays and weekend hunger programmes have been run.
- Expanding credit union membership by 700 and introducing a nationally acclaimed Covid Loan and Recovery Scheme.
- Administering the various business grant schemes, including support to the large SME and family-run sectors in the District that are more vulnerable to loss of income.
- Housing Options dealing with over 8,000 enquiries related to homelessness or the threat of homelessness. Under the Everyone In programme, 435 individuals have been supported off the street, with 283 being supported to suitable moving on options.
- Maintaining welfare advice services: locality based and district wide have continued to operate throughout the pandemic. Although access systems have moved to predominately online and via telephone, they have still supported over 10,500 people and managed over 28,900 queries in 2020/21. The Council invested £350K Covid funds in 2020 and then, through Public Health grant, £232.5K more latterly.
- Maintaining and investing in locality based welfare advice services to provide support to those most in need and develop a wide range of online services and developing the Warm Homes, Healthy People Service.
- Providing over 3,000 laptops to support pupils' home learning, including providing laptops and digital learning to all our children in care.
- Investing £3.7 million in Skills House to provide locality based support for 24,000 people to access the labour market and reskill and upskill to secure and maintain employment. This will be key as we see the potential impact on jobs, businesses and households as furlough is removed.
- Developing a tuition programme for over 600 year 11 pupils to raise attainment in maths.
- Developing a poverty proofing the school day pilot, to be started in 22 schools from September 2021.
- Introducing a 0-5 early help and intervention service which helps offset the lasting impact of poverty experienced in early childhood.
- Act Early, in collaboration with a range of partners, developing a neighbourhood renewal programme for Holmewood (a Well Bradford area) which, if successful, could provide a model for how to support our most vulnerable communities across the District.
- This year, and for the past 2 years, the Council has paid the Real Living Wage.
- Planning for investment of national grants into suicide prevention, improving public mental health, and reducing obesity, focusing on inequalities and vulnerable communities.
- Providing the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) Programme 2021. This is a DFE funded programme for Easter, Summer and Christmas 2021. It provides sporting and enrichment activities for Free School Meal children and families. Over summer, 23,000 young people were engaged in the programme. Alongside the activities, a

free meal is provided and advice and guidance can be provided to families around a range of support needs.

Table 1: District Wide Anti-Poverty Work Since January 2020

Anti-Poverty Strategy Theme	What has Been done Since March 2020
<p>Boosting Income and reducing costs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real Living Wage: This year, and for the past 2 years, the Council has paid the Real Living Wage • Feeding Families (excludes children and families supported through foodbanks): Holiday Hunger programmes have run across the school holidays from Summer 2020. For summer 2021, low income families in receipt of Council Tax Reduction were given £75 supermarket vouchers to help with the cost of food. In summer 2020, 1,973 children attended sessions and 21,128 meals were provided (includes main meals; snack packs and food sent home to families). In October 2021, 3,232 families were supported (average of 4 children per family) and 23,008 meals provided. Over Easter 2021 26,432 children were fed. In addition to this Weekend Hunger programmes have been running since December 2020 and from December to March, 22,747 children had been fed. • Credit Union: An additional 700 people have joined the credit union from March 2020-March 2021. 50% of these have also been supported through access to an innovative Covid Credit Loan Scheme set up in 2020. • Fuel Poverty: A two year Warm Homes Healthy People project has just been completed. This has led to the development of a new Warm Homes Health People service, currently under commission.
<p>Deliver an Effective Benefits Service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Benefits: The service has improved the prompt payment of housing benefits, despite an unprecedented increase in cases of over 10%. The 2020/21 average time to pay Housing Benefits was 12 days; by far the best performance Bradford has achieved. • Council Tax Reduction: An additional 5,000 people have been awarded Council Tax Reduction, totalling over £5m to those on a low income. No one on a low income had to pay any Council Tax for the first 3 months of this year. This helped Bradford achieve an increase in in-year collection, despite the pandemic. • Income Support to Self-Isolating: £2.5m provided to help 5,800 working families on a low income isolate if infected or a contact. This removed a source of pressure for our low income families and meant they could focus on dealing with the pandemic rather than worrying about incurring debt. It's also meant the Council did not see a reduction in income from Council Tax. • Advice services: Debt advice, welfare rights advice, housing, immigration support has all increased. In the first 6 months of 2020, 14,824 people made a total of 42,260 enquiries to all partners within the Bradford District. • Welfare benefits: The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) has processed 10 times as many claims. Having to refocus claimants' job searches, helping them understand transferable skills and the labour market. Additional support for the BAME community has been provided and focussed support for those on Health Journey, over 50s and 18-24 year olds. • Commissioned welfare advice services. Maintained welfare advice services: locality based and district wide have continued to operate throughout the pandemic. Although access systems have moved to predominately online and via telephone they have still supported over 10,500 people and managed over 28,900 queries in 2020/21.

<p>Improve Education Standards and Raise Skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills House: £3.57 million invested in Skills House partnership to provide locality based support for 24,000 people to access the labour market and reskill and upskill to secure and maintain employment. Local partners have aligned all their adult skills and support offer through Skills House. Since September 2020, 2,000 local people have received a careers consultation through the partnership, over 7,400 have progressed into training and the partnership have led recruitment for key sectors during the pandemic, including staff supporting Track and Trace, Covid Hubs, and the vaccination roll-out. Consequently, more than 550 local residents have either progressed into work or received in-work support to sustain employment through the partnership since September. • Future Boost: New partnership approach to ensure that everyone aged 16-25 will have access to support them all into fair employment includes: careers support, mentoring, work placement and paid placements, guaranteed college placements, apprenticeships and pathways to Higher Education. • Living Well: Schools programme housing a number of projects aimed at improving the health and well-being of pupils. One of its key strands is combating classroom inequalities by: poverty proofing the school day, bridging the digital divide and reducing discrimination and prejudice. • Poverty proofing the school day: This programme is being refreshed and extended from Autumn 2021 under public health. A pilot programme will be run across 22 schools. We are also working with Action for Sports to help develop provision of free sports shoes and equipment for deprived school children. • Digital inclusion: 3,000 of our most vulnerable children have been provided with laptops to support their learning through the pandemic and onwards. All our children in care have been provided with laptops and digital learning support. • Early help: We are developing a 0-5 Early Years Programme and an Early Childhood Services Outcomes Offer. As part of this work, we will deliver a prevention and early help offer for families (to support children and young people from conception to 5 years). • School improvement: Bradford Opportunities Area (BOA) is supporting a further 17 schools to improve their Ofsted grading through a school improvement programme. • Tuition programme: The BOA is also developing a tuition programme for 600 disadvantaged year 11 pupils to improve their KS4 maths results.
<p>Strengthening Families and Communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbourhood and Customer Services: Altered the way that they work. The service has moved to 7 day working and developed the existing Area Office infrastructure to mobilise 5 district hubs to provide and respond to immediate needs of families: connecting to foodbanks and other providers, providing food direct through food parcels, connecting to befriending and offering a range of services to help those isolated such as dog walking support. • Food poverty and insecurity: In addition to the provision of FSMs noted above and the delivery of food parcels during the pandemic, the Council and partners are developing a comprehensive sustainable food strategy for the whole District. One of the four key themes of this strategy is developing actions to reduce food insecurity and provide affordable food. • Act Early: This project is driving a joined up approach to early intervention policies aimed at giving our most vulnerable children and families the support they need to ensure the best start in life. The Act Early Holmewood Initiative is one example of an area based project aimed at improving the physical health, mental health, educational attainment and social mobility of people within the area. If successful, the approach can provide a model for area regeneration.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural and social enrichment: A cultural engagement strategy for all our children and young people is being developed as part of our 2025 City of Culture bid. We will extend the opportunities for cultural and social enrichment within local communities through, for example, developing sports, arts, and theatre and music engagement activities. Our communities should offer young people a rich cultural life. • Housing: The Council Plan set out measures to improve the poor quality of housing stock, particularly in the private sector, by working with owners and landlords and encouraging and supporting them to bring properties into good repair, including empty homes. • Connecting communities: We are developing a strategy to connect our communities, both digitally - a third of the poorest households lack access to fast broadband services - and through green transport links that allow them to move around the District and connect with family, friends and the wider life of the District. • Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) Programme 2021: This is a DFE funded programme for Easter, Summer and Christmas 2021. It provides sporting and enrichment activities for Free School Meal children and families. Over summer, 23,000 young people were engaged in the programme. Alongside the activities, a free meal is provided and advice and guidance can be provided to families around a range of support needs.
Supporting the economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business support: The Council has made over 43,280 business support grant payments to over 11,000 businesses worth a total of £220.1 million. Over £50 million has been awarded in business rates relief. Bradford Council has also provided grants to eligible home-based and mobile self-employed businesses such as driving instructors and mobile hairdressers who have not been able to apply for the other Government grants. The Council has also provided a one-off support grant for all the District's taxi drivers. The funding will allow all the District's licensed taxi drivers to claim £600 in support • The economic strategy: Has been renewed and updated to build back better for the post Covid world. This is key to reducing poverty because, at its heart, poverty is about the income people receive and the opportunities open to them. High unemployment in a low skill, low wage economy will trap people in poverty.
Vulnerable Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Housing Options Service: Responded to Covid advice by introducing telephone-based assessments whereby customers are triaged by experienced officers and allocated an interview appointment. As a result, the service was able to prioritise customers based on their circumstances, offer a more targeted intervention and assist customers more effectively. There have been 1,890 requests relating to housing conditions in the private rented sector – the highest ever total and a 5% rise in a year. • Vulnerable children and families: We have worked hard to support our most vulnerable children and families. For example, 80,525 virtual and face to face visits have been carried out with vulnerable children. • Adult Social Care Access Team: working alongside other partners made a total of 76,064 outbound calls to people on the Government's Extremely Vulnerable List who were asked to shield, resulting in 28,933 people receiving information and advice, 1,007 people receiving food support and 590 people receiving social isolation related support. • Mental Health: The Council and Public Health are working on understanding the impact of the pandemic on health inequalities, including: a rapid assessment of mental health needs in response to the pandemic; new work around living well and community development and developing joint work with the area offices to support community asset building; and access into Living Well and programmes such as the social prescribing networks. • Everyone in: 435 individuals have been supported off the street, 70 individuals remain in emergency accommodation with 284 supported with securing suitable move on options. During the pandemic Central Government subsidised accommodation for people habitually sleeping rough in temporary housing which has been

extended to October 2021. Sanitary products are made available for women accommodated who are menstruating and are unable to cover the costs of appropriate materials.

- **Period Poverty:** Looked after Children in the care of the Local Authority who are menstruating receive sanitary products as required. Financial allowances paid to foster carers also accounts for the costs of period products.
- **Children in care/ care Leavers:** Those aged 18-21 can be exempt from Council Tax and from age 21-25 can receive a 50% discount. Also, as noted above, all our children in care have been provided with laptops and digital learning support.

Moving Forward Post Pandemic: A New Poverty Landscape

- 2.19 The impact of and response to the pandemic has created a new poverty landscape. The pandemic has deepened existing inequalities, highlighted emerging ones such as digital exclusion and a debt crisis and resulted in a wide range of strategies and policies being renewed and redeveloped. Tackling inequality in the District is also a key cross cutting theme in the draft Bradford District Plan. Changes to the organisation of resources and activity in the District have been taking place, with more being done at community level. These changes are set to accelerate and become ever more embedded in system culture. At the same time, changes to the health and social care infrastructure are rapidly underway, with the move to the ICS and ICP placing greater emphasis on population-wide outcomes and equality of access to healthcare and health outcomes. The national and regional picture has also changed dramatically. For example, devolution and the creation of a West Yorkshire mayoral authority. A priority for the Mayor is creating a regional “Good Work” Charter to address issues such as low pay.
- 2.20 This has transformed the context in which our anti-poverty strategy operates. The range of strategies and plans addressing poverty and the partnership bodies overseeing these is provided in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Indicative List of Local Strategies and Policies Key to Anti-Poverty Work and their Lead Partnership Bodies

Key Strategies/Policies (Developed or in development)	Partnerships/Lead Bodies
The Economic Recovery Plan	Bradford Economic Recovery Partnership Board
Anti-Poverty Strategy	Overview and Scrutiny Committee leads governance: Anti- Poverty Co-ordination Group co-ordinates the strategy, Anti- Poverty Events Group runs events. Well Being Board looking to link with APS.
Skills Strategy	Skills and Employment Partnership
Equality Strategy	Well Being Board
Health Inequalities Strategy	Well Being Board
Act Early	Well Being Board/Health and Social Care Economic Partnership
Living Well Programme	Well Being Board - Public Health leading multi-agency partnership on poverty proofing
Review and Commissioning of Advice Services	Public Health leading
Bradford Food Strategy	Well Being Board – supported by Sustainable Development Partnerships/Public Health
Education Opportunity Area Programme	Education Opportunity Board
Children’s Plan	Children’s and Young People’s Systems Board
Child Friendly Communities	Children and Young People’s Systems Board

Culture is Our Plan (we are developing a cultural engagement strategy for children and young people)	Cultural Place Partnership
Warm Homes/Healthy People	Housing Partnership with Public Health leading commissioning
Poverty Proofing the School Day	Sits under Living Well Programme, led by public Health, Education, Schools, VCS
Housing improvement and Neighbourhood Retrofit	Housing Partnership/Sustainable Development Partnership
Digital Inclusion	Well Being Board
Mental Health Strategy	Mental Health, Learning Disabilities, Autism Health and Care Partnership Board,

2.21 We have now moved out of lockdown measures and the Government is reducing or removing many policies introduced to help manage the pandemic and reduce the economic social and health impacts. This is likely to further increase the impact of poverty and affect our most vulnerable communities.

Key considerations here include:

- The ending of furlough in October 2021 and impact on retail and the high street.
- Removal or maintenance of the £20 per week Universal Credit uplift.
- Resumption of courts and tribunals to pre pandemic service levels which will increase demand for welfare advice and legal support.
- Reduced/ceased funding for the Everyone In programme.
- Cessation of the moratorium on no fault evictions – this ended on 31 May 2021.
- Impact of Long Covid – research suggests 55% of households with long Covid also experience financial hardship.
- Welfare advice funding –the Council has invested Covid funds and public health money in the past two years. Existing contracts are due to end on the 31 March 2022.
- Potential rise in inflation and its impact on cost of essentials such as food and fuel.

2.22 The new poverty landscape raises the question of how best to join up and align the APS with the strategies and policies working directly on anti-poverty issues and move toward a whole systems approach.

2.23 Work is already underway with the APCG and other partners focussed on the following themes:

- **Mapping and joining Up:** As Tables 1 and 2 show, there is a new policy landscape developing around anti-poverty work across the District. The dangers of overlap and duplication were recognised in the report of January 2020. Given the new policy landscape, this is even more of a danger now. Many of the key projects addressing poverty are reported on as separate projects and policies. Both having a clear map of what work is taking place and how this all joins up is key to ensuring a whole systems approach.

- **Setting priorities** in the post Covid world. The impact of the pandemic and the developing evidence base on this suggest that there will be a clear need in the short term to focus on:
 - maximising income and minimising spending and debt through:
 - debt reduction, rent, mortgage and payment holidays;
 - **poverty proofing** services;
 - reducing evictions and improving housing conditions;
 - provision of welfare advice and support services (there is an ongoing review of these services);
 - addressing food insecurity and fuel poverty;
 - developing a co-ordinated and District wide approach to debt relief strategies and minimising costs faced by those in poverty.

We know that work addressing these issues is being conducted across the District and the further mapping of this work will help identify this work. Reviewing and resetting priorities for the APS in the light of this work, and the challenges of the post Covid world, is crucial to determining future work.

- **The role, membership and remit of the APCG** and its relationship to other key partnerships. Given the new policy landscape and impact of the pandemic, the role membership and remit of the APCG bears review. We are currently exploring with the Wellbeing Board how best to align anti-poverty work across the District. We will be presenting to the Well Being Executive Group in October and will be working with Strategic Board Coordinators to connect anti-poverty work and ensure it runs through different programme areas. As part of this, we will also review and clarify the role of the APCG in:
 - Monitoring and reporting on anti-poverty work;
 - Co-ordinating strategies and policies and working in partnership to deliver key aims;
 - Setting priorities and directly delivering specific projects;
 - Monitoring and reporting on trends in poverty;
 - Providing voice for groups in poverty, linking in with key projects aimed at developing the voice of poor and marginalised groups and feeding this voice into the policy making process;
 - Driving the poverty proofing of strategies, policies and provision across the District.
- **Voice and Lived Experience:** One of the key strands of work for the APCG was giving voice to those living in poverty. The need for this voice has become all the more important given the impact of the pandemic. How best to promote this voice and capture lived experience should be reviewed, focussing on:
 - Promoting the voice, lived experience and involvement of people living in poverty at all stages of the policy making process: identification of needs, on design and delivery of policies and programmes, evaluation of what works, for who in what contexts;

- Collating, joining up and presenting clear evidence based on lived experience from the range of work going on across the District. In particular, the developing and rich evidence base of Born in Bradford;
- Campaigning and lobbying on behalf of those in poverty;
- Poverty proofing.

3 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Period Poverty

3.01 There are no precise figures on numbers experiencing Period Poverty but estimates can be made.

- Office of National Statistics (ONS) data shows that, in 2018, there were approximately 27,078 females aged 14-21 resident in the District. At 9.9 % this is higher than the national average of 8.7% for this age and gender split.
- There are 143,500 women and girls aged between 13-54, the typical age range of regular menstruation.
- There is a likely correlation between poverty and deprivation levels overall in households and period poverty. However, this has not been researched. If it is estimated that 30.4% of the population is living in poverty this can be used to extrapolate the numbers of women at particular risk of experiencing period poverty as being 43,600 overall.
- Bradford also has 10% (51) of the most deprived lower super output areas (LSOA) nationally indicating that significant numbers of children (26,400) aged 0-15 years old are living in households with income deprivation.
- Education does not record period poverty or its effects as part of its routine sickness absence data collection. However, absence records due to illness for females have been rising steadily from 2.53% in 2014/15 to 2.65% in 2018/19. This is less than the concurrent rise in males' absence due to illness during this time which is less at 2.33%. It may be that period poverty has an impact on lost days in education, as the research commented on below suggests.

Impact of the Pandemic

3.02 Research conducted by Plan International in March 2020, through surveys and the lived experience, shows that during the pandemic period poverty has continued to be an issue. The impact of school and community facilities closures has exacerbated this and it is thought that the numbers of women and girls experiencing period poverty is rising. Main outcomes from their research are:

- 10% of girls aged 14-21 said they were unable to afford sanitary products.
- 49% said they had missed at least one day of school as a result of their period.
- In a work context, 73% of women and girls said they struggled to work in the way they wanted to due to the effects of menstruation including: pain, discomfort, low energy and more general discomfort.
- The Birmingham City School of Health Research is conducting research which started in March of this year: *Periods in a Pandemic: how UK period poverty*

initiative is mitigating COVID-19 related Challenges. Early findings of this suggest that during COVID, disruptions to the school day have meant switching awareness raising sessions re period poverty to an on line format which for some has been positive. This has allowed proportionally more awareness raising sessions to be run and the digital format avoids 'collective embarrassment' for some students. However, for households where digital equipment and broadband connections are problematic this has had the opposite effect. With repeated school closures, new ways of distributing products to those that may need them have been set up. Requests for products from pupils during lockdown can now be received via teachers or tutors, or from central wellbeing teams, who will then send them out. Schools, particularly in Wales and Scotland, have promoted the use of reusable products during lockdown, with pupils providing positive feedback on their usage and an increase in requests for reusable products being noted as a result.

What is Being Done Locally

Foodbanks and other support projects

3.03 There is a thriving network of food poverty projects across the Bradford District. Many of which offer help with hygiene and period poverty needs. In a short survey of the main projects conducted during February 2021, the majority responded to say that they made period poverty and other hygiene products available. However, this is contingent on donations being received. Returns have been received from:

- Bradford Central (Trussell Trust);
- Bradford East (Women's Zone);
- Bradford Metropolitan;
- Bradford North (Trussell Trust);
- Great Horton (St John's);
- Ilkley Foodbank;
- Lower Grange Community Centre;
- Save the Mother's trust;
- Thornton (St James);
- Wibsey (St Pauls);
- Worth Valley.

3.04 This is a small sample of all the projects available across the District. A number of responding foodbanks expressed concerns around regularly sourcing supplies, noting that they'd offer these when they had suitable donations but that these were not consistent. Others talked about their main user groups being male or past menstruation age. They also noted that the need is wider than period poverty and included personal hygiene products, such as toothbrushes, shampoo, soap and, deodorant.

3.05 There was also a need to look at distribution and an appropriate and sensitive way.

3.06 Some projects include hygiene products routinely with the food parcels offered, others wait for service users to request help, a few include sanitary products in a

separate place making it possible for women and girls to source what they need on an ad hoc basis.

- 3.07 Ensuring regular supplies and what product/s are available is contingent on what is donated, which is not necessarily driven by the providers or the end user.

Holiday Schemes

- 3.08 There are a range of holiday schemes offering activities during school holidays. A proportion are funded directly via Education and the others are supported via charitable funds and Feeding Bradford. All offer food as a routine part of their programmes and many also offer support around period poverty sanitary product needs. Unfortunately, numbers are not available for these in terms of women and girls as beneficiaries or how many products have been distributed.

Council

- 3.09 *Support schemes vulnerable and/or shielded groups.* At the onset of the pandemic in April 2020, the Council organised a central scheme for food and other essential supplies to a range of households across the District unable to support themselves. This included a range of hygiene supplies, shampoo, nappies, sanitary products etc. In the few months this operated, it is estimated that 3,000 sanitary goods and 5,000 nappies were distributed this way.
- 3.10 *Donation and collections schemes.* Prior to the pandemic and subsequent lockdown there were two period poverty schemes operating from Council office bases. In Britannia House there was a hygiene poverty donation project that consisted of donation boxes placed in the largest kitchen facilities on each floor. When these were full, Facilities Management collated the goods which were then given to a local charity, Innchurches, for distribution. This was a successful project which has ceased temporarily but it hoped to resurrect when offices begin to open post June 2021.
- 3.11 The other approach was fostered by the Unite union, the Period Dignity project encouraged public bodies such as local and central government to stock sanitary products in female toilets in publicly accessible offices. In Bradford this included Sir Henry Mitchell House, Margaret Macmillan Towers, City Hall and Keighley Town hall. As the majority of offices are closed and/or operating at much reduced occupancy at present, this is scaled back; however, Customer Contact Staff, accessible from the ground floors in Britannia house and Keighley town hall, can and do offer period poverty supplies if and when requested.

Schools

- 3.12 The Government has made finance available for the supply of period products and also to raise awareness and dispel some of the stigma attached to period poverty. This is accessed directly through the Department of Education portal and schools and any state supported establishment for education specifically aimed at learners aged 16-19 may claim. The amount claimable is levied on 35% of the number of

learners in the organisation whose legal gender is female and who, based on age, are likely to have started their periods.

- 3.13 Government has invested £11.4 million with the Personnel Hygiene Services Group (*phs* is a private sector company) to supply personal hygiene goods to schools and other educational establishments direct. Whilst this is positive, according to their own needs mapping, if 100% of those likely to be in need were supplied, the anticipated costs projected would be closer to £18 million.
- 3.14 Establishments may purchase a range of disposable and reusable products including;
- Period Pads;
 - Environmentally friendly period pads
 - Reusable period pads
 - Applicator tampons;
 - Non-applicator tampons;
 - Menstrual cups.
- 3.15 Each school or establishment is responsible for their own needs and must claim their costs. Unfortunately, this is not currently part of the monitoring arrangements between the Council and local schools therefore information specific to Bradford District for period poverty in schools, costs and their take up is not available.
- 3.16 With repeated school closures, new ways of distributing products to those that may need them have been set up. Requests for products from pupils during lockdown can now be received via teachers or tutors, or from central wellbeing teams, who will then send them out. Schools, particularly in Wales and Scotland, have promoted the use of reusable products during lockdown, with pupils providing positive feedback on their usage and an increase in requests for reusable products being noted as a result.

Everyone In project

- 3.17 During the pandemic, central Government subsidised accommodation for people habitually sleeping rough in temporary housing, which has been extended to October 2021. Sanitary products are made available for women accommodated who are menstruating and are unable to cover the costs of appropriate materials.

Looked after Children

- 3.18 Children who are in the care of the Local Authority and are menstruating receive sanitary products as required. Financial allowances paid to foster carers also accounts for the costs of period products.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

- 4.1 There are none arising from this report.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

5.1 There are none arising from this report

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

6.1 There are none arising from this report

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

7.21 There are none arising from this report

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

7.31 There are none arising from this report

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

7.41 There are none arising from this report

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

7.51 There are none arising from this report

7.6 TRADE UNION

7.61 There are no trade union implications.

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

7.71 The Anti-Poverty Co-ordination Group intends to work directly with Council officers with a direct remit for developing and monitoring ward action plans.

7.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING

7.81 Children in Care are one of a number of groups most affected by poverty and reduced life chances. The report identifies specific measure to support children in care and care leavers. For example, children in care have been supplied with laptops and a digital learning programme and care leavers from 18-21 can be exempt from Council Tax and from age 21-25 can receive a 50% discount.

7.9 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

7.91 There are no issues arising from the privacy impact assessment.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

8.1 None.

9. OPTIONS

9.1 Not applicable.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 That the Committee consider the report and agree to have an update on progress in twelve months' time.

11. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Key Themes and Delivery Plan

Appendix 2: Poverty Across the District Before and After the Pandemic.

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

12.1 None.

Anti-Poverty Strategy and Delivery Plan

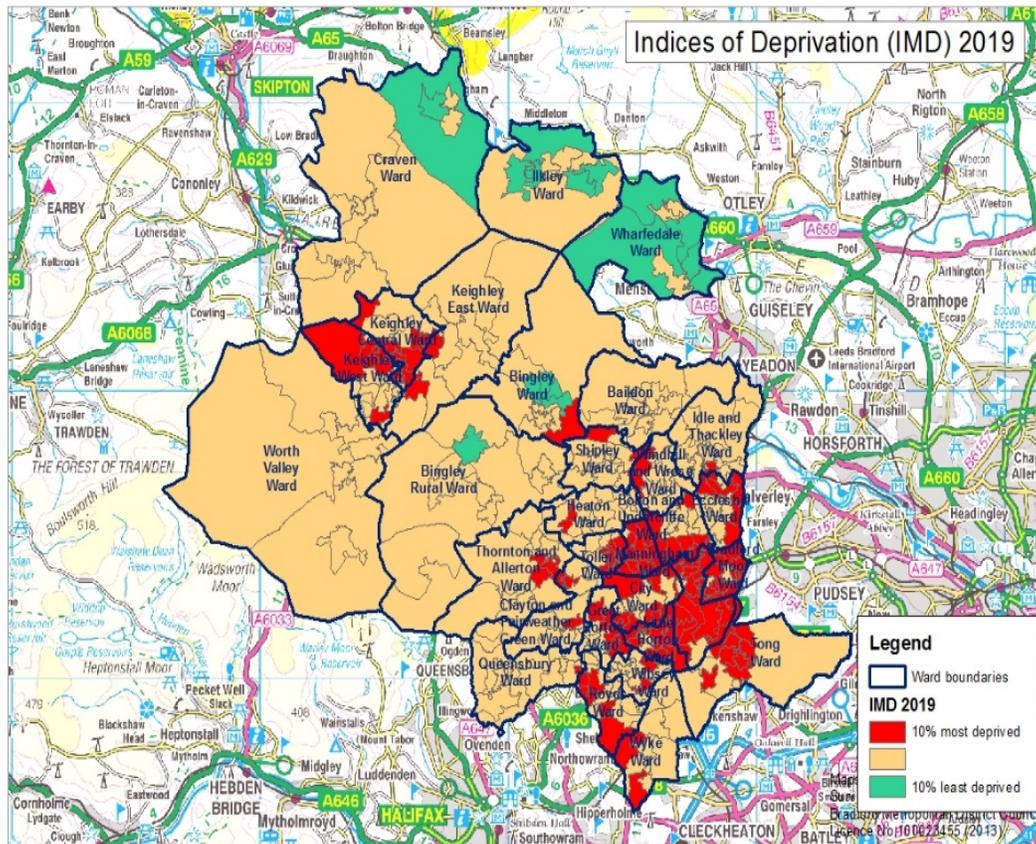
Theme	Delivery Plan Actions
Boost Income and Reduce Costs	Consider different approaches to recovering statutory debt such as Council tax, rent arrears, utilities bills, court costs and fees and charges (Local Charter)
	Develop a different way of recruiting to entry level jobs that delivers literacy and numeracy support on the job.
	Investigate, with a view to developing and implementing, the use of social inclusion currency in the District (the currency is virtual and is earned through taking part in specified activities. It can be used to access discounts with local participating retailers and services).
	Work with the Stronger Communities Programme (Integration pilot area) and other programmes to consider how barriers to employment experienced by those currently living in poverty might be overcome.
	Encourage workplace representative groups to better publicise membership – as they offer a means for people to improve their working conditions and also to access a range of services, such as legal advice, and discounted services. Partner organisations to offer these groups space in their staff newsletters.
Promote Long Term Growth Benefitting Everyone	Appropriate APCG members to consider how to support implementation of the Council's Social Value and Inclusive Growth Policy to ensure big local employers use their collective spending power to better connect jobs and opportunities to neighbourhoods and businesses that would benefit most.
	Consider if additional support is required for the self-employed who are claiming Universal Credit.
Deliver an Effective Benefits System	Raise the profile of financial capability, access to low-cost credit and highlight the dangers of loan sharks.
	Consider measures needed to ensure all private rented sector residents are aware of and claiming benefits they are entitled to, including Tax-free childcare.
	Develop recommendations for action as informed by the recent mapping exercise undertaken about the needs and entitlements of refugees.
	Seek information about Roma and Travellers communities on which to base future recommendations for action.
	Lobby central government to increase the weekly allowance for asylum seekers and to allow them to work.
	Work closely with the Stronger Communities Programme (integration Area pilot) to develop and deliver awareness and information sessions for service providers about support available to help people access benefits including provision of ESOL.
	Create/improve data sharing agreements - with clarity of use of information across frontline agencies to ensure individuals can access appropriate support.
	As is happening in the social rented sector, increase digital access and enablement to access benefits for those in the private rented sector.
	Consider future joint lobbying activity and response to consultations about changes to the benefits system.
	Consider with Children's Services, and others, actions needed to 'poverty proof the school day' – for instance encouraging schools to provide used uniform and shoe swap shops, items of uniform to be available from high street supermarkets.
Improve Education Standards and Raise Skills	Consider data from Bradford Education Opportunity Area volunteer literacy and numeracy in schools mapping and plan appropriate actions.
	Consider how to target the apprenticeship levy at the most vulnerable residents.

	Consider with Education how community venues (including schools out-of-hours) could be used to run skill development sessions.
Strengthen Families and Communities	Involve people with first-hand experience of poverty in shaping policies and approaches to prevent poverty and enable people to get out of poverty – consider establishing a Poverty Truth Commission or other mechanism.
	Facilitate community-led solutions to poverty through an asset-based approach within communities, recognising the strengths and skills already present (including those with a lived experience of poverty).
	Work with social enterprises and voluntary and the charity sector to find new and innovative solutions to address food poverty in the District.
	Encourage initiatives to reduce the risk of social isolation.
	Identify groups with destitute members – current support available to them and unmet needs.
	Consider how our multi-lingual people could be involved to support individuals in community settings to inform about interventions and gather views on proposed actions.

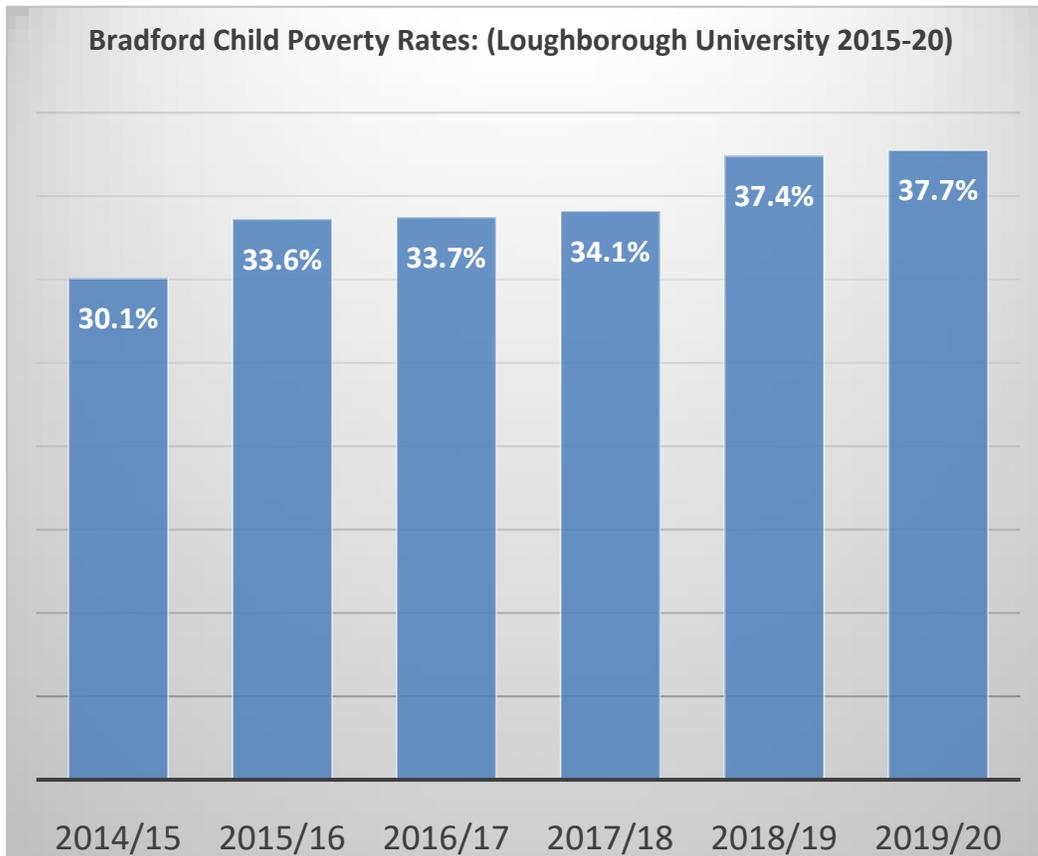
Appendix 2: Poverty Across the District Before and After the Pandemic

Poverty and Deprivation

- The 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation shows Bradford District as the 13th most deprived local authority in England. The 2015 Indices ranked it as 19th. So it has fallen six places. Bradford is the 5th most income deprived local authority. 14 of Bradford's 30 wards are in the 10% most deprived wards in England.



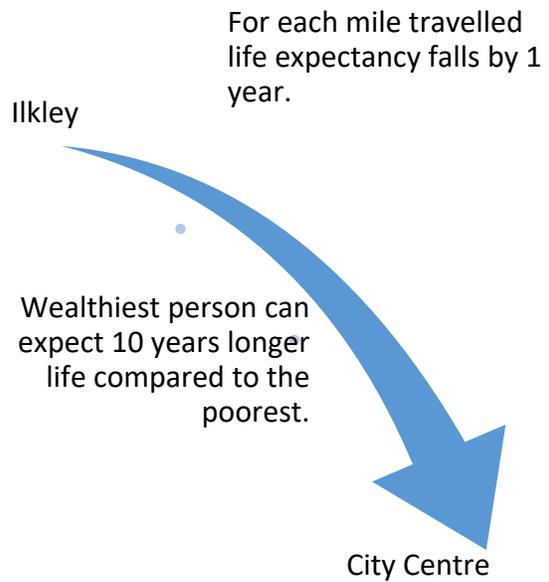
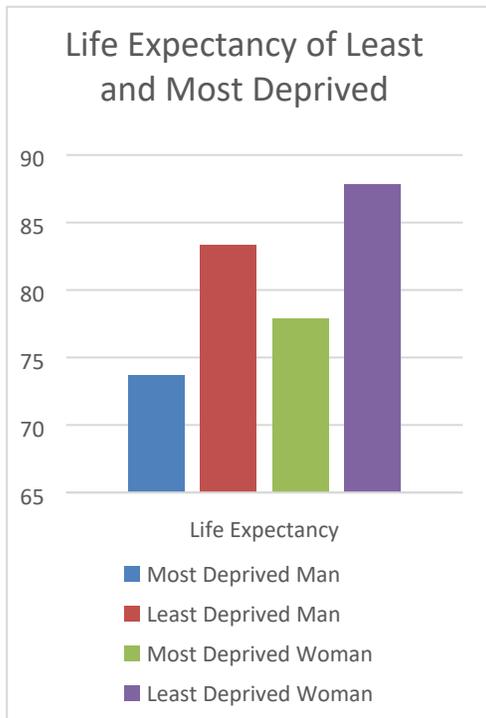
- Research conducted by Loughborough University shows that in 2020, 37 % of the District's children lived in families classed as being in poverty. Bradford's has two constituencies – Bradford West and Bradford East – in the top 20 constituencies with the highest rates of child poverty (after housing costs). By March 2020, Bradford West had 47.3% of children lived in families classed as being in poverty; in Bradford East, 46.7%. From 2015-2020 the rates increased by 10.8% and 8.7% respectively.



- In 2019/20, over 51,000 families in Bradford were living with absolute low income. Of these families, 69% were in-work and 31% were not in work; 28% were headed by a lone parent and 72% were headed by a couple.
- 12.4% of the total householders in the District are in fuel poverty.

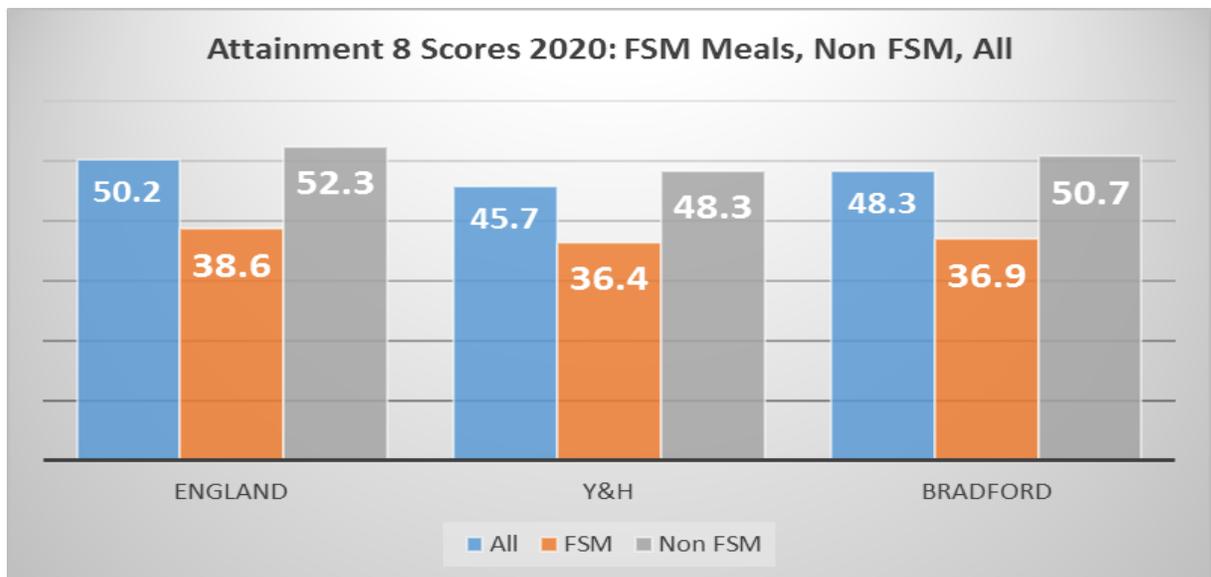
Health inequalities

- By 2020, increases in life expectancy had stalled in the Bradford District. The poorest child in the District can expect to live 10 years less than the wealthiest. Our poorest citizens can expect to spend far more of their adult life coping with ill health and disability. From Ilkley to the centre of Bradford it is approximately 10 miles. For each mile travelled from Ilkley to the centre, life expectancy drops by a year.



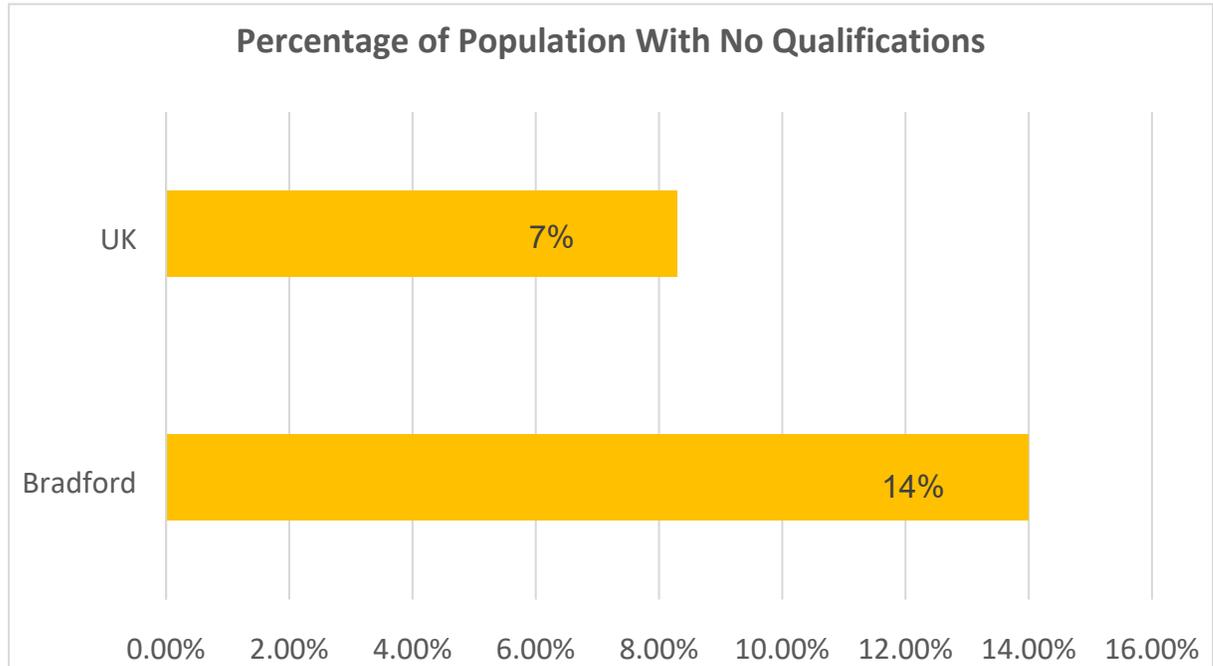
Education and skills:

- While progress has been made in closing the gap in educational attainment between the District and the national average, it has not gone far enough or fast enough. Before the pandemic the poorest and most disadvantaged children were 18 months behind their peers in educational attainment by the age of 16. The pandemic has widened this gap.
- In 2020, for Bradford pupils on free school meals (FSM) the Attainment 8 score was 36.9; for Bradford pupils not on FSM it was 50.7



- The adult skills base remains relatively low and young people enter labour markets where job opportunities are rare and in poorly paid and unskilled sectors. The pandemic has significantly worsened this situation. 14% of the adult population

have no qualifications and only 26% have qualifications at level 4 or above; nationally, the figures are 7% and 40% respectively.



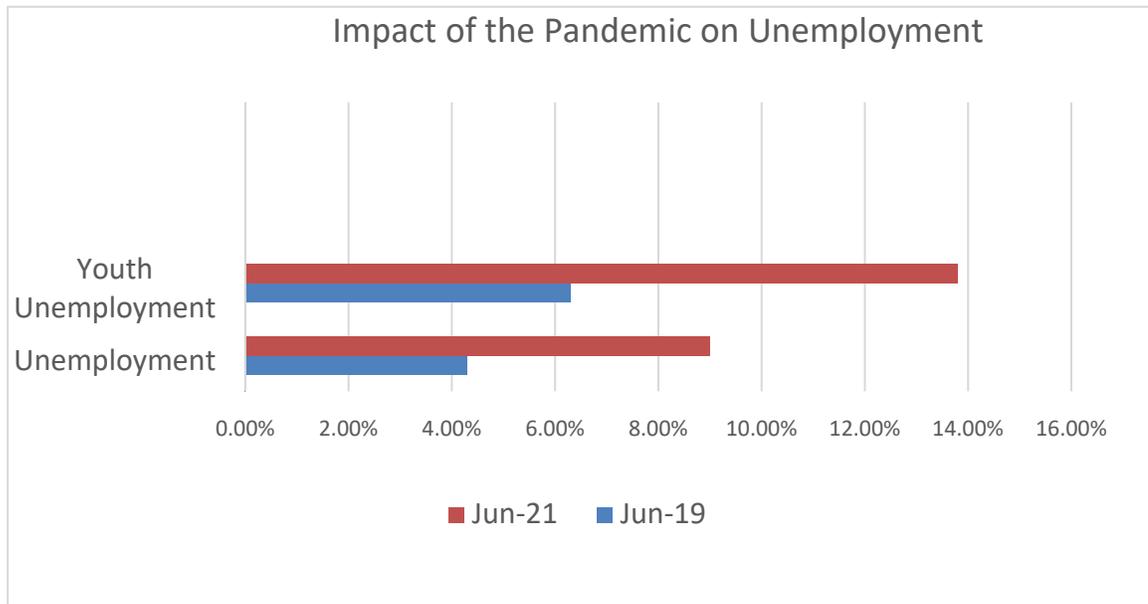
Poverty and The Pandemic

The pandemic has had a profound impact on poverty and inequality. It has shone a light on and further deepened our longstanding social, economic and health inequalities and high rates of poverty. It is the poorest and most vulnerable groups who have been hardest hit by the pandemic. In particular, children and young people have been very heavily hit by the wider social, educational and economic consequences of the pandemic.

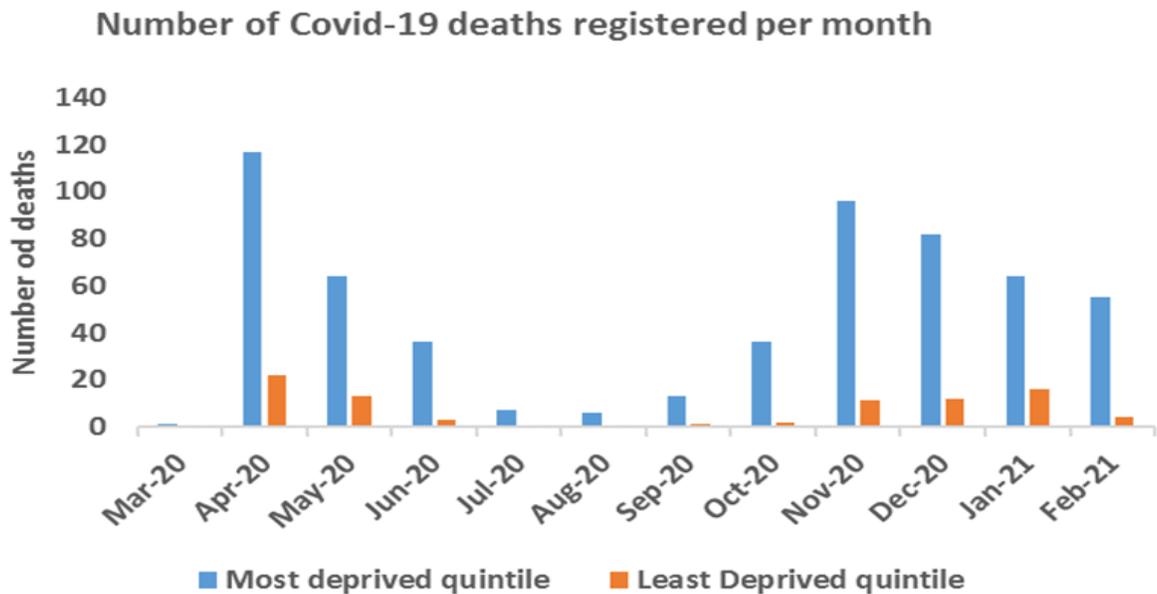
National, regional and local research by Born in Bradford all show this impact. Examples are given below:

Unemployment.

- Since June 2019 unemployment and youth unemployment have doubled. The unemployment claimant count in June 2021 was 9% compared to 5.6%. For 18-24 year olds in June was 13.%. The West Yorkshire rate is 10% and national rate is 8.8%.
- Bradford is the 3rd highest city for unemployment and 12th highest local authority. For youth unemployment, it is the 2nd highest city and 5th highest local authority.
- 21 of Bradford's 30 wards had unemployment rates higher than the national average. Manningham is highest at 16.9%, followed by Little Horton, 15.5%, and Bowling and Barkerend, 14.5%.



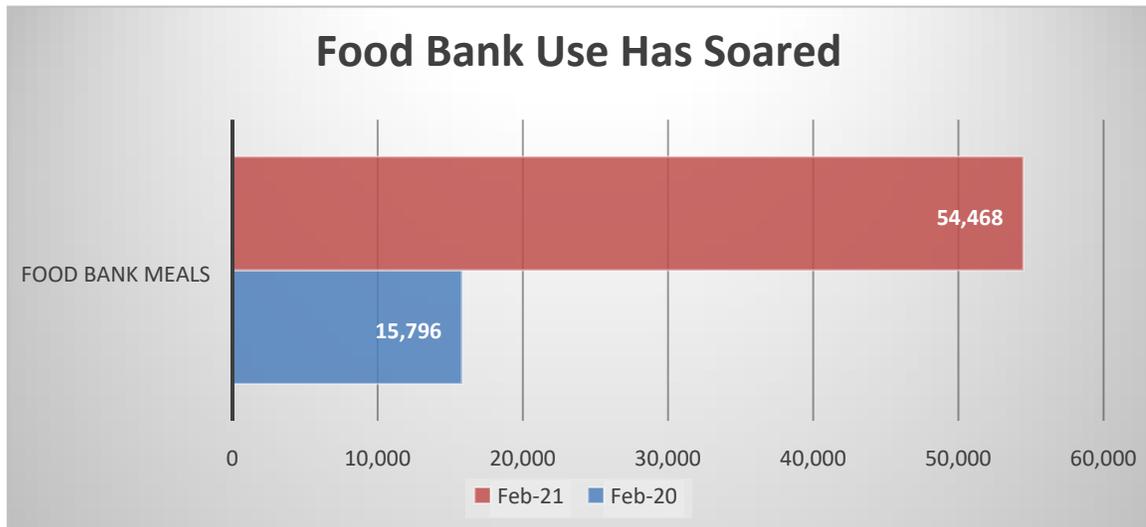
- **Job Retention Scheme (Furlough scheme):** as of March 2021, 79,100 applications had been made for the furlough scheme. Furlough will end this October.
- **Health:** from March 2020 – February 2021, 50% of Covid fatalities occurred in the 20% most deprived areas of Bradford. For the 20% least deprived areas of Bradford it was 7% of fatalities. This division between rich and poor is reflected in national research. This shows that mortality has been twice as high in the poorest 10% of areas and 4 times as high for those aged between 50-69 when compared to the wealthiest areas. Particular groups have been hardest hit: minority ethnic communities, people with disabilities and those in deprived neighbourhoods.



- **Homelessness:** over the past year, the Housing Options Service has received 8,250 applications for help with homelessness or the threat of it. 1,890 requests

relating to conditions in the private rented sector have been made – the highest ever figure and a 5% rise in one year.

- **Council Tax Reduction:** the number of people claiming Council Tax reduction rose during the pandemic from 27,000 to 32,300² due mainly to the increase in people becoming unemployed.
- **Food Bank Use:** across the District, this has soared over the past year. From a base line of 15,796 meals being provided in February 2020 to 54,468 by February 2021.



- **Free School Meals:** nationally, the number of children eligible for FSM has risen by 20% and Bradford reflects this. Currently 25.3 % of secondary pupils in Bradford are eligible for FSM, up from 21.9% in 2019/20.
- **Income and Debt:** the pandemic has allowed the more privileged to save money. The poorest have not only been more likely to experience job loss or furlough, they have also not been able to minimise costs, for example, through home working. A recent (June 2021) Cities for Growth report pointed out that in cities like Bradford one in every two neighbourhoods were likely to have been pushed into debt. For every £1 reduction in spending for the poorest neighbourhoods there has been a £12 reduction for those in the wealthiest. The richest have saved much more. People in the bottom 20% of the income scale were twice as likely to see a drop in income as those in more affluent neighbourhoods.
- **Two Child Limit:** As of April 2021, Bradford had the second highest number of families (5,000) hit by the two child limit of all local authorities (after Birmingham).

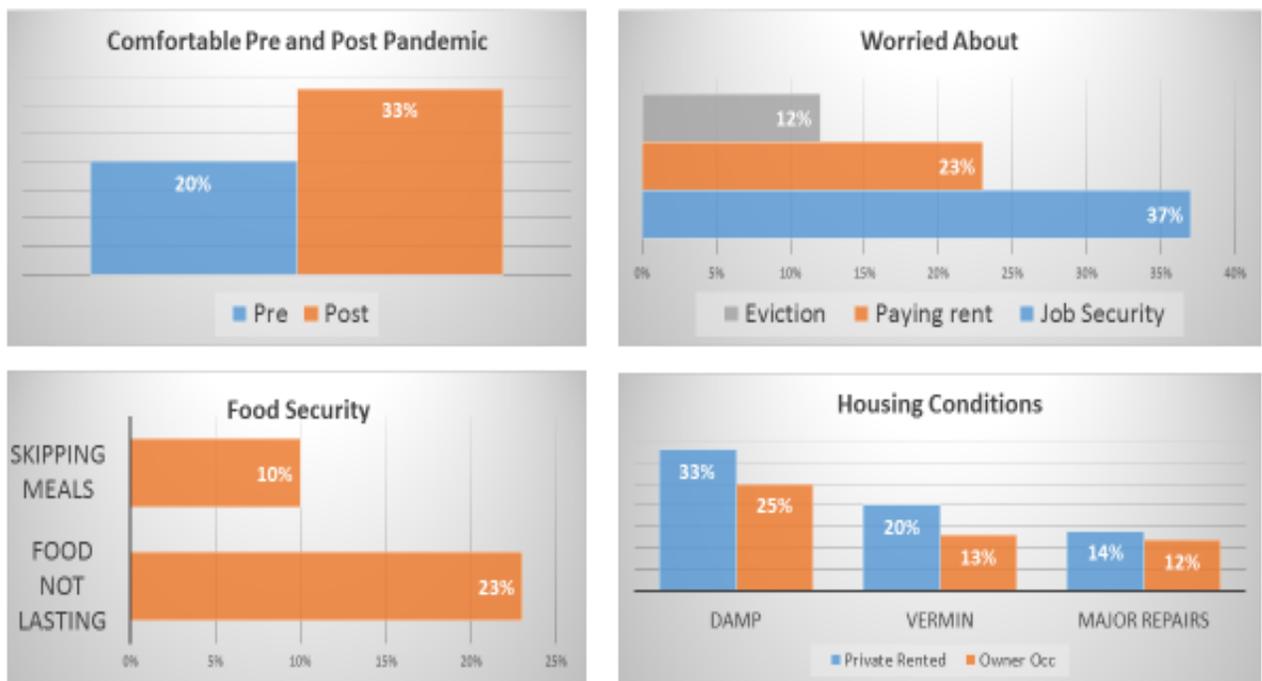
² Document DS, Report to Bradford Council Executive 6 April 2021

What Our Families Are Experiencing

The Born in Bradford Families Survey provides detailed local data on the impact of the pandemic. The survey of over 2,000 families, conducted in June 2020, found:

- Poverty is increasing:** compared to pre-Covid baselines, fewer families are living comfortably (33% to 20%). More families are 'just about getting by' (27% to 19%) or finding it difficult to manage (11% to 7%). 37% of families are worried about the job security of the main earner; 23% are worried about paying the rent; 12% worry about losing their home (eviction/repossession).

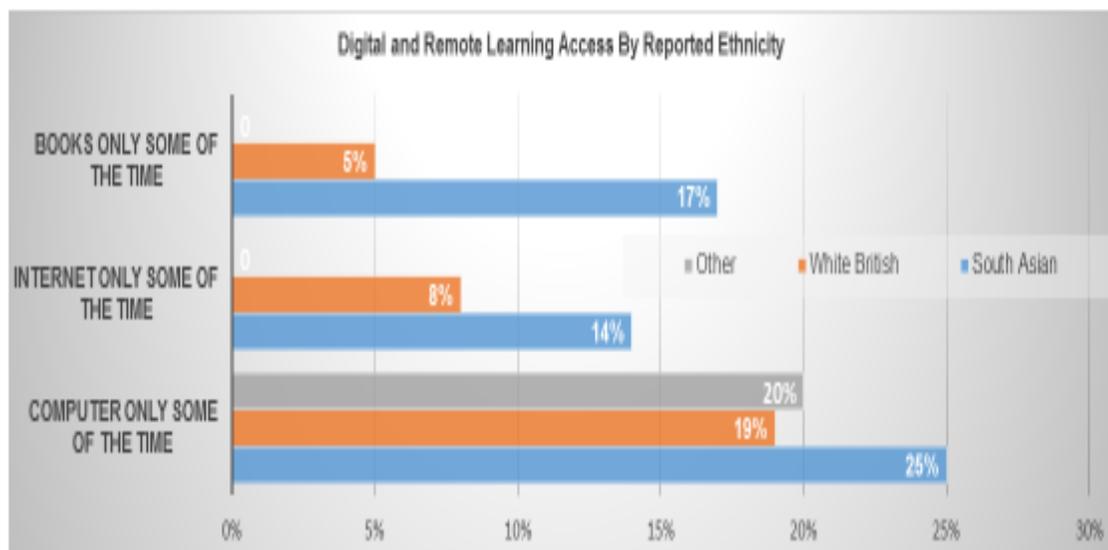
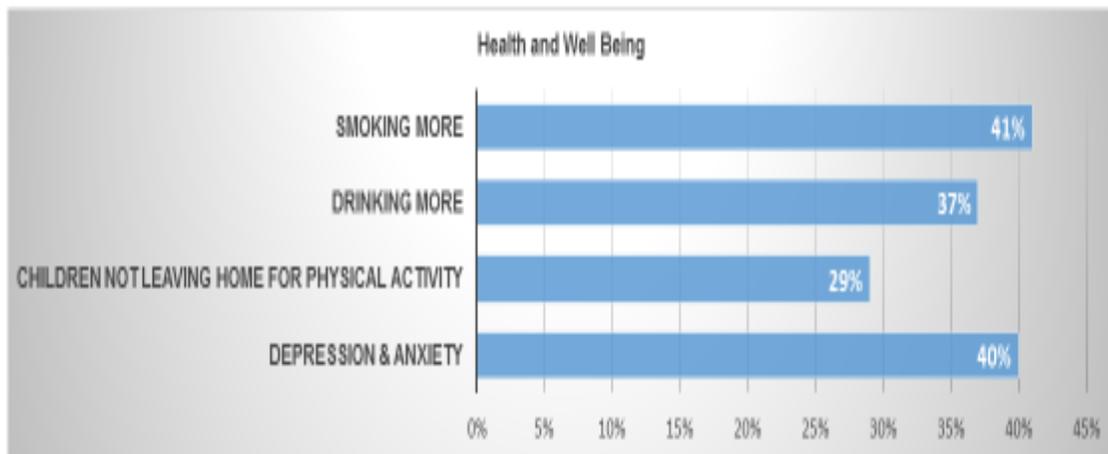
Lived Experience of First Lockdown: Born in Bradford Family Survey



- Vulnerabilities are multiplying:** 6% of respondents reported poor general health. Respondents where the main earner was unemployed or lived in poor quality housing were twice as likely to be in poor health (14%). Families living in private rented accommodation were more likely to live in poor housing conditions (33% report problems of damp, 20% problems with vermin; 14% need major repairs; compared to 25%, 13% and 12% respectively for owner occupiers).
- Food security is decreasing:** 23% of respondents reported that food often didn't last and they couldn't afford to buy more; 10% had to skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food.

- **Physical health behaviours are worsening:** 41% of parents who smoked reported smoking more. 37% of those who drank alcohol were drinking more during lockdown.
- **Mental ill health is becoming rife:** two-fifths of respondents have depression or anxiety. This is more common in these families than before the pandemic. The risk of poor mental wellbeing is higher in those struggling financially. Children’s most common worry was health anxiety around Covid-19: themselves or their family becoming ill and dying, particularly family members working for the NHS. There was also anxiety about wider society and when the pandemic would end.

Lived Experience Of First Lockdown
Born in Bradford Family Survey



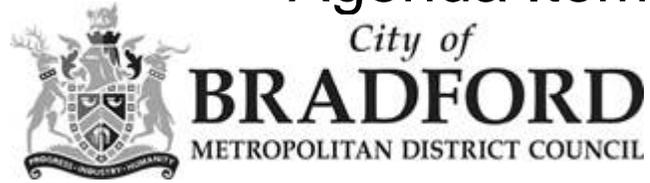
- **Physical activity levels are decreasing:** only 27% of children met the physical activity guidelines during lockdown. Boys were more likely than girls to meet the guidelines (30% compared to 25%). White British children were more likely to meet

the guidelines than children from Pakistani heritage (34% compared to 22%). 29% of children didn't leave their home to do physical activity during lockdown, especially children of Pakistani heritage (39% compared to 18% of white British heritage).

- **Digital inequalities are limiting access to remote education:** South Asian heritage children were more likely to have had access to computer equipment only some of the time (25%) compared to children from White British (19%) and other ethnic groups (20%). South Asian heritage children were also more likely to only have access to the internet some of the time (14%, compared to 8% of White British) and to books (17% compared to 5% White British children).
- **Classroom inequalities are increasing:** in a survey conducted across all Bradford schools, teachers expressed concern over the disproportionate effect of Covid-19 on vulnerable children and children with SEND. Key issues included the lack of access to specialist services, such as children's social services, Speech and Language Therapy (SALT), and counselling.

What Our Families Say About the Early Impact of Covid





Report of the Director of the Department of Place to the meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny to be held on 16th September 2021

G

Subject:

Voluntary Community Sector and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Infrastructure Procurement Strategy

Summary statement:

This report is provided for information to advise members of the forthcoming procurement of a combined VCSE grant with a value in excess of £2 million in line with the requirements of Contracts Standing Orders (CSO 7.2.1) prior to the commencement of the procurement process.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY:

Compliance with Equality Act 2010 is embedded in the Council's procurement process and requirements. The implementation of the VCSE Infrastructure grant will promote equality and diversity in the supply chain. Whilst ensuring that our money is not only delivering high quality services but also promoting equality of opportunity. Equality and diversity objectives will be incorporated in to our contract, policies and delivery and we will expect our suppliers to promote equality within their businesses. The promotion of equality in procurement will help us deliver more responsive, accessible and appropriate services that meet the needs of the districts residents.

We will design, commission and deliver services that are accessible, inclusive and responsive to the needs of people and communities and provide information about services in a range of accessible formats so that people know what services are available to support them and how to access them. We will aim to contract and commission locally where ever possible so that we can support our local economy and build a local supply chain connected to its wider social responsibilities and offering high-quality services and training opportunities to local VCS organisations, while delivering equitable services that are value for money.

Jason Longhurst

Portfolio: Corporate

Strategic Director Place
Report Contact: Ian Day
Phone: (01274) 433507
E-mail: ian.day@bradford.gov.uk

Overview & Scrutiny Area: Corporate

1. SUMMARY

1.1 This report provides an update on the VCS Infrastructure grant to be awarded in December 2021 for delivery to begin in April 2022.

1.2 This is a new contract that for the first time integrates Community Infrastructure grants current provided by the Council's Stronger Communities Team, Dept. of Place, Childrens Services, Health and Wellbeing and Integrated Care Services (formerly known as the CCG)

1.3 The procurement process will be conducted in line with the requirements of the 2015 Public Contract Regulations. Regulation 40 permits consultation with prior providers of the service, it is intended that this regulation will be used to hold pre-engagement consultations with potential providers. This is will be their opportunity to comment and discuss the requirements of the specification the commissioners have proposed.

1.4 It is intended that this pre-market engagement will take place in the week beginning 20th September 2021. Potential delivers of the new contract will be made aware of the exact basis of the engagement through existing channels of communication.

1.5 The current contract provided by the Stronger Communities team is delivered by Citizen Action Bradford & District (CABAD) in partnership with (Community Networks) Cnet and communities of interest organisations.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The review of the current VCS Infrastructure grant began in June 2019 and has been co-designed with the VCSE sector. Several consultations have been held with workshops, online focus groups and surveys which have provided us with the basis for the priorities and themes for the new tender, the results of the consultations are shown in Appendices B, C, D and E. Also shown is the current grant breakdown of funds provided by the sector by Stronger Communities, Dept. of Place in the Appendix A.

2.2 The new grant proposes to combine previous grants awarded by Stronger Communities, Children's Services and Adult Services along with the Integrated Care Services (previously known as CCG) into one single 'pot' to simplify access to funds. This will enable reduction in duplications of services, multiple bids to different funders, and greater value for money as a result of better collaboration and use of resources by the sector.

2.3 The new contract will be awarded for three years with a two-year extension subject to satisfactory performance to provide stability for staffing, development of services and securing the leadership of the VCSE in the district.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The timeline proposed for the offer to bid for the new contract is:

July/ August – preparation of specification document in consultation with the Commissioners

September 16th - Report to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

W/C 20th September - Market Engagement with the sector
Late September - Tender documents to be completed and open tender period
Late October – Tender period to close
November – Evaluation of bids
Early September - Contract awarded
Jan – March 2022 Mobilisation and implementation
1st April 2022 - Contract start

A copy of the procurement schedule is shown in Appendix F

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

4.1 The Council's Contracts Standing Orders provide for details of contracts with estimated value in excess of £2m be reported to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The procurements set out in this report will be carried out in accordance Contracts

4.2 Standing Orders and EU Procurement Regulations. The current EU threshold for procurements of supplies is £189,330.

4.3 The value of the new contract is £767, 000 per annum and will be made from a combination of £460,000 from Stronger Communities, Dept. of Place, £50,000 Adult Services, £72,000 Childrens Services and £185,000 from Integrated Care Services (CCG). These are existing funds within departments which will be combined to deliver a single point of contact for infrastructure support services to the sector.

4.4 The review is being led by the Stronger Communities Coordinator with commissioner's from Adult Services, Children's Services and ICS. The grants are existing commitments and will combine to offer a single process for funding of the new delivery of services to the VCS sector.

4.5 We are being supported by the Council's Procurement Team who are advising and guiding us through this process to ensure all technical, legal and policy requirements are being met.

4.6 The new grant will avoid duplication of services in the sector and lead to more efficient mechanism that is also geared to bring in additional external resources into the district. It will be important for the bidders to demonstrate added social value is delivered and that the local pound remains local.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

5.1 The risks include that one of the funding partners withdraws from the process or the sector interest in Bradford is low with local pound being spent to an organisation out of the district.

5.2 To mitigate against these factors, we propose to allocate 'percentage' costs for thematic spends which could be adjusted if the total fund is adjusted before the tender is made public. The marketing engagement event will allow local providers an opportunity learn and comment on the specification and tendering requirements before the launch

date and in addition to this opportunity the weighting given to the scoring when choosing the winning tender will look at social value and other factors including local knowledge of the sector and experience of delivery in the district to enable where possible and subject to regulations to keep service provision with Bradford based providers.

5.3 The contract for the grant will be managed by panel consisting of the commissioners of each of the services contributing funds and chaired by the Stronger Communities Coordinator.

5.4 Quarterly reports will be required from the contract giving information on outputs and outcomes including equalities data.

5.5 Year 4&5 funding will be depending on satisfactory delivery of the contract.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

6.1 There are no legal issues arising out of this Report in addition to the statutory references made within the body of the Report or detailed in the previous legal appraisal set out in the Report dated 28 November 2019 regarding commissioning of services.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None

7.1 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The Procurement Service's tender documents and specification have been updated to ensure that they include details of the Council's commitment to reducing its carbon footprint through promoting sustainable best practice and through working with Contractors who are actively taking steps to minimise the impact of their activities on the environment.

7.2 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

By undertaking a tendering exercise the commissioners will seek to minimise future environmental impact, through selection and contract management of suppliers who propose sustainable and environmentally friendly service provision, and that manage their work activities to minimise any environmental impact through energy/resource conservation, and efficiency planning.

7.3 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None

7.4 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

This tender will not detrimentally impact on our obligations with the Human Rights Act.

7.5 TRADE UNION

The new contract may result in staff working for the VCSE sector currently benefiting for the VCSE Infrastructure grant losing jobs or being assigned to new roles. The TUPE arrangements will be formally part of the tendering process so staff affected can be allocated to roles with the winning bidder(s)

7.6 WARD IMPLICATIONS

None

7.7 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS

➤ None

7.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING

None

7.9 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

Tender documents and the specification have all been brought up to date with the latest requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and the Council's technical security requirements for Data, Information Systems & Confidentiality.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

➤ None

9. OPTIONS

9.1 The current VCS Infrastructure grant is commissioned under the current arrangements. Allowing for community engagement and infrastructure grants to be allocated by individual departments and services.

9.2 The VCSE consultation and moves to make a unified single contract to avoid duplication and completion in the sector is supported by members.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 That no changes are made to the current funding support made available to the VCSE sector

10.2 That the option to review of the grant is welcomed with the input of the sector and the integration of the funds into one grant is approved for tender with the timeline given.

11. APPENDICES

Appendix A - The Current breakdown of the VCS Infrastructure grant

Appendix b - VCS Support findings - Project Rome

Appendix C - Bradford and District VCS Infrastructure Review – Themed Workshops Interim Report

Appendix D - Bradford and District VCS Infrastructure Review: Sense-checking progress so far Survey Report – March 2021

Appendix E - Review of the support requirements of the BAME groups and organisations

Appendix F - Procurement Timetable

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

Appendix A Stronger Communities VCS Infrastructure grant

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This Grant Agreement is intended to support Community Action Bradford & District Charity (CAB&D) to provide generic/universal support services across the district to the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) that is responsive to local need.

AIMS

This support will enable the sector to participate in and influence policy making and service delivery, help local VCS groups to thrive, encourage collaboration in order to increase VCS involvement in the delivery of public services, and facilitate support for volunteers and volunteering

CORE FUNCTIONS

To provide generic/universal support services across the district to the VCS that is responsive to local need.

Specifically the work is expected to be accommodated through 5 strands of delivery

1. VCS Information – to provide reliable and accessible information to over 1,500 District groups in the most effective way possible related to opportunities for funding, volunteering, events, job vacancies and any other information relevant to the sector with:
VCS Information 2019-20 at £60,000
VCS Information 2020-21 at £60,000

2. VCS Voice and Influence and engagement - representation for local voluntary organisations and community groups - Developing relationships between the public sector and the VCS - Engaging with diverse organisations and groups – Developing opportunities with Public and private bodies with:
Voice and Influence 2019-20 at £80,000
Equality Forum Development 2019-20 at £25,000
Voice and Influence 2020-21 at £80,000
Equality Forum Development 2020-21 at £25,000

3. VCS Support and Development – general advice related to Funding, Constitution & Legal, Marketing, Dissemination and gathering of information, Good practice, Evaluation and Tendering:
Support and Development 2019-20 at £159,000
Training 2019-20 at £33,000
Hub Funding 2019-20 at £5,000 (Year one only)
Support and Development 2020-21 at £162,000
Training 2020-21 at £33,000

4. Volunteering to focus on Encouragement and Promotion of volunteering, Recruitment and Coordination
Volunteering 2019-20 at £78,000
Volunteering 20120-21 at £80,000

5. Active Giving to include support for Bradford District Community Fund, Local giving and Corporate giving.

Active Giving 2019-20 at £20,000
Active Giving 2020-21 at £20,000

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**VOLUNTARY AND
COMMUNITY SECTOR
FUNDING SUPPORT IN
BRADFORD & DISTRICT**

VCS REPORT

1. Introduction
2. Process of the review
3. Definitions, facts and figures
4. The support grant
5. Current arrangements
6. Future arrangements
7. Feedback from the workshop sessions
8. Three difficult issues
9. Recommendations
10. Appendix: Programme Ideas

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

This is a review of the infrastructure support structures available to the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in Bradford and District.

As the previous BMDC support grant was due to in March 2019¹, and in line with efforts to support systems working, the review was commissioned jointly by the Local Authority (BMDC) and the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), supported by the VCS Assembly.

The principle sponsors of VCS infrastructure support² sought an independent assessment, informed by the views and opinions of partners and stakeholders of what support might be best provided in future and how that might be structured to support the VCS to be sustainable and maximise its impact, within the wider system and in the context of a challenging and changing environment.

What has become clear during the collation of the report is that there is a shared ambition for the VCS – everyone wants it to thrive. It is also commonly acknowledged that the VCS will play a vital role in the future success of the City and District.

External stakeholders and the VCS themselves are keen to demonstrate the level of impact that the sector has in a wide range of activities. Both wish the VCS to operate on a financially sustainable footing that increasingly does not rely on Public Sector Grant income. And, suppliers of services recognise the innovation, can-do spirit and deep engagement that local VCS providers can add to sometimes over-stretched public service provision.

Ultimately a strong VCS will lead to the better use of public resource and stronger services for the general public. It will also improve the everyday lives, wellbeing and connectiveness of citizens allowing them greater opportunities to become involved in a large number of good causes and positive activities.

¹ These arrangements have been extended to allow for this review.

² City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council (CBMDC) and Bradford NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

INTRODUCTION

This recognition of what is possible is not new. Substantial public sector resource is already being made available to support and improve the VCS across the district both in terms of the infrastructure support and direct delivery of services. This money has supported some excellent initiatives and valuable work. There are inspiring stories of success and improvement in the local VCS that would not have happened if it was not for the existing arrangements.

But almost everyone agrees these arrangements are now past their sell by date, and are disjointed in their commissioning and delivery. Set up in a different era, when the VCS was often viewed as the junior partner in service provision, grants dominated VCS financing. Impact didn't have to be demonstrated quite as rigorously. There was no real imperative to end duplication in spending between public sector agencies and the plurality of beneficiaries was a top-tier concern.

There is now an opportunity for a refresh. We are convinced that the public sector and the VCS together can build a single, effective, improvement package for the third sector in Bradford and District, but it will take leadership and mutual trust to bring that change about.

OUR APPROACH
NET POSITIVE

THE RESULT FOR OUR CLIENTS

- Outstanding subject knowledge and contextual understanding
- High quality service at a competitive price
- Flexible terms
- Work with a team with great values
- First-rate brand association

THE RESULT FOR OUR PEOPLE

- Interesting work for a purpose-driven company
- Good rates of pay and lessened payment risk
- Flexibility
- Autonomy
- Esprit de couer
- Brand association

THE RESULT FOR SOCIETY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- First 10% of our annual profit goes to good purposes
 - / Educational access project
 - / Regenerational project
 - / Rebuilding project
- Sustainable business practices



PROCESS OF THE REVIEW

PROCESS OF THE REVIEW

Our research has revealed what VCS organisations, stakeholders, commissioners, providers and individuals think about the current services and products and how they are organised.

This research concentrated mainly on the products, services and arrangements of the BMDC VCS Support Grant.

REPORT PRODUCTION

1. Desktop exercise to establish and amalgamate existing knowledge
2. Primary Research (interviews & survey)
 - Semi structured survey (212 responses from 1,629 Briefing Bradford subscribers invited to respond)
 - Focus Groups (130 VCS participants)
 - 1hr face to face interviews (32 VCS “leaders”)
 - 1 hr face to face interviews (12 public sector commissioners)
 - ½ hr telephone interviews (17 external sector experts out with Bradford)
 - 1 hr conversations (5 Trusts & 3 Foundations)
 - 2 hr workshop (Elected members)
 - Unstructured conversations, email, telephone calls with individuals on request.
3. Recommendations Workshops:
 - (1) VCS Leadership (2) Funders & Partners
 - ‘Check and confirm’ with additional feedback gathered
4. Synthesis

ENVISAGED POST REPORT ACTIONS

5. Final Report
6. “Co-design” of grant specification and outcomes
7. Commissioning document produced
8. Grant to be let

DEFINITIONS, FACTS & FIGURES

DEFINITIONS, FACTS & FIGURES

When one asks observers what they mean by “the VCS”, you receive very different answers. These vary from narrow definitions based on legal entity status, to more expansive ones that include private traders and companies who operate with a purpose beyond profit margin. Certainly in the context of Bradford and its commissioners, the VCS is all encompassing and includes everything from micro, non-constituted volunteer groups, to large national charities with multi-million pound turnovers.

Although for the purposes of engaging with the VCS, there is a frequent expectation from external stakeholders that the sector should be able to operate as a single, coherent entity with a common voice and approach, this is in fact impossible as the sector is large, diverse, disparate and transient in its nature.

Small and medium-sized charities whose annual income falls between £10,000 and £1 million, nationally, constitute 52 percent (64,000) of all registered charities and 19 percent (£7.2 billion) of charitable income (2014-15) across the UK.³

We have based all our facts, figures and definitions on a single reputable publication: **The 3rd Sector Trends Study 2012 & 2016 University of Durham 2016.**

This study used robust methodology and drew data from reputable sources and compared results across the north of England to reach its conclusions. The study undertook some original research (including in Bradford) but relied heavily on commercially available datasets such as GuideStar.

In an attempt to reassure ourselves that we were not too far from the mark we have triangulated the Durham Study data with that contained in the NVCO Civil Society Almanac 2018, The Charities Commission website and other local datasets held by some commissioning organisations and the VCS itself.

We have accepted University of Durham’s findings unless there was a more up to date credible and referenceable source. However, the reader should not get hung up on detail, but rather, concentrate on the trends or themes contained within this report.

We accept that the findings of our study are “proximate” in nature and based on information which is now a couple of years out of date, however, this is the best available data to us at this point.

³ <https://www4.shu.ac.uk/research/cresr/sites/shu.ac.uk/files/value-of-small-final.pdf>

DEFINITIONS, FACTS & FIGURES

WHERE IS BRADFORD & DISTRICT?

The Durham Study delaminates “Bradford” by the postcodes covered by the Council (including LS29). This is the same geography as set out by BMDC. We have adopted this as our standard area. NHS boundaries stretch beyond the political and include parts of North Yorkshire. It is important to note that the Clinical Commissioning Groups and other NHS partners also cover Craven, which, from a local authority perspective is covered by North Yorkshire County Council who commission VCS infrastructure separately. The areas are of equal importance, but it would be a long and complicated exercise to disentangle the data beyond the scope of this study. This is another reason why it is important not to get hung up on the specifics of this report.

HOW MANY VCOS ARE THERE IN BRADFORD & DISTRICT?

There are more than 5,316 VCOs (voluntary and community organisations) operating within the District at the current time. The evidence suggests that this volume for Bradford & District is broadly in line with the rest of West Yorkshire.⁴

There are probably many more purpose driven micro- organisations within the district, but these are next to impossible to track, either financially or via registration as their turnover will be below reporting limits. They do, however access the support funding offered via local authority grants on occasion and a small number will go on to make a great impact on their community.

We estimate that there is a turnover rate of 6% per annum in registered VCOs. This mainly comprises of small charitable endeavours being created/ceasing registration. Again, this is in line with what would be expected. The data contradicts the strong local narrative we encountered who reported experiencing a rapid decline in the number of third sector organisations especially in more economically challenged communities. This is more likely to be a decline in the number of services delivered by VCS organisations, as public funding is lost.

Hidden within this statistic are the 644 charities headquartered within the Bradford district who have been removed from the Charities Commission Register since 2012. A further 109 are out with the statutory time allowed to file returns in this financial year and will be removed if this is not rectified. These removals usually happen because an organisation has either spent up or ceased to function for some other reason. It is an important statistic because along with Trustee turnover rates (which are very high in Bradford and District), many external funders use this measure to inform as part of their investment confidence level.

⁴ Third Sector Trends: Durham University, July 2016 based on Guidestar data. This triangulates with a more limited dataset produced by the NVCO Civil Society Almanac 2016-2018 – adding the none duplicates leaves us with a figure of 5,316 – this is not an actual figure it is an estimate.



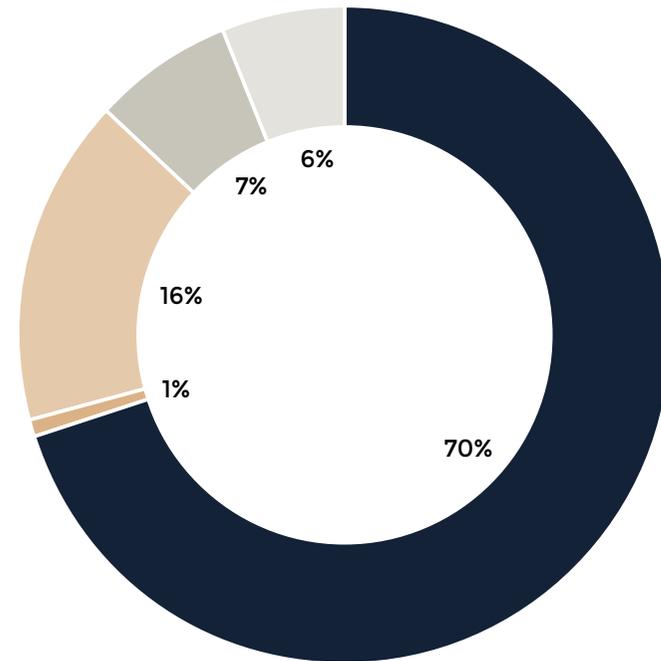
WHICH ARE THE ORGANISATIONS IN THE VCS IN BRADFORD & DISTRICT?

The Durham Study includes and excludes specific “types” of organisation. All organisations which are legally constituted as “not for profit” or “third sector” are included, this means that Cooperatives, Mutuels and legally constituted faith groups are included but self-employed professionals working in the field or companies who have a purpose beyond profit, such as B-Corps are not.

Bradford VCS Assembly, which is the ‘Voice and Influence’ part of the infrastructure, and includes a number of Forums, has not defined who can attend or why, but it invites and is attended by organisations with a civic purpose, so, sole-traders, trading faith groups and B-Corps come but Bradford’s thriving Mutuels do not attend. Neither has support been offered from the support grant to Co-operatives. It is therefore important to re-iterate that one must be careful when reading across from one source to another and the VCS itself seems to be settling on a definition of “VCS” which is purpose rather and legally driven.

Notwithstanding this, VCS organisations are often divided by legal “type”. In 2016 the mix of these in Bradford and District were as follows (right)

Obviously this does not include voluntary groups with no legal structure. As one might expect, Charities are in the majority. These comprise of fund-raising organisations such as school foundations or charity shops for example and organisations who provide services, from medical aid abroad to local junior football clubs. The mix is changing; as trading activities increase a larger percentage of “companies” are being registered.



VCS LEGAL STRUCTURES BRADFORD (2016)



WHO WORKS IN VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS (VCOS) IN BRADFORD AND DISTRICT?

Obviously the 5,000+ organisations in the VCS vary in size – from no employees, to single handers, SMEs to large charitable endeavours with hundreds of people employed.

In many ways how many people a VCS “employs” and/or how many people volunteer is a better measure of gravity or impact than financial turnover. There is a clear correlation between turnover and employment and financial reporting is regulated and more transparent than staffing numbers. So, we have followed others in defining size by financial turnover (see funding).

In 2016 Bradford and District VCS employed 6,600 people. The value per year to the local economy of that employment is £140 million (using an average wage calculation).⁵ Many of these people work for Mutuals and large foundations who have little to do with the VCS support infrastructure, but it gives the reader an idea of the scale of the not for profit sector as a whole and the relatively limited reach of the current support infrastructure arrangements.

Consultants, sole-traders and small PLCs who would classify themselves as social entrepreneurs are also blurring the boundaries of the type of organisation which would be included in the VCS.

The Durham Study estimates that Bradford and District has 30,000 volunteers.⁶ There is considerable disquiet with this calculation in particular. It does seem a little low. Claims of 100,000+ volunteers have been made in some official documentation. Presumably this includes anyone who has ever staffed a stall at the school fete or volunteered through a corporate giving programme etc. which is of course volunteering; but might not be what is meaningful to count. Further research will be needed to establish (a) what we mean by volunteer, and (b) the level at which this currently stands, if this is to be considered as a measure of success for the VCS.

Another key set of people are the Trustees of organisations. They are overwhelmingly volunteers (indeed to be a Trustee rather than a director you cannot receive payment). 46% of VCOs interviewed as part of this Review reported they were carrying Trustee vacancies. This correlates with information we received from the Bradford Volunteering Service and would certainly seem to be a worrying trend.

⁵ Third Sector Trends: Durham University, July 2016

⁶ This does not include carers how are a specific group within the voluntary economy who are not counted in this figure.

WHAT AREAS OF ACTIVITY ARE SUPPORTED BY THE VCS IN BRADFORD AND DISTRICT?

There is considerable range to the type of activity delivered by VCS organisations.

If we use the crude measure of income as a proxy for “level of support” the latest survey information indicates causes that attract significantly more funding than the regional average are children & young people, disadvantaged urban, households in poverty. Those attracting significantly less funding than normal are older people, people with a mental health condition, people with physical disabilities.⁷

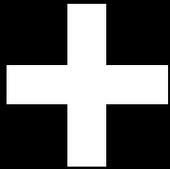
Yet many interviewees insisted that causes relating to poverty and social justice were on the decline in their area. Both these could be correct - funding for the disadvantaged urban causes may well have decreased from a higher point, or the geographic spread might have altered. As we will see in the funding section, the decisions the Public Sector take on whether and how it will out-source its provision via VCS providers has a significant effect on this type of calculation.

⁷ This data was collected by University of Durham. statistical significance = +/-1 standard deviation from the norm.



DEFINITIONS, FACTS & FIGURES

Causes receiving more or less assistance than regional average via VCS

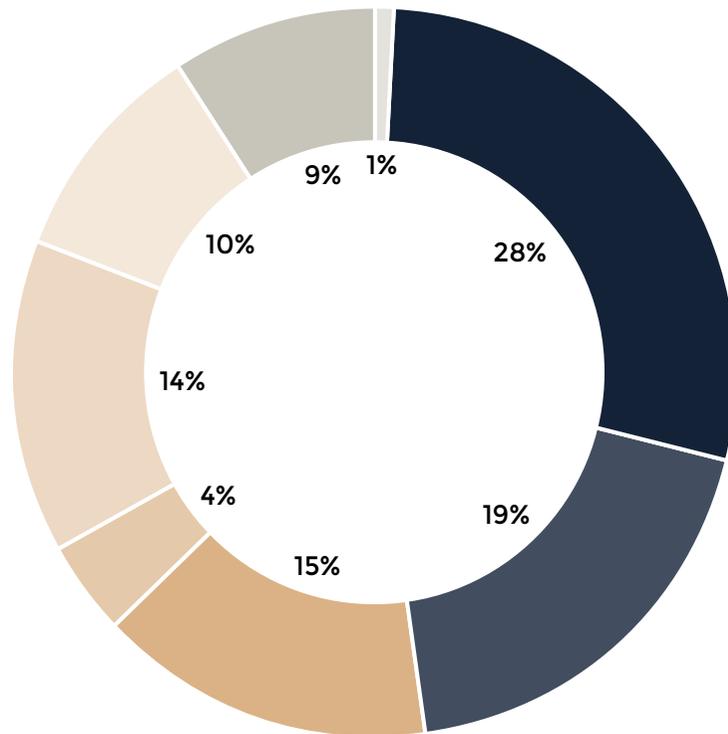


Children & young people
Disadvantaged urban
Households in poverty

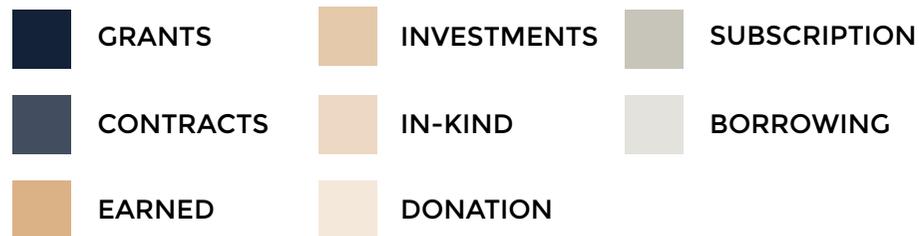


Older people
People with a mental health condition
People with physical disabilities

DEFINITIONS, FACTS & FIGURES



VCS INCOME



HOW IS THE VCS FUNDED?

The total income figure reported for VCS Bradford in the Durham Study is: estimated **£95.5m per year**⁸. Most VCOs believe this will remain roughly the same going forward.⁹ When taking inflation into account this amount does not seem to have altered significantly since last measured in 2013 by Durham University.

National research carried out by Sheffield Hallam University of behalf of the Lloyds Bank Foundation (2018) shows that what they define as small and medium sized VCS organisations receive much less local government funding (16 percent) than larger charities do (84 percent) and that the difference is most pronounced in comparison with the very largest charities (income over £10m) – the large majority of which (76 percent) are non-local – who receive 55 percent of all local government funding.¹⁰

Three key funding points to consider: (1) a large number of micro-purpose driven organisations, charitable entities and the mutual/co-operative sector are not directly supported by public sector contracting/funding. (2) in many parts of the country, the public sector have moved more swiftly than in Bradford away from “grants” as a mechanism of funding, and, (3) Many charities and local organisations benefit in other ways from local authority policy – such as reduced rents on shop space etc. which disproportionately benefits the largest regional, national and international charities.

⁸ Third Sector Trends: Durham University, July 2016

⁹ Third Sector Trends: Durham University, July 2016

¹⁰ <https://www4.shu.ac.uk/research/cresr/sites/shu.ac.uk/files/value-of-small-final.pdf>

DEFINITIONS, FACTS & FIGURES

Notably is localised activity which is paid for by the generosity of citizens and private benefactors in a traditional and 'charitable' manner - this amounts to 10% of the income of the VCS in Bradford and District as a whole. Many of these organisations are not interested in becoming involved in formal support arrangements locally. They might apply for the occasional grant, but they are proud to be independent (see VCS access).

The overwhelming amount of funding in the sector comes from grants and commissioned work and goes to a very small percentage of the 5,000+ organisations.

The definition of what is a grant and what is contracted income is quite tricky to establish, and in the case of the above diagram covers grant funding from the public sector as well as other Charitable Trusts and Foundations.

We have followed convention and split our reporting by income as follows:

Small = below £50,000 turnover per year (representing 41% of the Bradford VCS)

Medium = £50,000-£250,000 turnover per year (representing 31% of the Bradford VCS)

Large = £250,000 and above turnover per year (representing 28% of the Bradford VCS)

THE SUPPORT GRANT

THE SUPPORT GRANT

THE PURPOSE OF SUPPORT FOR THE VCS

There are a number public sector “grants” available from commissioners in any given year which are specifically designed to support the sustainability and effectiveness of the sector. It is important to note that this is not the investment in the sector as a whole, and does not include funding for the delivery of front-line services:

£460,000

BMDC Neighbourhoods Infrastructure Support Grant

£72,000

BMDC Children’s Services Infrastructure Support Grant

£500,000

BMDC VCS Transformation fund (non-recurrent)¹¹

£259,000

BMDC Community Building Grant¹²

£175-400,000

BMDC Community Building Grant¹³

Notably the CCG investment has been across a range of grants although in most recent years have included non-recurrent investment in establishing the VCS Alliance, and the Engaging People grant.

To all intent and purpose these grants and payments have operated independently from each other and have been governed via separate arrangements and structures.

Yet although they are all configured differently, they share a common purpose, which is to unlock the asset base of people and place by maximising the impact and sustainability of the VCS in Bradford and District.

Definitions of infrastructure are varied, however, for these purposes, from the perspective of CCG and BMDC commissioners, these are activities and services designed to support the sector, that is anything which is not considered a front-line service delivery.

¹¹ This is a non-recurrent source of funding which is used flexibly which includes reviewing the needs of an organisation and providing consultancy support and advice, as well as small grants.

¹² Funding to support small organisations with building costs

¹³ CCG defines “support” as any service which is not directly delivering care. This is an average estimated from previous spend. This funding has included non-recurrent funding to establish the VCS Alliance, the Engaging People grant, and other small adhoc grants.



THE CURRENT SUPPORT STRUCTURE ARRANGEMENTS

The current grants are administered and provided through a disparate and complicated set of arrangements.

The 2 formal governance structures for VCS Support are currently:

The VCS Assembly

Bradford VCS Assembly is the elected voice and influence structure made up of Forums, which provides representation onto a number of committees and boards, including Health and Wellbeing Board, and is funded via the BMDC Neighbourhoods Grant. The Assembly has a Chair and Assembly Steering Group which is made up of the Forum Chairs.

Bradford VCS Alliance

Bradford VCS Alliance (BVCSA) <http://www.bradfordvcsalliance.org.uk/> was established to allow the VCS to operate as part of the integrated health and care system, similar to GP Alliances. The Alliance provides a contracting management function for health (currently the CCG) which also allows it to use its 'market place' of member VCS organisations to come together to deliver creative solutions.

BVCSA is established as a separate legal entity with a Board of Directors. BVCSA co-ordinates the VCS Representation on the majority of the Community Partnerships in Bradford and also represents the VCS on the Bradford Health and Care Partnership.

THE SUPPORT GRANT

DELIVERY WITHIN THE CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS

Within the main BMDC VCS infrastructure grant which is let by the Neighbourhoods Service, there is a lead provider: Community Action Bradford and District (CABAD), and a range of subcontractors including C-Net, WYCAS, Bradford Volunteering Service and Keighley Volunteering Service, COEMO, Equity Partnership and Equalities Together.

Delivery is across the following key areas:

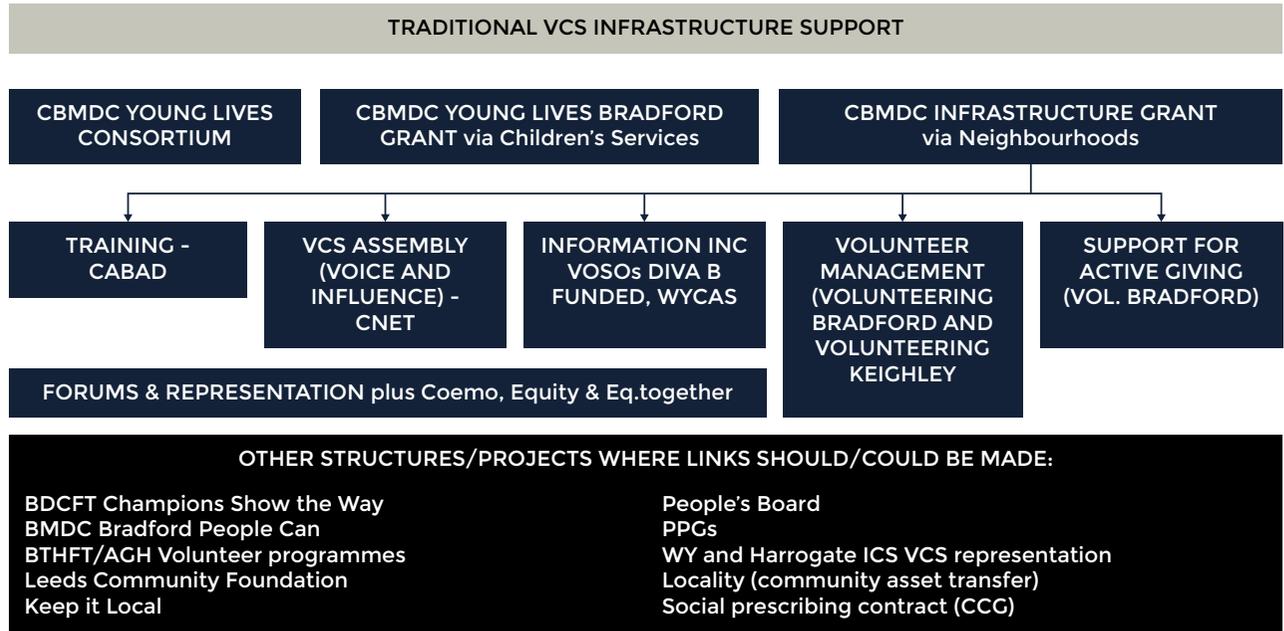
- Information to VCS organisations
- Voice and influence
- Equality Forum development
- Volunteering
- VCS support and development
- Active giving
- Training

In addition to this, BMDC Children's Services fund a separate infrastructure called Young Lives which has an infrastructure function, as well as Young Lives Consortium (a similar model to the Bradford VCS Alliance).

The CCG consider the partial outsourcing of its statutory engagement duties via the Engaging People grant to be a further form of support structure which is delivered by the VCS although it is recognised that this would not necessarily be a function which would be defined as infrastructure.

There are also a range of ad-hoc forms such as Woman's Health Network, Positive Ageing Partnership which do not currently operate within the formal structures.

THE SUPPORT GRANT



HOW SHOULD THE VCS STRUCTURE SUPPORT FIT ALONGSIDE OTHER COMMISSIONED SUPPORT IN BRADFORD AND DISTRICT?

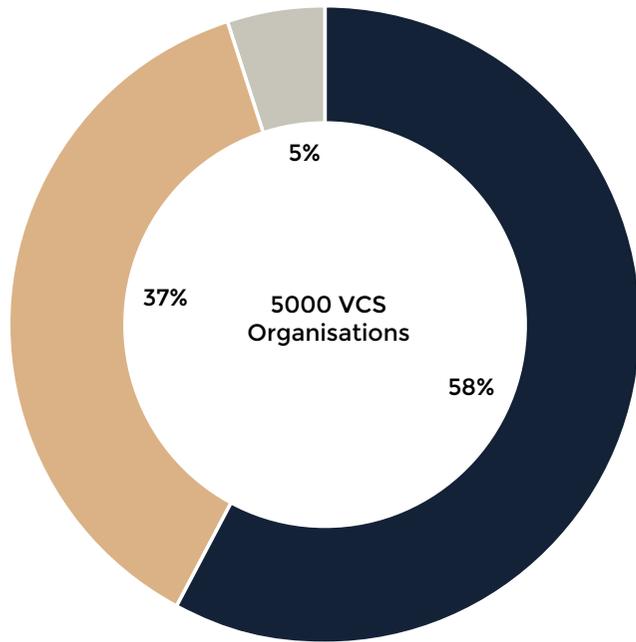
Arguably there are projects and programmes which could or should be linked in some way as they are publicly funded, such as: BDCFT Champions Show the Way, BMDC Bradford People Can, BTHFT Volunteers, AGHFT Volunteers, Leeds Community Foundation, Keep it Local, People's Board, Patient Participation Groups, West Yorkshire & Harrogate Integrated Care System /VCS Representation, Locality, Social Prescribing. This is something which could be explored further as part of the co-design process.

HOW MANY VCOS PARTICIPATE AND ACCESS SUPPORT VIA THE BMDC INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT?

It is important to note that the current BMDC Neighbourhoods infrastructure grant was commissioned specifically to support smaller VCOS rather than the full spectrum that the sector covers, which is arguably where there is greatest need for support.

Around half of the 5,000+ voluntary and community organisations in Bradford and District have not had contact with the support offered via any grant, are not registered on the DIVA database and are seemingly uninterested in being involved with state sponsored activities. This is for a range of reasons including other infrastructure being resourced elsewhere (eg for sport), not seeing the value in what is being delivered, and wanting to remain independent from the statutory funded provision entirely.

A further 37% are registered on the DIVA database and receive regular communications (once a year or more) from the infrastructure. 5% take part in activities (have either responded to surveys/ accessed services and courses or use VOSOs). Fewer attend events - 80 VCOS (296 individuals) have taken part in Assembly events in the first 3 months of 2019-20. A further 60 individuals have attended the Young Lives Forum. 369 training sessions have been held - reaching a maximum of 391 individuals in the quarter. This element of provision is the part which is most diverse in take-up and involvement.



ESTIMATE OF CURRENT SUPPORT 'REACH'

- NO CURRENT ENGAGEMENT
- ON DIVA DATABASE
- TAKE PART IN ACTIVITIES

OTHER FACTS (Q1: 2019)

C-NET E-bulletin 936
 DIVA User logins 7,327
 Web enquiries about volunteering 2953

Accounting Advice sessions 60
 VOSO sessions 299

Most VCOs Interact with the Infrastructure Organisation's on-line. The DIVA database has 7,327 user logins, 4,836 browsed the B-Funded website, 2,107 visited the Community Action Bradford and District (CABAD) website, 1,629 subscribe to the Young Lives E-bulletin, 936 for the VCS Assembly E-Bulletin.¹⁵

The most engaged and visible participants in the VCS Assembly Steering Group and VCS Alliance are those whose principal funder is the public sector (NHS or Local Authority), as in the main, this is the way that they find out about developments in the public sector, and opportunities for funding. In general, with some exceptions, this group of VCOs are relatively stable professional organisations who have some managerial capacity allowing them to generously contribute their resource to assist the VCS at large through Charing Forums or other representation activity, for example, on public sector committees.

¹⁵ Information is from the Q1 Contract Monitoring Report, we have no further information about which Organisations have logins.



CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS

CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS

WHAT'S STRONG ABOUT THE CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS AND PROVISION?

VCS participants valued the interaction they enjoy within the wider Bradford and District 'System'. They think the networking opportunities and sharing of information at events was very valuable. The concept of an Assembly was popular, although it was recognised that there needed to be some changes to the way that it works.

Others from outside the Bradford and District mentioned that the level of financial support offered by the public sector to improve the VCS was impressive and welcome – although this was not necessarily recognised by all stakeholders within the VCS, perhaps as they may be less aware of the swathing cuts to the VCS in other areas of the country.

The infrastructure supply organisations were proud of the products and services they provide. They and the elected members commended the work of the VSOs and believed their work on the ground to be a vital part of the jigsaw when it comes to ensuring a vibrant and thriving District, particularly during challenging times.

CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS

WHAT'S WRONG ABOUT THE CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS AND PROVISION?

VCS Issues

VCO's who were not engaged with the system fell into two camps:

- the majority did not care much about being involved with the infrastructure and their only point of contention was about "communication" and notification of opportunities to bid for grants
- the minority who didn't even want this level of involvement. They want their independence to be respected.

None of the small number we talked with had accessed training this year.

The mid-sized and larger locally based VCOs are more likely to be engaged in the VCS Assembly. Notification of opportunities was a continuing theme with a number of the engaged VCOs who also felt that methods and processes for this were not clear, or often transparent. They were supportive of a number of the infrastructure services offered to the sector but seemed to think these were not aimed at them but at smaller organisations.

A number of VCO's complained about the commissioning arrangements claiming that they had been brought together by the VCS Alliance to bid collectively for work but had not received what they believed to be value for their part in this work – with particular concerns about the lack of full cost recovery and the perceived unfair management charge taken by the Alliance.

A small number of organisations and groups complained vociferous about not having a voice within the system, claiming the architecture had failed them and that there is no clear link between 'grass roots' feedback and the representation work within the current arrangements.

CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS

Public Sector issues

Familiar concern about the complicated nature of infrastructure arrangements were again raised particularly in terms of it being unclear how to navigate the politics and who to speak to about what. This could often be seen as a barrier to involving the VCS as it can feel like 'hard work.' Commissioners were also very concerned about the cost of these arrangements, specifically about the duplication of functions and number of senior officers/back office functions the grants supported etc.

The Public Sector colleagues we spoke to recognised the importance of investment in VCS infrastructure, but did not believe current arrangements had led to a consistently high-quality product being delivered to them. They also did not feel that there were the market mechanisms available to them all offering the degree of flexibility they wanted.

They did not believe the current arrangement supported the VCOs leadership enough. They wanted to involve the leaders of the VCOs in more projects, as well as at a strategic level, but recognised that this was an area which needed greater investment as there was over-reliance on a few key individuals willing to volunteer their time to be involved in representation activity, and that this was not a sustainable position.

Finally, they are very concerned that present arrangements do not address problems in provision locally (at a ward or Community Partnership level). There are parts of the city where community centres and organisations act as 'anchors'. These vary significantly in terms of their quality of delivery, provision available and sustainability with clear examples of where provision is failing and their closure could have a significant impact on the local area it serves. There were widely varied opinions, in terms of how this should be addressed, however, a number of key stakeholders highlighted the need for the grant to be used more flexibly to identify areas of the District with significant gaps in VCS provision and/or areas with significant health inequalities. This would mean more targeted resource and less 'universal offer' which could also be controversial for those who perceive themselves as missing out. It would also not be a 'quick fix' and would require significant investment in community development and capacity building over an extended period of time.

CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS

Grant makers and Foundations

There is a significant amount of grant funding that comes into the District via Trusts and Foundations. Of particular note is the level of investment in Bradford as an identified 'priority area' from the Big Lottery, Henry Smith, Lloyds Bank Foundation, Power to Change, St George Martin, BBC Children in Need, Sport England, Bradford Community Fund, under the umbrella of Leeds Community Foundation and the Cooperative Group.

That said, the external funders we talked with told us that they wanted to invest more in Bradford and District as it ticked a lot of boxes for them to do so. However, they had found interacting with the VCS here quite difficult. They were particularly unsure who was speaking for whom. One respondent told us they gave up trying to invest "because it was just too complicated to work out where the money would go" and they were: *"fed up of having to work so hard for the pleasure of giving these organisations our money"*. For those we talked to, the proxy measures they use to assess investment risk (such as Trustee and organisational turnover, record keeping, internal governance) were all "flashing red" in Bradford.

CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS

SUMMARY

Although there have been previous reviews of VCS support infrastructure which have led to changes¹⁶, there was an overwhelming opinion that it is time for significant change to ensure a fit for purpose and future proofed solution, which maximises impact.

It is notable that there was a high degree of alignment about the strengths and weaknesses of the current system from all stakeholders (VCS and public sector). The current infrastructure organisations recognised the need for enhancements, although were varied in their views about how significant this change should be.

Most respondents were pleasantly surprised at the level of funding made available via the local authority support grant and the overall funding that has flowed from the public sector to develop and build the VCS.

Though this information is available through annual reports and other publications, only a few very well-informed commentators have an understanding of how the money flows once it is received by the commissioned provider and what has been achieved with that funding.

Nearly every commentator believed the system had too many organisations, complicated governance structures and back office/management functions involved in administration and delivery, that the money had been split too many ways, and, that the Assembly Forums need updating.

¹⁶ The last review led to the merger of a number of organisations to create what is now Community Action Bradford and District (CABAD)

FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS

FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS

MARKERS OF A SUCCESSFUL VCS ENVIRONMENT

We asked 10 Funders (Public Sector, Grant givers and Foundations), 10 VCOs and 5 external experts to think about systems and places where the local VCS thrive. Specifically, we wanted them to list the characteristics that would mark out a good system in which the VCS would thrive.

Tier 1:

(>75% of participants “agreed”)

- Large number of diverse VCOs
- Evidence of an independent mindset (not public sector in character/entrepreneurial)
- Evidence of diverse funding streams
- Transparent systems and processes

Tier 2:

(25%-75% of participants “agreed”)

- Low turnover of Trustees
- Growing numbers of Volunteers
- Other funding recently attracted
- Co-production of contracts
- A culture of giving evident
- Long retention of Chief Executive

We also asked them to identify a place they knew which they admired as a great place to be a VCO. The results were far more mixed; and no pattern was established. Most told us there isn't a single exemplar.

There was also a strong theme encouraging charities to modernise and update systems and processes to take full advantage of modern digital tools.

FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS

WHAT LARGER VCOS (+£250K) WOULD LIKE TO SEE IN FUTURE

Most of the respondents we talked with in this category had interacted with the infrastructure during the last twelve months. Two larger fundraising VCOs (based in Bradford) had not had any contact and they saw no reason to become engaged in future. The rest were engaged and were animated about improving the system. The larger the organisation (financially and staff wise) the less they needed the practical help being offered, preferring to use commercially/externally available alternatives which they could tailor to their needs. Medium size organisations were interested in both expert assistance and sector wide development opportunities. They also highlighted that they would be keen for different models to be explored such as a sliding scale for paying for services, support for joint purchasing (economies of scale) and coordination of more specialised training.

All provider organisations within this cohort wanted to create more opportunities for the public sector to outsource their work to the VCS, or to deliver collaboratively. They noted the wide narrative around the 'left shift' of resources but had seen limited evidence of this happening. They thought this might be organised via infrastructure support system. They were interested in grants and commissioned work and were comfortable with the direction of travel toward higher standards of reporting and outcomes.

A small but influential number of respondents (notably those working at a locality level) wanted to decentralise the support offer completely and support VCO development locally through strong anchor organisations. The Anchor VCO would then be paid a fee to manage this work and would develop their local community micro-offer. When this organisational response was raised with others they agreed that a geographical approach works in places where there is a natural anchor, but doesn't if there is not, they were also keen to understand how these "uber-centres" would be nominated and what that meant for non-geographically assigned VCOs – would they lose out in some way? (see three big issues).

This group definitely see the infrastructure as a means to facilitate a collective voice for the VCS in both NHS and Local Authority decision making bodies/systems forums, and felt that there had been some positive results for the sector, and communities, by working at this level, particularly in the last couple of years.

FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS

WHAT SMALLER VCOS (-£250K) WOULD LIKE TO SEE IN FUTURE

The support infrastructure providers and other VCS leaders believe that smaller organisations and purpose driven micro-organisations in the main beneficiaries of support. The training and access to information offered is essential to them, and a number have benefited from the direct support of the Voluntary Organisation Support Officers (VOSOs).

Yet few are involved in the leadership and representation of the VCS as they simply don't have the resources to do so. Although we tried to balance the sample, we talked with more engaged VCOs in this category than non-engaged but the views of both about the future were consistent.

Smaller VCOs wanted practical help to increase resource. They want to increase their income with bid writing assistance and access to grants. They are not as interested in trading in general and see themselves as key providers of insight into their community. And, they want to increase the number of volunteers. They see a role for a centralised resource in both these areas. They clearly do not feel that their voice is currently being represented through current mechanisms, however, there is also a challenge given their limited resources for them to participate in meetings or even engage in some of the electronic communication methods.

A key message from small VCOs were that they did not want infrastructure organisations which are meant to be supporting them, to then compete with them for grants.

FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS

WHAT THE NHS WANTS FROM THE VCS IN FUTURE

Although the NHS has historically been a proxy for the local Clinical Commissioning Groups, as part of this review we also spoke to colleagues from Bradford District Foundation Care Trust, and the two local acute hospitals.

All NHS colleagues were keen to do more with the VCS and see the infrastructure system as a way of making this happen for them. There are practical and ideological drivers for them.

The NHS is clear that it must ensure that the money it spends in the VCS gets results. They want to be able to prove the impact this spend has made on their objectives set by the NHS. When pushed they accepted that they do see the VCS as a way of delivering a number of stretching targets within a reducing resource envelope.

Some NHS stakeholders were very clear that, if they were to keep the maximum amount of spend in- district, in the case of unplanned funding or funding released from NHS England with little notice, they will occasionally have to strike bilateral agreements with VCOs that they trust to deliver at short notice.

The NHS providers (who commission services) in Bradford and District told us they would prefer to trade with strong collaborations of locally anchored organisations who they can trust with large sums of money and they see “pre-qualified frameworks” as a sensible way to achieve this. They also want a single marketplace where they can advertise opportunities.

The VCS Alliance is perceived as performing a useful function, in its ability to broker creative solutions, get funding to smaller organisations and perform a time consuming contract management function which they are no longer resourced to deliver in-house. There have, however, been some concerns about the delivery vehicle and business model for this function.

There is a clear commitment within the NHS to supporting the local VCS in Bradford and District, and they recognise the ability the VCS have to reach into communities to gain insight and influence. A couple of senior NHS leaders believed that the public sector had a lot to learn from the VCS about how to innovate to improve services delivery.

FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS

WHAT THE LOCAL AUTHORITY WILL WANT FROM THE VCS IN FUTURE

The local authority had many similarities to the NHS in practical considerations: improved impact reporting, support to the VCO's so they provide higher quality products for a lower price, use of local VCOs as insight collectors and influencers in "difficult to reach" communities etc. Like the NHS the key commissioners of services were concerned about their specific duties and how these were to be discharged but did recognise the wider requirement to create a universally strong VCS offer.

There was more emphasis on supporting sustainable organisations in the community. Universal coverage was more important to some Local Authority officials than other respondents. Some wish to ensure the city and district has strong VCS local anchors throughout and see the VCS support grant as a possible route to supplying these.

They seek a way to deal fairly with the community centres who might be at threat of closure and require financial assistance to survive and want a method to re-establish VCO coverage in areas which are currently under serviced.

The council procurement team is committed to transforming their procurement strategy, including procuring for social value and looking at where a 'light touch regime' can be applied. They were keen to establish "fair" trading rules, definitions and application that the entire local public sector could work within. They want to end any possibility of sweetheart deals being struck as these undermine trust in the system overall. They are keen to open dialogue with their counterparts in the NHS to discuss these matters. The team also wish to encourage diversity in VCS supply and a higher number of participants in the supply chain in future.

There was some interest in the function provided by the VCS Alliance, which has previously been focused on health funding only, and noted that this could be a useful vehicle for other external funding which might be brought into the District.

WHAT THE GRANT-GIVING ORGANISATIONS AND FOUNDATIONS WANT FROM THE VCS IN FUTURE

The public sector respondents were mostly concerned about systems and processes being fit for the future, the Grant & Foundations were more interested in people and relationships. They want to encourage purposeful leaders and to build longer term relationships with key trusted individuals.

They are short of is time to help local organisations apply. They wanted the confusion around whom speaks for whom in the sector sorted out with a single point of entry to the Bradford Marketplace. They also thought the Bradford system could be as smart as its neighbours, they should understand the key measures the foundations and grant givers use as proxies for good governance or high performance for example and have answers to the obvious questions they will ask. They also wanted to be welcomed for what they do rather than have their methodology questioned as if they were up to no good.

WHAT ELECTED MEMBERS WANT FROM THE VCS IN FUTURE

The elected members were quite clear about their requirements They want the majority of the grant to reach smaller localised organisations working within communities. They wanted universal coverage for the VCS with the district at the same time as clarity of what was available at a ward level. They were keen to ensure the percentage of money spent on the support infrastructure was transparent and for the overhead costs to be reduced as a way to ensure that funding was maximised at the front line. They were also clear that they wanted a greater understand of impact and outcomes. They were supportive of alignment between NHS/Local Authority spend.

FEEDBACK FROM WORKSHOP SESSIONS

FEEDBACK FROM WORKSHOP SESSIONS

A series of three workshop sessions were held with: (1) Elected Members (2) VCS Assembly Steering Group (the elected leadership), VCS Alliance Directors and the support infrastructure organisations/providers, and (3) Public Sector commissioners and providers. The insight gained from these sessions has been used throughout this report, however, each session contained important views that should be recorded in this report.

01 Elected Members

The session with the elected members was well attended. Most of the output was about what was possible in future and is recorded above. There was considerable support for continuing to support the work that the VCOs do within wards and the VCS overall. Members want to reduce duplication, administration cost and would support greater alignment of public sector spend overall.

02

VCS Assembly and Alliance and current providers

There was clear agreement that change was needed, but we could not find unanimous support for what the new system needed to look like or how to enact change. Consensus was, in general, difficult to find. Participants who supported change when interviewed fell silent when their ideas for change were repeated to peers who would be affected by the changes they supported in private.

For example, most participants supported the principle of simplification and the general direction of travel toward the recommendations contained later in this report - but there were a minority who do not support a single slim-lined structure/organisation to oversee the contract in Bradford and District.

It was clear that a number of organisations in the room came expecting to hear specific contractual recommendations on how commissioners would refresh support. Others noted that there were elements of the report that related to wider 'systems issues' which would not necessarily be addressed by VCS infrastructure and would also require changes in behaviour and approaches used by public sector colleagues.

Although this was the most challenging of all the feedback sessions we held, it was in many ways the most helpful. It narrowed the scope of what might be achieved with the VCS in Bradford and District at present. And it clarified that getting to meaningful change would require a longer period of time if co-production is used.

03

Public Sector commissioners

At a workshop with the public sector commissioners in November 2019 there was unanimous agreement from senior officers across the Local Authority and the NHS to work together toward a common objective of ensuring a strong and sustainable VCS in support of the wider objectives of the District. Officers also agreed to investigate the practicalities of bringing together funding for a joint commission of these services going forwards.

THREE DIFFICULT ISSUES

THREE DIFFICULT ISSUES

We have covered a lot of ground during this review and we have uncovered some great ideas and positive attitudes about what the future might look like, but we have also uncovered three difficult issues, which need to be acknowledged but around which there is no consensus of opinion.

01

“NOT-SPOTS” AND COMMUNITY ANCHORS

There are parts of the City and District with strong vibrant Community Centres that are financially stable, run by experienced leaders who have earned a high level of trust from local charities and voluntary organisations as well commissioners. They would definitely be well placed for hosting support services and functions. There are other places where probable anchors (the stronger community organization) are either in deep financial/governance trouble and/or issue specific in nature.

There are a series of responses one could make to this challenge. Funders might choose to channel a significant proportion of support spending (and management fees) through Community Anchors, commissioning them to deliver all support within a given geography within the City and District. This is very popular with some - but who will pick the winners & losers?

A large percentage of the financially weaker institutions are in the most economically deprived parts of the City - arguably, where they are most needed. This is clearly of concern.

In some places the strongest “anchor” with a community minded purpose would be a faith or sports organisation or an issue driven charity. Some smaller VCOs liked the idea of working with such a local anchor - others were absolutely dead set against it, claiming that unintentional bias was bound to play a part in this arrangement. In a completely random and unrepresentative survey both possible non-community centre anchors that we approached were very reluctant to take responsibility as it was an objective beyond their articles of association.

Alternatively, the public sector might also put together a “support package” to help failing Community Centres in critical “not-spots”. But is this not rewarding failure? It is certainly grant funding by another name.

Or the public sector could choose to leave Centres to fail and wait for the void to be filled by a sustainable locally generated response - perhaps from another third sector provider such as a faith organisation – yet this could leave a part of town without provision for a time or unintentionally marginalise another community? At the moment this issue is not being addressed at all.

02

CO-PRODUCTION PROCESS AND MEANINGFUL CHANGE

There is a majority voice locally for radical and meaningful change to the way the support infrastructure is delivered. Yet most interviewees favour implementing that change through a local co-production process that will involve the current suppliers of services. Yet our experience is that what is said in private is not always supported in public. Our concern is therefore that entering a co-production process will result in little meaningful change to arrangements. A central contract let and several sub-contractors all of whom are paid management fees, leaving less for front-line support.

VCOs are already defining themselves less by geography and more by community of interest. We are also not convinced that all of the VCS current infrastructure delivery partners who are engaged in the process have the same appetite to innovate or adopt new technology as may be needed if they are to remain relevant to their VCO colleagues in future.

Simplification of the system, and maximizing innovation and impact, will require absolute resolve from commissioners in particular.

03

DON'T REWARD THE VCOS BECAUSE THEY ARE MICROCOSM OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR

The most engaged actors in this review are those who are involved in public sector led commissioning contracts. The public sector is understandably keen to do business with organisations with which it feels comfortable. The view is that the most successful VCO providers are those who walk and talk like public sector organisations. By insisting on compliance to public sector norms the system might lose innovative practice and entrepreneurial spirit along the way - and that would be detrimental to quality in the long run.

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

Having considered the matter carefully we are putting forward the following recommendations to improve the VCS in Bradford and District via a public sector support package.

PRIORITISING THESE RECOMMENDATIONS

Agreeing a purpose (recommendation one) is the most important enabler. In setting a purpose, decision makers MUST ensure that plurality and diversity is respected – specifically this cannot exclude those who champion causes beyond: Health, Children Social Care etc. so a wider purpose (wellbeing?) should be favoured.

Then, those recommendations that help VCOs of whatever size or purpose to become sustainable and find funding from out with the public sector are to be favoured as one cannot expect support grants to continue beyond this settlement. This includes support for entrepreneurial activities.

Finally, finding and recruiting a diverse set of high-quality Trustees across the sector – thereby reducing the overall vacancy rate and increasing the number of people with influence who are personally involved with good causes is, we believe, a universal improvement we could deliver through this support.

The commissioners should apply the following principles to support spending on the VCS in future:

Public Sector and VCS to work together to agree a shared vision and set of values

with the potential to link this to a refresh of the Compact. Perhaps start with the working in recommendation one.

Do things once. Avoid duplication.

Bring all public sector VCS support spend together to maximize improvement impact and reduce overhead spend. This may best be achieved via a single facilitator.

Bradford and District first (whenever possible).

Spending money within the District has added beneficial effect. A local solution is always therefore preferable – but only if it is of equal or better quality and price to an external offer.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Commissioners should contract a single infrastructure organisation to oversee the following five programmes to:

1. Attract more external funding and diversify the income streams of VCOs so they are collectively less reliant on the public purse.
2. Recruit, retain and develop individual VCS/VCO leaders
3. Improve the consistency of quality of service and reporting offered by VCOs to commissioners/funders.
4. Fill Trustee and volunteer vacancies and improve the governance of VCOs across the district.
5. Simplify and modernise the support infrastructure, including service directories and market mechanisms.

A time limit should be set against delivery of each programme as should Outputs and Outcomes drawn from Appendix 2.

None of these programmes will be fully successful unless there is system-wide agreement and behaviours change. The current arrangements include a behaviour code – which is observed through the breach. **Participants from the public sector and the VCS must agree to play by the rules and not try to go around the systems which are being put in place.**

The VCS and its VCOs should view the improvement support they receive as something they should add to. Specifically, there is an organisational responsibility for VCOs to improve the package of training and development they offer to their staff and volunteers.

The Assembly and forums should be subject to evolution rather than revolution via Programme 5 Simplify and Modernise. We support calls for the Assembly Chair to be elected by the Assembly membership, act as the leader of the VCS in Bradford and District, be a sabbatical post supported financially via these arrangements. It is unfair to ask people to carry out this full-time task in an ad-hoc manner. The VC needs a single identifiable leader who is from the VCS.

For further detail of what might be included within each programme of work and to find out more about the ideas discussed in the consultation stage, please see Appendix 2.

**“YOU HAVE
TO EAT YOUR
OWN-BRAND
DOG FOOD
OR IT WILL
NEVER TASTE
ANY BETTER”.**

Google playbook

APPENDIX

PROGRAMMES TO DISCUSS

APPENDIX: PROGRAMMES TO DISCUSS

Commission support against an agreed common objective.

Idea	Notes
Perhaps “to ensure that the VCS in Bradford and District is supported and equipped to deliver the best outcomes for citizens of the district”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on our external expert testimony

Do things once.

Idea	Notes
Bring all public sector VCS support spend together to maximize improvement impact and reduce overhead spend.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building on Local Authority/ NHS workshop This may best be achieved via a single infrastructure organisation set within a clear hierarchy

Bradford and District first (whenever possible).

Idea	Notes
Spending money within the district has added beneficial effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A local solution is always therefore preferable But only if it is of equal or better quality and price to an external offer. Bring Procurement Teams together to discuss
VCS to collaborate more with each other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Boards of VCOs should agree to interview at least one candidate from the wider Bradford & District VCS for Executive officer roles.

Programme One: Attract more funding and increasing the overall pot

Idea	Notes
Centralised Horizon Scanning Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linked to marketplace Be more pro-active with push messenger etc.
Centralised Bid-writing Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not universally supported by VCS who fear “de-skilling” of smaller organisations if this happens
Single point of contact for VCS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create one infrastructure team with one person at the head.
Campaign to attract outside funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A warmer welcome for private funders.
Spend more public sector money with the BD VCS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Especially research money
Spend more Bradford donations in Bradford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outreach to find out what local givers want to support Active campaign to encourage local spending from Foundations & Trusts and Grant givers
Longer term contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Sector change required
Support VCOs to “trade” off assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn from Transformation programme Training package?



Programme two: People and leadership talent development

Idea	Notes
Support for Social Entrepreneurs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May need to change definitions/ broadening of third sector to social purpose
Access to good quality leadership development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to extend public sector training to include VCS • Focus on diversity of leadership to ensure representation of BAME communities

Programme three: Improve quality and reporting

Idea	Notes
Create and use a single VCO Assessment tool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn from Transformation programme – but simplify • Agree a shared understanding of Outcomes Based Accountability. • Investing a substantial proportion of this grant to support a drive towards every VCO producing an Impact Assessment.
Out-reach for new VCOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The VCS Infrastructure should always strive to have a better knowledge of groups and what they offer to place on DIVA.
Not-spots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decide on a future of support programme for “failing” centres – where financial support is given for a change in governance.
Support for Small & Medium VCOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training programmes should continue to be offered specifically at these organisations

Programme four: Trustees & Volunteers

Idea	Notes
A trustee marketing campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To attract and fill vacancies (especially from beyond the public sector) • Increase applications from those with protected characteristics.
Volunteering better triage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All should use the central on-line system • Agree a consistent definition of Volunteers and a way to estimate their number and use it.
Volunteer Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need greater investment and to be more presentable and welcoming than present.

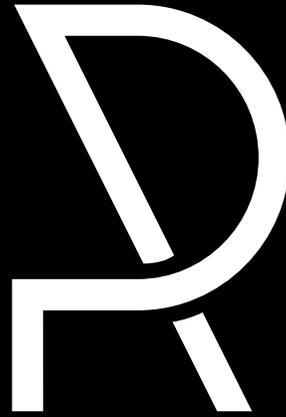
Programme five: simplify and modernise

Idea	Notes
Change the marketplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove lower value contracts from competition process. • Agree cross sector “social value” clause • Create and use a single portal (Better than B-Funded) • Pre-qualification will read across to training. • Single guardian/host of system – with no trading arm.
Single VCS Directory Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link to commercial social value planning gain menu on all Public Sector contracts • Should be next generation (machine learning, Artificial Intelligence, block chain etc.) to reduce cost and complexity.
Agree single management fee for all commissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15% should be the starting point for negotiations
A single voice for the VCS through the Assembly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The infrastructure support organisation should report to the Assembly as the representative group for the VCS across the District.
Single Communication system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A (single) e-newsletter and face to face meetings should work alongside a flexible online two-way communication platform; this might be linked to the “marketplace platform.
Assembly should adopt a digital platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For information sharing, most meetings and transparent decision making
Review Role of Reps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rep Role: (a) helping develop a new product, (b) being the “subject specialist” adding professional insight, or (c) as the provider of service. • Rep should be interviewed for positions rather than elected • Discussing a matter with the VCS/organisation is not a replacement for meaningful engagement with the target group itself. • Engagement or reach into a community should be commissioned. • Consideration should be given as part of the co-design process about whether the current model of representation is sustainable. • Consideration should be given as part of the co-design process, how the voice of small grass roots organisations can be fed in more effectively.



Review the Assembly governance arrangements at Board level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assembly Steering Group (the Board) should be appointed by a panel of system leaders rather than elected • Might be aligned to Community Partnerships
Assembly Forums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities of interest and popular subject specific groups (such as Health and Wellbeing or the Youth Forum) should be encouraged to continue for information sharing, however, the topics should be reviewed as they are outdated. • Consideration should be given as part of the co-design process how the Assembly can also operate in a more agile manner to coordinate around cross cutting themes.
An Infrastructure Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A slimmed down, simple management organisation should administer the grant and commission services. This body should not supply commissioned front-line services to others – its sole purpose is to service this contract in the most efficient method available and certainly within 15% of the total monies available.





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**GET IN TOUCH
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Platform

New Station Street

Leeds

LS1 4JB

+44 (0) 113 873 0167

+44 (0) 750 644 3346

hello@projectrome.co.uk

www.projectrome.co.uk

Appendix C - Bradford and District VCS Infrastructure Review – Themed Workshops Interim Report

Historically BMDC and Bradford CCGs have funded the support of the Voluntary and Community Sector through grants to infrastructure organisations. The overall purpose of the funding is to develop, maintain and encourage a thriving non-profit sector in Bradford. The non-profit sector plays a vital role in the success of the city and contributes vastly to the wellbeing of the workforce and residents in Bradford.

During the last eighteen months, Bradford and Districts infrastructure support organisations have worked with independent contractors to undertake a review in relation to the services and support delivered as part of Bradford Metropolitan District Council's and Bradford CCG's contracts. Initially in 2019 Project Rome worked with the sector and developed a report aimed at outlining the current provision and working up a set of recommendations for future commissions.

Thereafter, a co-production phase was entered bringing together stakeholders to look at the service needs and strategic development within infrastructure for the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector. The workshops initiated conversations around designing whole system approaches, collaborating with the wider economy whilst embedding community voice. Only a third of the planned workshops were completed before the subsequent COVID lockdown. This interim document compiles the notes from the events.

Voice and Influence

'Voice and influence' constitutes two interconnected strands of work - representation of the VCSE sector and, the voice of communities and how that influences strategy across the district. In terms of sector voice, the current structure of the Assembly gives representation with a line of accountability and governance structure. A further 'Engaging People' commission connects with communities through the VCS to gather voices on specific subject.

The Voice and Influence Co-design workshop prioritised the following areas of development;

- A review of the Assembly forum topics and themes, consideration to be given to those cross-cutting themes, themes that currently work in isolation and how information is shared across the forums.
- Forums to move away from information sharing platforms to partnership forums between both the VCSE and public sector partners including CCG and Council officers.
- Further development of outreach. Consideration of how the mechanisms foster a relationship between the voice of the grassroots and service design and strategy.

- To revisit the governance of the Assembly Steering Group, look at whether the most appropriate VCS leaders are representing the sector through ASG and, the transparency of both that representation and decision making.
- Clarity to be outlined in terms of where Community Partnership representation and ASG representation work together and, to further acknowledge and understand the different types of representation; strategic / commissioning / design and delivery.
- To move towards a shared vision for the sector, which can be carried by the ASG leaders and Alliance governance structure.
- Staffing resource for Assembly forums to be more widely discussed. Allocating one dedicated part time worker for each topic forum was the preferred model.
- Assessment and clarity in voice and influence sub groups, particularly under the protected characteristics sub contracts. There is a need to give a more equitable reach to these communities of interest with an emphasis on paid representation.
- Need for a diversity of networks with shared visions. These networks don't necessarily need to be physically centralised.
- Engaging Communities activity works on an ABCD approach and existing network of assets for engagement work. This data should be shared strategically and district wide. Information to be more widely interrogated and have a conduit for feedbacking into communities. This work is likely to be given more direction with a district wide engagement plan.
- Voice and Influence insight to be fed into external funding opportunities giving strong community voices to the design of services.
- Development of Young People's leadership and representation.

VCSE Resourcing

The current voluntary and community sector resourcing provision across Bradford District is comprised of two elements of work. Bradford VCS Alliance operates as part of the integrated health and care system and provides contract management for health. This function was originally funded by Bradford CCGs however operates a sustainable model through the contracts it attracts and manages. Community Action Bradford and District provides a research and information service which benefits the sector with resourcing insight.

During the VCSE Resourcing co-design workshop, the following areas of development were prioritised;

- Income maximisation for VCSE organisations within the district and generating additional external funding into Bradford.
- Increasing capacity for the inclusion of resourcing services for social enterprise.

- Links to be developed between 'Give Bradford', CSR and the Infrastructure organisations developing resourcing activity.
- Development of a 'market place' to run alongside the Alliance activity. This market place to build a network of specialists/members.
- Aim to work within an 'honest brokerage' across the Alliance activity. Conflict of interest to be removed from brokerage to provide more transparency. Current provision has cross over of Alliance/Assembly/providers/Competitors. 'Honest Brokerage' is seen to be able to enhance the influencing of the strategic environment.
- Contract Management packages to be developed to assist with the 'honest brokerage' and outcome data sets.
- Transformation work to be developed around real time data platform – links to both income maximisation and brokerage.
- A concentration on a 'Left Shift' strategy, following the work carried out in Airedale.

Volunteering

Volunteering provision currently operates from two independent Volunteer Centres located in Bradford and Keighley. The functions of these centres comprise of the recruitment and brokerage of volunteers and volunteer placement, advice and support for employers on volunteer management and volunteer development in terms of promoting 'People Can' and representation at region.

The priority areas to come out of discussion during the co-design workshop can be summarised as follows;

- A wider assessment to be undertaken into the resource needed to run two independent volunteer centres and how that resource might best fit needs across the district.
- A move away from appointment-based drop ins and a more time effective model developed.
- Shifting towards a model of capacity building within organisation and culture change within those organisations towards the use of volunteers.
- The need for a renewed Volunteering Strategy across the district.
- Furthering the possibilities of the 'People Can' kitemark within organisations.
- To ensure that the training strand is linked with the capacity building training package.
- To work towards developing portable 'volunteer passports' to enable DBS and training transferrable.
- To maximise funding of volunteering agenda through joint funding of volunteer co-ordinators across organisations.
- Carry out focussed work supporting organisations around the Corporate Social responsibility agenda.

- Ensuring that volunteering is linked to other programmes across the district for example, the RICS programme which outlines support for volunteering
- Drive forward a programme for statutory organisations and organisations within the VCSE to release staff to volunteer.

Information and Insight

A small part of infrastructure commission is current spent within information and insight services. This piece of work delivers on making available information on funding, volunteering, events, jobs, relevant news and policy and guidance.

There was a brief discussion, which was proportionate to the work element and although this role was depicted as being vital, the main areas for further development were;

- The establishing of a self-serve information service through a single platform. This platform to be able to provide downloadable resources, policy packs, advice and information.
- A refresh of the DIVA database and updated information in relation to the VCS sector.

Capacity Building

Commissioned services are centred around the provision of training to include the development of skills, effective use of resources and community accountancy. There is a delivery of a generalist support to groups, in particular new and emerging groups and, a Voluntary and Organisation Support Office (VOSO) in each constituency. Some of the themes previously mentioned, such as Information and Insight and Resourcing cross over with the capacity work.

The discussion at the co-design workshops were centre around the following priority areas;

- Workforce development and capacity building of strong new and diverse cohort of system leaders.
- Skilling up the sector – market development to link in with VCSE Resourcing.
- Creation systems of learning around generous leadership.
- Self-serve single platform for organisations to self learn / develop – a move away from the appointment based VOSO model.
- Robust assessments for support – possibility of specialist support to organisations – move away from generalist offer.

Bradford and District VCS Infrastructure Review: Sense-checking progress so far

Survey Report – March 2021

1.0 Background

In 2019, the City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council (CBMDC) and Bradford NHS CCG commissioned an independent review¹ to explore the existing infrastructure and support for the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCS) sector across Bradford District. The aim was to explore the views of stakeholders and partner organisations in order to understand, how to support the VCS in the future in terms of sustainability and maximising impact within the wider system.

Project Rome¹ published a report (2019), outlining the current provision with a set of recommendations for future commissions. The process included; a desk-top review of relevant documents, interviews, focus groups and a series of workshops with key stakeholders. The workshops were facilitated conversations about how to design whole system approaches, collaborate with the wider economy and embed the community voice.

However, the review process was stalled owing in part to a systems response to the Covid pandemic. In summer 2020, the VCS looked for a possible system lead or small team to support the next steps and conclusion of the VCS Infrastructure Review. Support has been provided by the Improvement and Clinical Outcomes (ICO) Lead at Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (BTHFT) working with the VCS infrastructure review steering group.

In December 2020, following on from the initial workshops and findings from other recent consultations² an online survey was sent to relevant partners and stakeholders. The aim of the survey was to a) check if previously identified themes from the original reviews workshops were still relevant and b) capture any new issues or gaps owing to the impact of Covid 19 now being faced by stakeholder groups.

The aim of this report is to present the findings from the sense checking survey. Within the discussion, the recommendations from the original Project Rome report are revisited in light of any new findings.

2.0 Method

An online survey was co-developed using SurveyMonkeyTM by the ICO lead and VCS steering group, consisting of 31 items. Survey questions explored the following areas:

- Findings from themed workshops – identified areas for development
- Issues identified by Race Equality Network (REN) and Bradford & District Community Empowerment Network (CNet)

¹ Project Rome report (?2019) - Voluntary and Community Sector funding support in Bradford & District

² - Race Equality Network (REN) and Bradford & District Community Empowerment Network (CNet)

- Survey on VCS resilience in the light of Covid

- Issues identified from sector surveys on VCS resilience in the light of Covid

Potential participants were identified via the VCS infrastructure steering group. An introductory email was sent describing the purpose of the survey with a link with a reminder message sent before the closing date. The survey was sent to [insert number] members of the VCS community, partner organisations and funding bodies. The survey ran during December 2020 and closed on 8th January 2021.

2.1 Data Analysis

Data from the survey was analysed using survey monkey analytics. The items with the highest response options were highlighted in Tables 2, 3, and 4. A thematic analysis approach³ was used to explore findings from free text responses. This involved reading and familiarisation with narrative comments, to develop codes and themes. The analysis was conducted independently by the ICO lead.

3.0 Findings

3.1 Key features of organisational responses (Questions 1-6)

Type of organisation

A total of 134 individuals responded from 78 organisations took part in the online survey. [Insert response rate based on data – by individual/organisation]. This included, 98 (73%) from the VCS sector, 8 (6%) from Social Enterprise, 11 (8%) from the local Council, 13 (10%) from NHS organisations and 4 (2%) identified as other (See Figure 1).

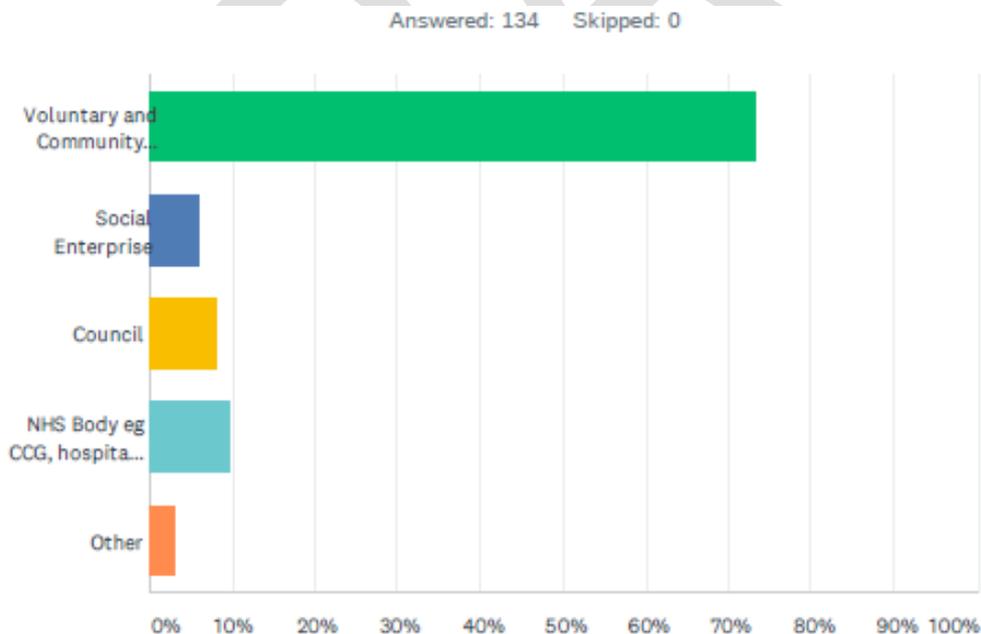


Figure 1: Types of organisations taking part in the survey

³ Braun V and Clarke V. Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qual Res Psychol 2006; 3: 77–101.

Key features of participating organisations

The majority of participants (84%) worked at organisations with paid staff and 45% (59) described being ‘service user led’. In relation to organisations geographical focus, 91% (119) indicated that work was not isolated to a specific neighbourhood (See Table 1).

Of the 109 respondents that answered the question about ‘protected characteristics that organisations focussed work upon’, the main areas represented were, under 18’s, 18-60, 60 and over and disability (See Figure 2).

Table 1: Key features of organisations

Key characteristics	Number or total responses	Number	Percentage
Run by volunteers	131	Yes - 21 No - 110	16% 84%
Service user led	131	Yes - 59 No - 72	45% 55%
Focus on a specific neighbourhood	131	Yes - 12 No - 119	9% 91%

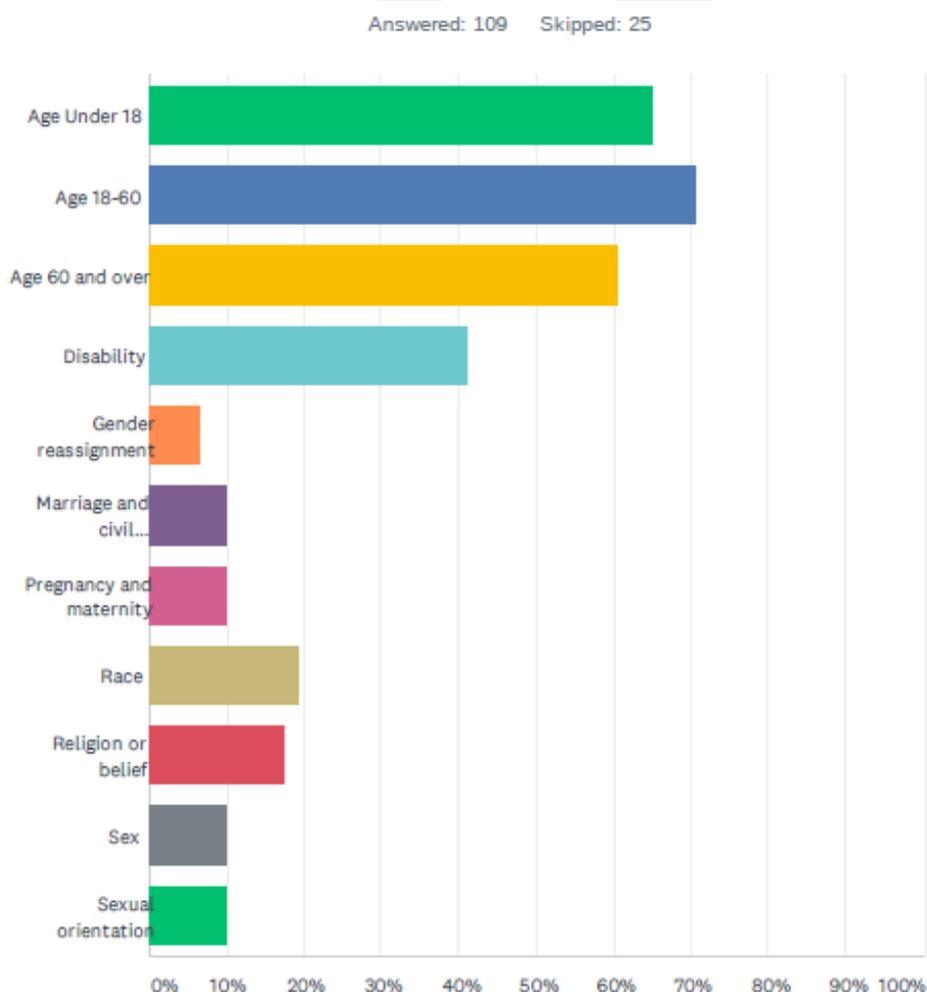


Figure 2 Organisational focus: protected characteristics

3.2 Survey responses – closed questions

The following section reports the results from responses to closed questions in the survey. Descriptive statistical analysis has been conducted using SurveyMonkey's™ analytical tool. The results have been grouped into three sections with key points highlighted:

- Stakeholder themed workshops (See Table 2)
- Issues identified by Race Equality Network (REN) and Bradford & District Community Empowerment Network (CNet) (See Table 3)
- Sector surveys on VCS resilience in the light of Covid (See Table 4)

3.2.1 Stakeholder themed workshops – identified areas for development

(Questions 8, 13, 18, 22 and 28)

Key points:

- Overall, there is agreement with the need to move towards partnership forums and to review the current governance structure and processes within the VCS Assembly. This includes testing ideas, such as, creating a market place with brokering facilities and gathering and sharing information in real time using a single self-serve platform.
- There is agreement to increase participation from grass organisations to ensure 'voice and influence' (two key themes of work) are strengthened. This includes, developing Young people's representation and leadership within the VCS, insights to be fed into generating funding opportunities and developing a volunteer passport to facilitate people to move between organisations easily and safely.
- A systems approach towards learning and compassionate leadership, whilst creating a stronger culture of volunteering across the system was agreed.

Table 2: Stakeholder themed workshops

Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
VCS Assembly Forums to move from information sharing platforms primarily for VCS organisations to partnership forums formed of VCS and public sector partners	28.57% 22	41.56% 32	22.08% 17	5.19% 4	2.60% 2	77
Ensure greater participation from grassroots organisations by providing a variety of ways to engage and participate and have views heard	59.21% 45	35.53% 27	3.95% 3	0.00% 0	1.32% 1	76
To review the membership and governance processes of the Assembly Steering Group (VCS leadership)	39.74% 31	32.05% 25	25.64% 20	2.56% 2	0.00% 0	78
Clarify the different type of representative roles and the processes for appointing to different types of role	41.03% 32	37.18% 29	19.23% 15	2.56% 2	0.00% 0	78
Ensure there is dedicated paid staff support allocated to each voice & engagement theme/forum	37.18% 29	37.18% 29	19.23% 15	5.13% 4	1.28% 1	78

Establish protected characteristic sub groups to ensure that voice and influence work is relevant to the whole community	34.62% 27	35.90% 28	21.79% 17	7.69% 6	0.00% 0	78
To use an Asset Based Community Development approach to support community based activities	42.86% 33	28.57% 22	25.97% 20	2.60% 2	0.00% 0	77
Voice and Influence insight to be fed into generating external funding opportunities	46.05% 35	38.16% 29	13.16% 10	2.63% 2	0.00% 0	76
To develop Young People's leadership and representation within the VCS	48.00% 36	34.67% 26	13.33% 10	2.67% 2	1.33% 1	75
Source additional funding into Bradford District	58.06% 36	30.65% 19	11.29% 7	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	62
Increase capacity to support social enterprises to source funding and resources	37.10% 23	32.26% 20	29.03% 18	1.61% 1	0.00% 0	62
Ensure there is a joined up approach to funding and resourcing that incorporates local funders and grant giving bodies, support organisations, philanthropy, support from businesses and organisations bringing resource into the district.	56.45% 35	32.26% 20	9.68% 6	1.61% 1	0.00% 0	62
Develop a 'market place' that allows organisations to be part of wider funding opportunities	42.86% 27	41.27% 26	12.70% 8	1.59% 1	1.59% 1	63
Ensure an honest broker facility is in place that joins up partners in a transparent way without conflict of interest	58.06% 36	33.87% 21	6.45% 4	0.00% 0	1.61% 1	62
Offer paid for packages of support with managing contracts and managing outcomes and data to partnerships that have been formed through an honest broker arrangement and been successful in winning bids.	32.26% 20	20.97% 13	40.32% 25	3.23% 2	3.23% 2	62
Develop ways of gathering and sharing data in a real time way to help support efforts to bring money into the district and to support the development of partnership bids	53.97% 34	38.10% 24	7.94% 5	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	63
Use evidence from local and national work to demonstrate the benefits of a significant shift in funding from statutory to community provision.	50.00% 31	29.03% 18	19.35% 12	1.61% 1	0.00% 0	62
Assess the resources required to support two independent volunteer centres for the District and if this addresses current needs	24.59% 15	31.15% 19	34.43% 21	6.56% 4	3.28% 2	61
Move to a more time efficient model of volunteering brokerage and support to organisations	37.10% 23	25.81% 16	37.10% 23	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	62
Develop a group of volunteers who can help organisations build their capacity and provide training on organisational development.	33.33% 20	28.33% 17	21.67% 13	16.67% 10	0.00% 0	60
Renew the Volunteering Strategy across the district.	36.07% 22	22.95% 14	36.07% 22	4.92% 3	0.00% 0	61
Help organisations to achieve the People Can - Volunteering Quality Mark	33.87% 21	25.81% 16	29.03% 18	9.68% 6	1.61% 1	62
To develop a 'volunteer passport' to enable volunteers to transfer safely between organisations	39.34% 24	32.79% 20	24.59% 15	1.64% 1	1.64% 1	61
To broker joint volunteer co-ordinator roles (2 or more organisations share and pay for a single coordinator)	29.51% 18	19.67% 12	40.98% 25	6.56% 4	3.28% 2	61
Carry out focussed work supporting organisations around engaging with businesses around volunteering (the Corporate Social Responsibility agenda.)	35.48% 22	37.10% 23	25.81% 16	1.61% 1	0.00% 0	62
Drive forward a programme for local authority, health bodies, businesses and other organisations across the system to release their staff to volunteer.	32.79% 20	39.34% 24	21.31% 13	6.56% 4	0.00% 0	61

To develop an information service through a single platform	40.68% 24	28.81% 17	22.03% 13	5.08% 3	3.39% 2	59
To refresh and update the DIVA database for the VCS sector	31.67% 19	36.67% 22	28.33% 17	0.00% 0	3.33% 2	60
Build a diverse cohort of system leader	45.76% 27	25.42% 15	22.03% 13	3.39% 2	3.39% 2	59
Create systems of learning and compassionate leadership	43.10% 25	27.59% 16	24.14% 14	1.72% 1	3.45% 2	58
Create a self-serve single platform for organisations to support e-learning	39.66% 23	34.48% 20	17.24% 10	5.17% 3	3.45% 2	58
Conduct robust for specialist support to organisations	39.29% 22	25.00% 14	28.57% 16	1.79% 1	5.36% 3	56

3.2.2 Issues identified by Race Equality Network (REN) and Bradford & District Community Empowerment Network (CNet)

(Questions 10, 15, 20, 25, 30)

The following section reports on survey responses to questions based on research conducted by REN and CNet.

Key points:

- There is agreement for more opportunities for BAME organisations to come together to support each other, ensure representation at key stakeholder meetings, improve access to training and development for leaders and volunteers and the need for training and education about racism, cultural competence, and unconscious bias.
- There is agreement over needing support with key aspects of funding, such as, awareness of opportunities, help with writing funding bids and sustainability issues.
- ***Desire for change***

The response to Covid has identified the appetite for more creative approaches and challenging the old model of funding. There was a sense that after Covid things will return back to normal. However, it is emerging that CVS needs to embrace the chance for focussing on things that matter at a local level.

'...help existing VCS organisations 'think outside the box'. Unless these organisations adapt and change they will cease to exist. Many are just waiting for things to go back to normal, that might be a very long time and they need to think what their role is now and what they need to do differently. (R-06)

Training was considered out dated and more support was needed to understand the bidding and commissioning process and managing a project rather than just getting though the application stage.

Respondents also noted that during the crisis it was small local community groups that addressed emerging needs and not the large national charities or VCS groups.

- **Streamlining systems**

Suggestions included standardising policy and documents for organisations, sharing resources such as Human Resources (HR) requirements. This would avoid duplication of efforts and would also help support small groups with capacity issues:

‘There are tasks that all community organisations have to do that could be done centrally to save time and duplication e.g. policies and updates. There should be a quality assurance system for all community centres which could be produced and managed by CVS, similar to the one conducted by the ward officers for all organisations receiving local authority funding.’ (R-19).

Table 3: Issues identified by REN and CNet

Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
More networking opportunities and events for BAME groups to get together, share information, support each other	37.66% 29	29.87% 23	25.9% 20	5.19% 4	1.30% 1	77
Ensure there are more ways to raise and address the issues and concerns shared by BAME groups and the communities they serve	46.75% 36	36.6% 28	15.58% 12	0% 0	1.3% 1	77
Form a BAME strategic advisory panel	34.21% 26	23.68% 18	39.47% 30	2.63% 2	0.00% 0	76
Ensure more BAME voices at key meetings and voices and representation from the black community	53.25% 41	28.57% 22	15.58% 12	1.30% 1	1.30% 1	77
Training for BAME leaders/potential leaders to take part in decision making	46.05% 35	40.79% 31	10.53% 8	1.32% 1	1.32% 1	76
Help with bid writing for groups that do not have the capacity	30.16% 19	47.62% 30	15.87% 10	3.17% 2	3.17% 2	63
Working with statutory partners on issues such as transparency of funding and ensuring sustainable funding and support	47.62% 30	36.51% 23	14.29% 9	0.00% 0	1.59% 1	63
Information about funding opportunities	47.54% 29	44.26% 27	8.20% 5	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	61
Funding support for small groups	43.55% 27	50.00% 31	6.45% 4	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	62
Support to recruit, train and retain volunteers	37.70% 23	34.43% 21	27.87% 17	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	62
Annual training review for volunteers	36.07% 22	29.51% 18	32.79% 20	0.00% 0	1.64% 1	61
Increased information, communication and networking to and with BAME organisations	33.90% 20	40.68% 24	20.34% 12	1.69% 1	3.39% 2	59
Develop ways to find out about other BAME groups, organisations and support services	30.51% 18	44.07% 26	22.03% 13	0.00% 0	3.39% 2	59
Support to market BAME groups and organisations	33.90% 20	42.37% 25	18.64% 11	1.69% 1	3.39% 2	59
Opportunities to pool information and share resources	42.11% 24	36.84% 21	19.30% 11	1.75% 1	0.00% 0	57

Education and understanding for all about black communities; their history and culture	46.55% 27	31.03% 18	20.69% 12	0.00% 0	1.72% 1	58
Training about racism, cultural competence, and unconscious bias	52.54% 31	15.25% 9	30.51% 18	0.00% 0	1.69% 1	59
Brokerage to help locate premises to operate from	37.29% 22	28.81% 17	30.51% 18	3.39% 2	0.00% 0	59
Organisational health checks	40.35% 23	36.84% 21	22.81% 13	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	57
Mentoring of smaller groups by larger ones	33.90% 20	38.98% 23	22.03% 13	3.39% 2	1.69% 1	59

3.2.3 Issues identified in sector surveys on VCS resilience and response to Covid

(Questions 9, 14, 19, 24, 29)

Issues identified VCS resilience and response to Covid.

Key Points:

- Responding to a crisis - There was agreement over the need to ensure that the VCS should be at the centre of decision making at a systems level, the volunteering route is simplified and support is given to community organisations. This includes Support with IT, digital and virtual working.
- Co-coordinating information between the council, health and social care and messaging to communities was important.
- There was strong agreement over the need to support the mental health of staff.

Table 4: Issues identified in surveys on VCS resilience and response to Covid

Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Ensuring that the VCS can be at the heart of decision making and influence responses in times of crisis and recovery. Ensuring the structures and processes support this and can respond flexibly.	55.26% 42	28.95% 22	11.84% 9	2.63% 2	1.32% 1	76
Ensuring Commissioners and funders are flexible to changing circumstances	57.14% 36	38.10% 24	4.76% 3	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	63
Supporting financial recovery during and post Covid	57.14% 36	33.33% 21	7.94% 5	1.59% 1	0.00% 0	63
Clear and easy ways for people to volunteer in response to emergencies or crises	50.00% 31	35.48% 22	11.29% 7	3.23% 2	0.00% 0	62
Support to local community response groups	40.98% 25	42.62% 26	13.11% 8	3.28% 2	0.00% 0	61
Co-ordinated information and communication with council, health and other partners	51.67% 31	33.33% 20	10.00% 6	5.00% 3	0.00% 0	60
Co-ordination of community messaging and information	45.00% 27	38.33% 23	10.00% 6	5.00% 3	1.67% 1	60
Interpretation of national and local policy and guidance explaining how it affects VCS organisations	45.76% 27	35.59% 21	13.56% 8	5.08% 3	0.00% 0	59

Support with IT, digital and virtual working (equipment, skills, connectivity of clients, organisations, staff and volunteers)	49.15% 29	35.59% 21	11.86% 7	3.39% 2	0.00% 0	59
Mental health and resilience of staff and volunteers	51.72% 30	36.21% 21	12.07% 7	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	58
Interpretation of regulations and policy guidance	32.76% 19	50.00% 29	17.24% 10	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	58

3.3 Open-ended questions

The online survey asked a number of open ended questions about areas of work by the VCS. The following section presents key themes with supporting extracts from respondents. The responses have been anonymised (R=Respondent).

3.3.1 Question 7

Question 7: What do you think currently works well in terms of voice and influence and you wouldn't want to see lost or cease?

- **Voices being heard**

The current structure has allowed people to feel that there are opportunities to have voices heard across the system. Through forums and meetings where representative organisations participate in conversations, they feel they are able to 'channel' (R-03) voices to other stakeholders:

'It is important that people are given a voice to implement changes.' (R-01)

'The voices of communities, young, adult and elderly are vital in shaping how we deliver our services.' (R-31)

The Bradford VCS Assembly, which is the 'Voice and Influence' part of the infrastructure provides a number of Forums for groups to meet. This was seen as a 'good way of bringing people together and share ideas and information' (R-15). At the same time grass root organisations wanted the Assembly to be more 'visible' (R-7) to smaller charities, expressing that they 'hardly hear what is going on' (R-32).

Community groups felt that there was a good sense of voice and influence when there was service user involvement, two-way conversations, rapid feedback and communication from larger supportive organisations and access to people within the system.

'RACE EQUALITY NETWORK and CNET keep us in the loop. We are getting quick and professional updates on a daily basis.' (R-3).

- **Being connected**

Being connected to others was seen as an important part of having a voice and influence. Smaller organisations described feeling uncertain about the value of the VCS Assembly and

that there was little connection to larger groups. This meant that for some organisations they felt voices got lost and little was translated into direct action:

'What is needed: a voice that can be heard and is not lost in the larger but often different conversations about urban areas'(R-44)

'Young people have been consulted so often yet nothing changes... Despite the legal duty on local authorities to secure "sufficient" activities for young people, many of them have nothing to do (even pre-COVID).'

There is an opportunity to become better connected, improve communications and coming together as a community. Centralising information for everyone to access my address some of the current concerns of things being 'messy'. Coming together with more visibility from the VCS assembly were considered positive possibilities.

'Need to build up the voice of community health provision by encouraging collaboration- VCS alliance could be a good vehicle for this.' (R-06)

3.3.2 Question 11

Question 11: Are there any other issues that you think should be prioritised? These may be issues that have been raised during the response to Covid-19 or since the original workshops that have affected 'Voice and Influence'.

- **Learning**

The theme of learning related to the VCS response to Covid-19. Respondents described a lack of co-ordination, issues over funding and the need for clear leadership during the pandemic. The need for training to develop leaders across the sector was identified. The comment from one respondent summarises the key learning highlighted with the sectors response during Covid:

'The pandemic highlighted that the VCS is not coordinated in its approach - amongst the great work there were many examples of duplication and overlap. There are too many VCS lead organisations - there needs to be a recognised channel for sharing information and coordinating responses. (R-09)

Learning also helped to inform what was needed in the future. Streamlining systems and reducing bureaucracy could improve the process to collaborate. Organisations need to develop closer links with communities that they represent and strengthen connections across the system.

- **Diversity and Inclusion**

The call for more diversity and inclusion included the need to improve reaching seldom heard voices, with the idea of minorities within minority groups not being represented:

'I feel that the people least benefitting from services are not engaged with as they are the minority within the minority groups!' (R-03)

'The current Forum structure is ineffective and attended by a minority group. Staffing and resource needs to be designated to driving agendas forwards and support linkages, projects and priority setting. They can't be reliant on voluntary Chairs who have day jobs. The topics need to allow for more cross cutting work.' (R-11)

Roles within the volunteer sector meant those with full time work find it difficult to make meetings and fulfil roles without working excessive hours:

'I'm writing these responses after 9pm at night. When opinions are heard or decisions made only at meetings (often happening during the school/working day), you exclude many people, especially real volunteers' (R-07)

The idea of increasing paid roles within the VCS sector was seen on one hand as novel idea and simultaneously not in keeping with the spirit of being a volunteer.

- **Mental Health**

The issue identified as a key priority to be addressed was the need for more Mental Health support especially for young people and older adults. The population in Bradford is unusual with a large number of young and older adults both facing mental health issues and both equally needing voice and influence within the system. The following extracts highlights the issue:

'...increase access to mental health support for Children and Young People.' (R-22)

'I feel that older people have got lost their voice over the past few years and I would like to see' (R-34)

3.3.3 Question 12

Question 12: What do you think currently works well in terms of VCS resourcing and you wouldn't want to see lost or cease?

- **Funding opportunities**

Community Action Bradford & District (CABAD) and Bfunded were recognised as useful resources to identify funding opportunities. However smaller organisations wanted more than advice, with support with applying for small grants.

Respondents described positive experiences approaching the VCS Alliance. However, a conflict of interests was identified with larger supporting organisations often bidding for the same funding streams as smaller grass root groups.

- **Mixed understanding**

'It's a confusing picture to work with this should be under one roof if at all possible' (R-04)

This extract highlights the feeling about smaller organisations describe how funding and resources are accessed. There appears to be a decrease in the level of hands-on support that was given previously, and a lack of strategies for monitoring how funds are used by groups. There is also a mixed perception over current VCS resourcing by VCS organisations demonstrated in the comments below:

'The VCS Alliance only funds its own members so don't trust them. CABAD supports the big names only. So they all get more funding.' (R-34)

'CABAD is great at sharing opportunities and providing support to those smaller organisations to secure bids - would want more hands on support to 'do the doing' with individuals rather than just giving advice.' (R-42)

This may imply that there are opportunities and support with regard to funding and resourcing but the message may not be reaching all groups.

3.3.4 Question 16

Question 16: Are there any other issues that you think should be prioritised? These may be issues that have been raised during the response to Covid- 19 or since the original workshops that have affected 'VCS resourcing'.

What do you think currently works well in terms of volunteering support and you wouldn't want to see lost of cease?

- **Recruitment**

The respondent described how volunteering support could be improved rather than what currently works well. There was the acknowledgement that volunteering was often unpredictable with people *'very rarely coming up with the goods'* (R-13). Managing recruitment was also difficult with some organisations using local networks to make better use of time to identifying potential volunteers.

- **Development opportunities**

There were ideas to develop the recruitment and retention of volunteers. This included, making it easier to find volunteering roles, see what is available and to create a pool of volunteers. In addition, providing advice and guidance to people wishing to volunteer, promoting the benefits of volunteering, such as, gaining work experience and encouraging organisations to adopt the volunteering quality kitemark were seen as positive moves to strengthen volunteering.

3.3.6 Question 21

Are there any other issues that you think should be prioritised? These may be issues that have been raised during the response to Covid-19 or since the original workshops that have affected 'volunteering'.

Covid-19 has presented challenges to the system and highlighted that the volunteering strategy is outdated:

'Develop a new, more effective volunteering platform for Bradford & district' (R-12)

There were issues about protecting the health of volunteers, so that it was difficult to use volunteers in the traditional way. The impact is that volunteers will have been lost over the past year. There was also the recognition that digital structures needed to be improved to overcome barriers and challenges of working virtually. The cost of training for organisations was also identified as a barrier:

'Getting rid of the ESFA £500,000 minimum contract, which excludes all small training providers from public training funds.' (R-14)

3.3.7 Question 23

What do you think currently works well in terms of information and insight and you wouldn't want to see lost or cease?

- ***Co-ordinating flow of information***

There appear to be numerous newsletters, bulletins and websites that provide essential information about funding, training and information about work from VCS groups across the system. DIVA Bradford was seen as a useful free searchable directory on voluntary and community sector groups from across Bradford District, job vacancies and a place to advertise events for the sector in Bradford. For smaller organisations, they wanted relevant information and using social media was easier to share key details and information. Overall, there was the sense of wanting to pull information into one platform and was easy to navigate.

'...we do just need one [platform] for the district and then resource to keep it up to date.' (R-22).

3.3.8 Question 26

Are there any other issues that you think should be prioritised? These may be issues that have been raised during the response to Covid-19 or since the original workshops that have affected 'information and insight'.

- ***Equality and Voice***

There was a sense that all VCS organisations should be perceived and treated as equal in terms of access to support, funding and training opportunities moving forward.

- ***Legacy of Covid***

The response to Covid-19 still continues with organisations raising concerns over how to continue to support people and providing services as the District recovers for the health and social impacts of the pandemic.

The idea of pooling insight and data (big data) to support better learning, identifying wider trends and themes was seen as positive way to 'Work as One'.

'[A] dedicated team managing the comms and messaging around insight specifically – data management and presentation, could really speed up organisational understanding of emerging trends and challenges (and possibly help identify early partnership opportunities around specific' (R-08)

3.3.9 Question 27

What do you think currently works well in terms of capacity building and insight and you wouldn't want to see lost or cease?

- **Employment and Training**

Training was very welcomed but there was a mixed response in terms of what worked well. This ranged from wanting face-to face and bespoke training and needs assessment at an individual organisational level and some favouring virtual sessions owing to geographical positions.

Organisations also wanted to simplify recruitment and offer paid job roles to attract younger adults to build capacity and capability for youth leaders.

'Ease of employing young adults part-time (e.g. via Bradford Community Payroll) so that they can be mentors/leaders to younger people whilst earning as much as they would do by working in a bar or supermarket.' (R-07)

- **Purchasing Power**

The opportunity for smaller organisations and groups to work together to procure arrangements with providers for items, such as, utilities was identified.

3.3.10 Question 31

Question 31: Are there any other issues that you think should be prioritised?

It was acknowledged that there was plenty of advice and guidance available. Ideas with regard to addressing capacity issues included thinking about different ways of working, focussing on governance and sharing administrative tasks:

'...Consideration of brokering joint back office functions, and joint purchasing, support to bring organisations together to look at different operating models [and] legal structures.' (R-07).

This also extended to the potential power of being able to negotiate contracts for utilities for multiple organisations and groups.

The issue of training was highlighted as an issue, with suggestions of a shared calendar for all with regard to training opportunities across the district. The need for specialist training was identified, for example:

'...we need volunteers who have higher level Sign Language skills...who can drive a minibus ...who can lead groups out of doors.' (R-09)

'I don't see anything about the importance of safeguarding priorities and training across the VCS as the increased incidence of, for instance Domestic Violence has become apparent.' (R-06)

Finally, the offer of broadening the understanding and heritage of Roma communities was extended to groups across the VCS.

'There is very little awareness among stakeholders about the cultural and historical background of Roma communities which we are happy to contribute with' (R-01)

4.0 Discussion

The aim of the survey was to sense check previously identified themes from the original infrastructure review¹ and capture any new issues for the VCS owing to the impact of Covid-19.

The key findings were:

- Overall agreement on moving towards partnership forums and to review current governance structure and processes within the VCS Assembly
- Equality - creating opportunities for BAME organisations and smaller community groups to support each other and increase participation to ensure 'voice and influence' is strengthened
- Improve affordability and access to training and development for leaders, staff and volunteers within the VCS
- Support organisations with key aspects of funding e.g. awareness of opportunities, help with writing funding bids and addressing sustainability issues
- Streamlining systems – this includes sharing information and using 'big data' to inform systems thinking and work priorities
- System Response to a crisis - the VCS should be at the core of decision making process and recognised for the vital work from smaller community groups can play
- Ideas to test:
 - Creating a market place with brokering facilities
 - Sharing information in real time using a single self-serve platform

- Developing a volunteer passport to facilitate people to move between organisations easily and safely
- Adopting the volunteering quality kitemark as a standard for VSC organisations

5.0 Conclusion

The findings of this survey reflect some of the earlier recommendations from Project Rome (See Box 1). Modernising the support structure remains a focus for stakeholders and partner organisations. However, the survey highlights specific issues being faced by grass root community groups, BAME organisations and larger VCS supporting structures, in terms of voice and influence, feeling connected training and education needs and streamlining approaches to thinking and working.

Contextual issues were raised in the Project Rome report and need to be considered in relations to any new evidence and consultation processes that have been undertaken since the original review. These were:

- Whilst some VSC organisations were well led and flourished, some organisations were 'in deep financial' and 'governance trouble'
- There was a 'majority voice' for 'radical and meaningful changes to the way the support infrastructure is delivered'
- The most successful VCO providers are those who comply to 'public sector norms' and the system is at risk of losing 'innovative practice' and 'entrepreneurial spirit'

There are clear opportunities to 'Act as One' and think more creatively about all available support across the system, for example, tapping into Acute Health Care providers to access leadership training. Pooling resources for smaller organisations, in terms of people, spaces, vehicles, procurement processes may all serve to help the VCS to feel more connected to the whole system.

In essence the three principles outlined in Project Rome report are still echoed from the findings from this survey. Ideally, when agreeing the specifications for the future VCS infrastructure the following should be considered:

- 1) Public Sector and VCS to work together to agree a shared vision and set of values
- 2) Bring all public sector VCS support spend together to maximize improvement impact and reduce overheads - 'Do things once' approach
- 3) Bradford First - Spending money within the District, thinking about local solutions is but, only when it is equal or better quality and price to an external offer.

Box 1

Infrastructure review of support structures available to the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in Bradford and District (Project Rome, 2019)

Recommendations

Commissioners should contract a single infrastructure organisation to oversee the following five programmes to:

1. Attract more external funding and diversify the income streams of VCOs so they are collectively less reliant on the public purse.
2. Recruit, retain and develop individual VCS/VCO leaders
3. Improve the consistency of quality of service and reporting offered by VCOs to commissioners/funders.
4. Fill Trustee and volunteer vacancies and improve the governance of VCOs across the district.
5. Simplify and modernise the support infrastructure, including service directories and market mechanisms.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author declared potential conflicts of interest – Employed by BTHFT but is not involved with any VCS organisations personally or professionally, and received no funding for this survey.

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REVIEW OF THE SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS OF BAME GROUPS & ORGANISATIONS

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1. BACKGROUND

Bradford Council currently fund support services for the voluntary community sector (VCS) through 3 key infrastructure grants. The accountable body for the current grants is Community Action Bradford & District (CABAD). The delivery partners are:

- CABAD (Including Young Lives and Young Lives Consortia)
- Bradford District Community empowerment Network (CNET)
- Volunteering Bradford
- Volunteering Keighley
- West Yorkshire Accounting Services (WYCAS)

In addition, the CCG's fund patient and public engagement through the Engaging People contract, and support to VCS contracting and commissioning through Bradford VCS Alliance.

Over the past 2 years, the council has undertaken a review of the infrastructure support needs of the VCS. Summary of the consultation to date highlighted a need to engage directly with leads of BAME organisations to establish their specific support requirements.

The Race Equality network supported by CNET facilitated the consultation during September and October 2020. Phase 1 was a series of 3 workshops, phase 2 was a survey questionnaire.

2. PURPOSE OF THE CONSULTATION

To assess the support needs of the BAME voluntary and community sector groups and organisations from infrastructure services.

- i. Identify the support needs, particularly those specific to BAME groups and organisations
- ii. Highlight barriers to accessing support
- iii. Propose recommendations and potential solutions to improve the support available going forward

3. PHASE 1 - WORKSHOPS

i. Friday 25th September 10 to 12 noon

Specific support for African and African Caribbean communities facilitated by Charles Dacres, Bradford Hate Crime Alliance Coordinator

ii. Tuesday 29th September 1 to 3 pm

General support needs facilitated by Sofia Mahmood, Empowering Minds

iii. Wednesday 30th September 1 to 3 pm

Specific support for BAME Women facilitated by Sofia Mahmood

Following introductions, participants were given a summary of the support on offer through the current infrastructure delivery partners.

Workshop discussions

- What kind of support has your group/organisation received in the past?
- What kind of support is need by your group/organisation?

- What are the barriers to accessing help and support?
- What are the barriers to your involvement in meetings, consultations and leadership/representation opportunities such as joining statutory decision making boards and committees, joining forums etc.?
- What are the solutions and recommendations for the future?
- What improvements could be made to current infrastructure support services?
- Any other support needs

Many common themes emerged through the three workshops, such as support with funding bids, where to go for help and a desire to network. However, specific needs were identified from each group as highlighted in **bold** within the collective feedback and recommendations. .

4. COMMENTS AND ISSUES FROM WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

- There is lack of support for training, funding and sustainability
- Statutory organisations are equally responsible for reaching out to BAME communities. It's an easy excuse to say VCS are better equipped to reach out, we already know we are equipped
- Refer to support together, not to pass on a problem
- Being BAME is not a problem. More staff need sufficient cultural competency (not 1 day training and becoming experts). Stop using lack of language as an excuse to providing a poor service and forgetting human right laws in regards to consent, respect and dignity
- Board of trustees need regulating and supporting to direct / have vision during economic and social change...like Covid-19. They should be adequately trained to foresee and cope with change
- Project staff should not be left to deal with structural responsibilities...they are to manage the logistics. Implementation and delivery. Having a strong board builds on Two-way partnership and a mechanism of structural support for project staff and sustainability
- When starting our organisation, we found it very hard to access some of these services, currently not inclusive
- We need to find out the barriers - why don't BAME reps come forward, are they too busy, not interested, don't feel listened to?
- Managing a volunteer programme should not be taken lightly. All volunteering services in Bradford should be encouraged to kite mark with People Can and join a registered national volunteering org if finances allow it. Training should all have some form of accreditation or certification
- Volunteers need to be valued and their training needs validating
- Annual skills reviews should be a compulsory service in particular if working with vulnerable adults and children where safeguarding or clinic and social changes in health care provision changes
- Volunteers should demonstrate upskilling knowledge annually

5. PHASE 2 - SURVEY

Many groups could not attend the workshops, they may not have heard about them, or not had the time to take part. So a survey was developed using Survey monkey to gain a wider range of views and perspectives.

21 surveys were completed. The findings are incorporated into the recommendations.

PRIORITY AREAS IDENTIFIED AS “VERY IMPORTANT” IN THE BAME SURVEY

Top priorities in order of scoring

- 1) Engagement and inclusivity (under Voice and Influence)
- 2) Developing relationships and networking (under Voice and Influence)
- 3) Facilitation of forums (under Voice and Influence)
- 4) Accessible information (under Communication and Information)
- 5) Funding and sustainability (under Organisational Development)

The full survey results can be viewed in appendix 2 at the end of the report.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

i. Organisational development and capacity building

- Free organisational health checks for BAME groups and organisations
- Information about funding opportunities
- Help with bid writing, groups do not have the capacity
- Clarity from the council about support, where to go and how to access. Promote the infrastructure services on offer (council and providers)
- Brokerage to help locate premises to operate from. Details of premises available and premises needed by BAME groups and organisations

ii. Communication and information

- More information about what’s happening and how to get involved (general news and information)
- Ways to find out about other BAME groups, organisations and support services; BAME NETWORK/FORUM, link with REN / Black Health Forum
- Help to market BAME groups and organisations
- Signpost small BAME groups to larger established ones for support
- Transparency about funding allocation from the council (not just infrastructure services)
- More BAME voices at key meetings
- **Voices and representation from the black community**
- Free training for BAME leaders/potential leaders to take part in decision making
- Use plain English in meetings and reports, explain acronyms (many BAME have English as second language)

iii. Networking, voice and influence

- More networking opportunities and events for BAME groups to get together, share information, support each other
- Workshops about the issues and concerns shared by BAME groups

- **Workshops for BAME women, possible women's network (like the CNET one)**
- Opportunities to pool information and share resources, possible web portal
- Education and understanding for all about black communities; their history and culture
- Training about racism, cultural competence, and unconscious bias
- **More focus on the BLACK within BAME**
- Knowledge about how to contact local councillor
- BAME network

iv. Volunteering

- Support to recruit, train and retain volunteers
- Support to gain the volunteering kitemark
- Annual training review for volunteers

7. CONCLUSIONS

- Whilst the larger BAME organisations have survived over a decade of austerity by downsizing, successfully securing funding, income maximisation etc. many smaller BAME organisations have closed down and those that have survived require support to sustain themselves. The council should consider a package of support (financial and practical) to sustain such organisations
- The council should also consider better financial support to BAME infrastructure support organisations in order for them to better support the BAME voluntary sector organisations
- BAME infrastructure support organisations such as REN should be supported and empowered to hold public bodies to account and to bring together forums for advice to public bodies such as the Council, NHS, and Police
- A strategic BAME advisory panel should form part of recommendation iii above (Networking, Voice and Influence). This panel would include (but not limited to) REN, Council for Mosques, British Asian Social Enterprise (new business support body) and others as appropriate
- The council and other public bodies should make a declaration to the effect that, in the quest to deliver equitable services, they will approach BAME infrastructure bodies in a spirit of working together to achieve goals of equality
- Public bodies must also encourage other organisations such as Academies, Housing Associations, Colleges, Universities etc. to consider working towards common District equality aims and to work together to improve services for BAME communities
- In the effort to achieve equitable outcomes, initiatives and ideas must not be diluted for fear of far right backlash. This has happened too many times particularly in institutions failing to address gaps in BAME employment matters with initiatives to improve opportunities for BAME staff generalised for fear of criticism.

8. APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Workshop Notes

1. Support Needs

- Accommodation/building for groups
- **Better marketing of information particularly to black community**
- Better communication on services provided by infrastructure and where to access
- Help and support to access funding
- Bid writing help
- Equality – raise support offered to find accommodation for all organisations / groups
- Transparency about who is responsible for supporting
- **Raise profile of black stakeholders**
- Move away from BAME tick box, break it down
- **Education about Black community / understanding of others.** Building Bridges / educate about each other. tackle racism borne from ignorance
- Transparency about distribution of funding
- Finance is problematic
- How to become a constituted organisation
- Where to access help on Volunteering and support available to volunteers

2. What are the barriers to accessing support?

- Not aware of the support available
- Racism/Ignorance of BAME communities
- **Black element in BAME gets lost (BLACK LIVES MATTER)**
- No capacity for bid writing
- Communication issues when English is a 2nd language
- Time constraints (to engage) so busy delivering, no time for involvement in consultations, networking etc.
- Volunteer capacity and burn out
- Cultural barriers
- Discrimination in accessing support for employment / housing / education and medical care

3. Solutions – Next Steps

- Support for the BAME community from Councillors
- Too much signposting - direct support needed
- More communication from Council
- Bid writing support – guidance needed
- **Signpost small/ new Black groups to larger ones**
- Training – make community orgs aware of the support on offer
- Events – bring orgs together, networking/forums
- Accommodation needed for community orgs
- Marketing / communication of support on offer. Recognise new orgs

- Awareness about where to find information (council website should show where VCS support can be accessed).
- Transparency about funding
- Regular updates
- Help and support for community orgs to think more strategically
- Support for volunteers / recruitment
- Financial support / fundraising / volunteer recruitment
- Specific training support for refugee and asylum volunteers
- Workshop sessions to help integrate smaller community orgs
- Accessible training courses in mental wellbeing, safeguarding, recruiting volunteers
- Training to develop staff and volunteers
- Resources to help deliver support to communities
- **Mentoring – particularly for BAME young women**
- More cross forum working - come together around a theme
- Community events - more grassroots input
- Cultivate cross-organisation working collectively – think strategically – work on collaborative bids
[reduce competition / fighting for funding]
- Utilise existing resources
- Improve access to and communication of information on funding, networking and other opportunities
- Community orgs being proactive in reaching out for help

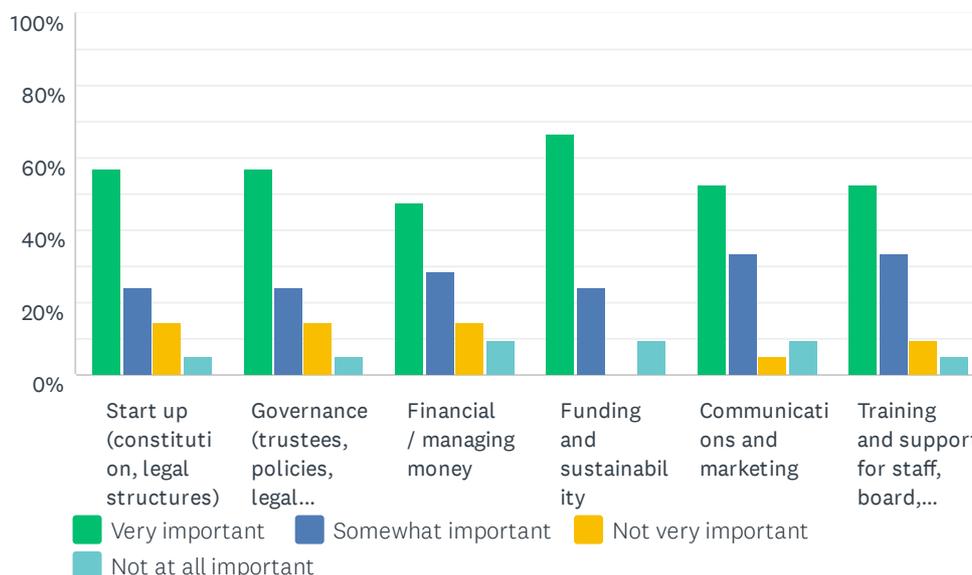
APPENDIX 2

Survey analysis

Next page

Q1 How important are the following VCS support services to your group/organisation? Group/organisational development and capacity building:

Answered: 21 Skipped: 0

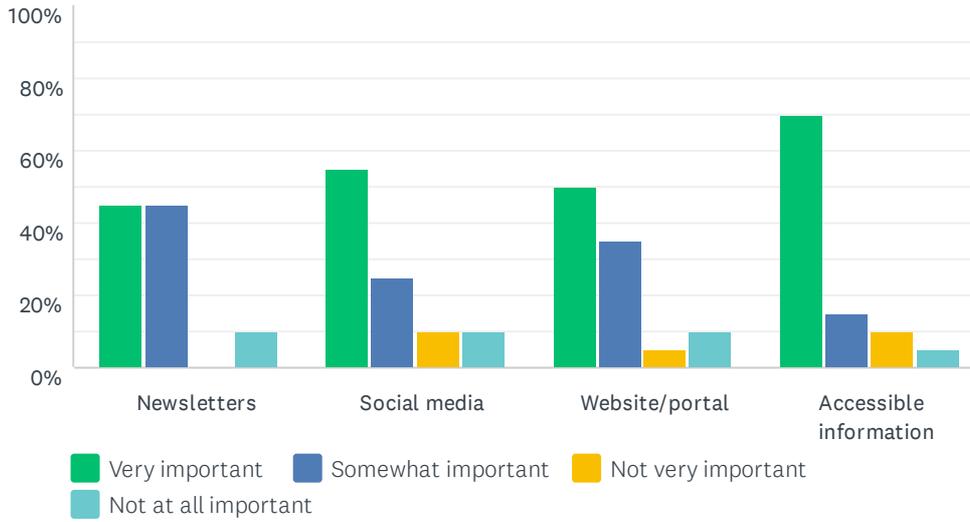


	VERY IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	NOT VERY IMPORTANT	NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT	TOTAL
Start up (constitution, legal structures)	57.14% 12	23.81% 5	14.29% 3	4.76% 1	21
Governance (trustees, policies, legal structures)	57.14% 12	23.81% 5	14.29% 3	4.76% 1	21
Financial / managing money	47.62% 10	28.57% 6	14.29% 3	9.52% 2	21
Funding and sustainability	66.67% 14	23.81% 5	0.00% 0	9.52% 2	21
Communications and marketing	52.38% 11	33.33% 7	4.76% 1	9.52% 2	21
Training and support for staff, board, volunteers	52.38% 11	33.33% 7	9.52% 2	4.76% 1	21

#	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS / SUPPORT NEEDS	DATE
1	Thanks	10/7/2020 3:01 PM
2	Board of trustees need regulating Or supporting to direct / have vision during economic and social change...like covid. They should be adequately trained to foresee and cope with change. Project staff should not be left to deal with structural responsibilities...they are to manage the logistics.implementation and delivery. Having a strong board builds on Two way partnership and a mechanism of structural support for project staff And sustainability	9/30/2020 9:28 PM
3	When starting our organisation, we found it very hard to access some of these services.	9/30/2020 5:14 PM

Q2 Communication and information:

Answered: 20 Skipped: 1

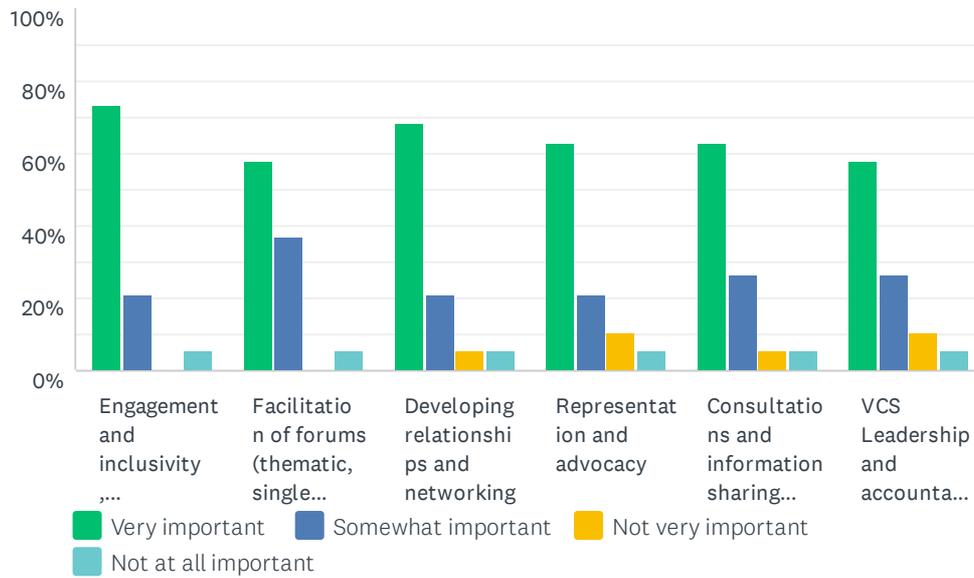


	VERY IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	NOT VERY IMPORTANT	NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT	TOTAL
Newsletters	45.00% 9	45.00% 9	0.00% 0	10.00% 2	20
Social media	55.00% 11	25.00% 5	10.00% 2	10.00% 2	20
Website/portal	50.00% 10	35.00% 7	5.00% 1	10.00% 2	20
Accessible information	70.00% 14	15.00% 3	10.00% 2	5.00% 1	20

#	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS / SUPPORT NEEDS	DATE
1	we receive a lot of our referrals through our website so to have that working and up to date is very important.	10/12/2020 12:40 PM
2	Thanks	10/7/2020 3:02 PM
3	There is lack of support for training, funding and sustainability	10/6/2020 5:23 PM
4	Statutory organisations are equally responsible for reaching out to BAME communities. It's a easy excuse to say VCS are better equipped to reach out. We already know we are equipped. What are the senior management to taking responsibility to work holistically. Refer to support together...not to pass on a problem. Being BAME is not a problem. More staff need sufficient cultural competency (not 1 day training and becoming experts). Stop using lack of language as an excuse to providing a poor service and forgetting human right laws in regards to consent, respect and dignity.	9/30/2020 9:32 PM

Q3 Voice and influence in policy planning and strategic decision making:

Answered: 19 Skipped: 2

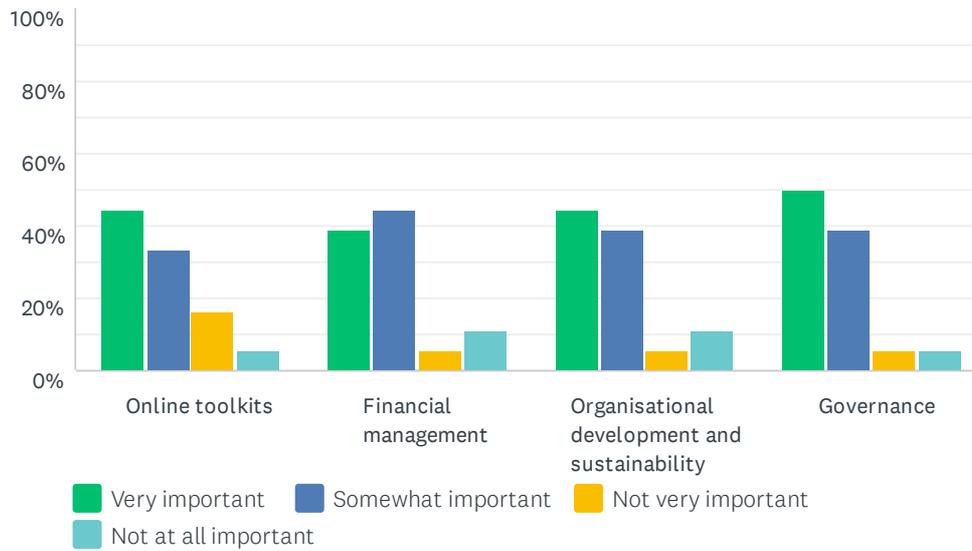


	VERY IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	NOT VERY IMPORTANT	NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT	TOTAL
Engagement and inclusivity, particularly of seldom heard groups	73.68% 14	21.05% 4	0.00% 0	5.26% 1	19
Facilitation of forums (thematic, single issue, theme)	57.89% 11	36.84% 7	0.00% 0	5.26% 1	19
Developing relationships and networking	68.42% 13	21.05% 4	5.26% 1	5.26% 1	19
Representation and advocacy	63.16% 12	21.05% 4	10.53% 2	5.26% 1	19
Consultations and information sharing events	63.16% 12	26.32% 5	5.26% 1	5.26% 1	19
VCS Leadership and accountability	57.89% 11	26.32% 5	10.53% 2	5.26% 1	19

#	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS / SUPPORT NEEDS	DATE
1	Thanks	10/7/2020 3:03 PM
2	Currently not inclusive	10/6/2020 5:24 PM
3	We need to find out the barriers - why don't BAME reps come forward? Are they too busy, not interested, don't feel listened to?	9/24/2020 3:15 PM

Q4 Training provision

Answered: 18 Skipped: 3

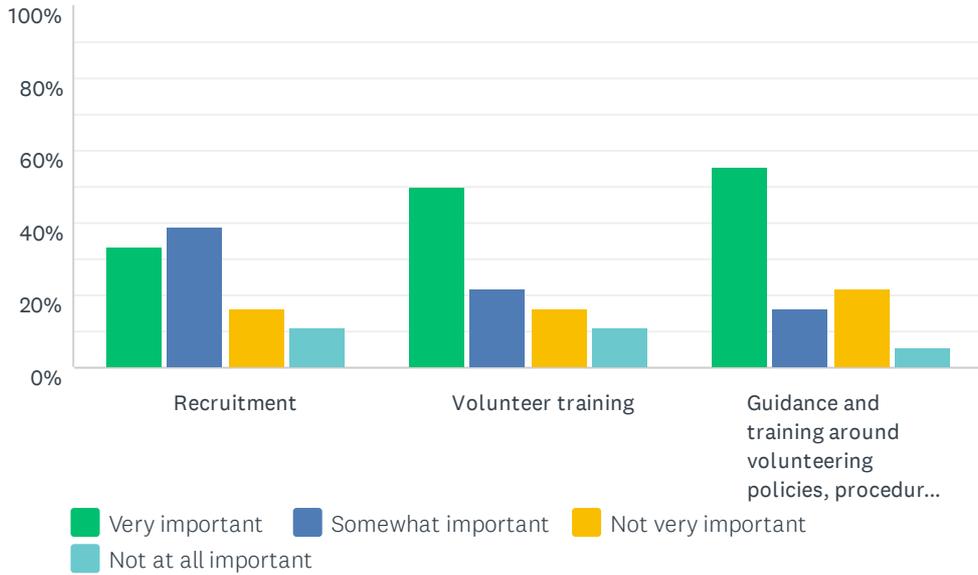


	VERY IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	NOT VERY IMPORTANT	NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT	TOTAL
Online toolkits	44.44% 8	33.33% 6	16.67% 3	5.56% 1	18
Financial management	38.89% 7	44.44% 8	5.56% 1	11.11% 2	18
Organisational development and sustainability	44.44% 8	38.89% 7	5.56% 1	11.11% 2	18
Governance	50.00% 9	38.89% 7	5.56% 1	5.56% 1	18

#	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS / SUPPORT NEEDS	DATE
1	Thanks	10/7/2020 3:03 PM

Q5 Volunteering

Answered: 18 Skipped: 3



	VERY IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	NOT VERY IMPORTANT	NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT	TOTAL
Recruitment	33.33% 6	38.89% 7	16.67% 3	11.11% 2	18
Volunteer training	50.00% 9	22.22% 4	16.67% 3	11.11% 2	18
Guidance and training around volunteering policies, procedures and the law	55.56% 10	16.67% 3	22.22% 4	5.56% 1	18

#	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS / SUPPORT NEEDS	DATE
1	Volunteers are key to our support groups	10/12/2020 12:42 PM
2	Managing a volunteer programme should be taken lightly. All volunteering services in bradford should be encouraged to 1. kite mark with peoples can 2. Join a registered national volunteering org if finances allow it. And 3. Training should all have some form of accreditation or certification. Volunteers need to be valued and their training needs validating. Annual skills reviews should be a compulsory service in particular if working with vulnerable adults and children where safeguarding or clinic and social changes in health care provision changes. Volunteers should demonstrate upskilling knowledge annually.	9/30/2020 9:36 PM

PROCUREMENT TIMETABLE

Procurement Exercise for: VC and S engagement

Advised Procurement Procedure: Open Tender

Action	Time Allowed (working days)	From	To	Action By	Actioned	Comments
Authority to Proceed	1	26-Jul-21	27-Jul-21	Procurement		Completed
Engagement with Stakeholder	15	27-Jul-21	17-Aug-21	Sponsor, Procurement		Completed except for market engagement event
Establish Market Engagement Location	1	17-Aug-21	18-Aug-21	Sponsor		
Market Research & Engagement: continuous process	20	26-Jul-21	23-Aug-21	Sponsor, Procurement		
Preparation of Market Engagement Documentation	5	16-Aug-21	27-Aug-21	Sponsor, Procurement		
Authorisation by Project team	1	27-Aug-21	31-Aug-21	Sponsor, Procurement		
Advertise Market Engagement day	1	31-Aug-21	31-Aug-21	Procurement		
Prepare Specification for presentation to the market	18	05-Aug-21	27-Aug-21	Sponsor, Procurement		Commenced and awaiting input from the project team
Obtain TUPE Data	4	20-Aug-21	26-Aug-21	Procurement		
Market Engagement Event	5	13-Sep-21	18-Sep-21	Sponsor, Procurement		Date to be agreed
Overview and Scrutiny	1	16-Sep-21	16-Sep-21	Sponsor		
Set Evaluation and Award Criteria, plus any Minimum Benchmarks	15	31-Aug-21	21-Sep-21	Sponsor, Procurement		
Finalise ITT Document	5	21-Sep-21	28-Sep-21	Procurement		
Prepare FTS Notice	2	21-Sep-21	23-Sep-21	Procurement		
STAGE 1 SIGN-OFF	1	28-Sep-21	29-Sep-21	Project Team		
Advertise FTS	33	29-Sep-21	01-Nov-21	Procurement		
Following Tender Return Date - Prepare for Evaluation - Seek References	30	01-Nov-21	13-Dec-21	Procurement		
Formal Tender Evaluations	5	13-Dec-21	20-Dec-21	Procurement, Evaluation Team		
Post Tender Clarifications	7	13-Dec-21	22-Dec-21	Procurement, Evaluation Team		
Assess Clarification Responses and submitted references	1	22-Dec-21	23-Dec-21	Procurement, Evaluation Team		
Supplier Presentations (if applicable)	0	23-Dec-21	23-Dec-21	Procurement, Evaluation Team		
Finalise Evaluations	1	23-Dec-21	24-Dec-21	Procurement, Evaluation Team		
Due Diligence of Commercial Information required from Successful Supplier	5	24-Dec-21	04-Jan-22	Procurement		
Prepare Tender Evaluation Report : including Compliance, Ts&Cs, Due Diligence, Risks	1	24-Dec-21	29-Dec-21	Procurement		
Approval from Customer	3	04-Jan-22	07-Jan-22	Sponsor, Procurement		
Prepare Decision Letters / Feedback (Award and Reject)	3	04-Jan-22	07-Jan-22	Procurement		
STAGE 2 SIGN-OFF	1	07-Jan-22	10-Jan-22	Project Team		
Mandatory Standstill Period	10	10-Jan-22	20-Jan-22	Procurement		
Prepare Contract Docs	6	10-Jan-22	18-Jan-22	Procurement		
Contract Documentation / Signatures	5	20-Jan-22	27-Jan-22	Procurement, Delegated Signatory, Supplier		
CONTRACTOR ENGAGEMENT - Contract Implementation Period	79	27-Jan-22	18-May-22	Sponsor		
CONTRACT COMMENCEMENT	0	18-May-22	18-May-22	Sponsor/Operational Contract Manager		
Publish FTS Award Notice + Contracts Finder	1	27-Jan-22	28-Jan-22	Procurement		
Upload final contract documentation onto Yortender	1	27-Jan-22	28-Jan-22	Procurement		
Update Contracts and Grants Register	1	27-Jan-22	28-Jan-22	Procurement		
Savings and Risk Register	1	27-Jan-22	28-Jan-22	Procurement		
STAGE 3 SIGN-OFF	1	28-Jan-22	31-Jan-22	Project Team		

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Report of the Chair of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the meeting to be held on Thursday 16 September 2021

H

Subject:

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee –Work Programme 2021/22.

Summary statement:

This report includes proposed items for the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme for 2021/22.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY:

Community Cohesion and Equalities related issues are part of the work remit for this Committee.

Cllr Nazam Azam
Chair – Corporate Overview and Scrutiny
Committee

Report Contact: Mustansir Butt
Overview and Scrutiny Lead
Phone: (01274) 432574
E-mail: mustansir.butt@bradford.gov.uk

Portfolio:

**Corporate
Community Safety**

Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Corporate

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report includes the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme for 2021/22, which is attached as appendix 1 to this report.
- 1.2 Also attached as Appendix 2, is the unscheduled topics to be considered by the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee in 2021/22.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council constitution requires all Overview and Scrutiny Committees to produce a work programme.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee has the responsibility for “the strategies, plans, policies, functions and services directly relevant to the corporate priority about customer services and e-government, that improve the Councils ability to deliver, govern and change, community cohesion and all other corporate matters not falling within the responsibility of any other Overview and Scrutiny Committee.” (Council Constitution, Part 2, 6.2.1).
- 3.2 The remit of this Committee also includes:
 - the co-ordination of the discharge of the Overview and Scrutiny role within the Council and in relation to external bodies;
 - supporting the Executive through its contribution towards the improvement of the Council’s performance;
 - co-ordinating the development of the Overview and Scrutiny role within the Council.
- 3.3 Best practice published by the Centre for Public Scrutiny suggests that “work programming should be a continuous process”. It is important to review work programmes, so that important or urgent issues that arise during the year are able to be scrutinised. Furthermore, at a time of limited resources, it should also be possible to remove areas of work which have become less relevant or timely. For this reason, it is proposed that the Committee’s work programme be regularly reviewed by members of the committee throughout the municipal year.
- 3.4 The work programme as agreed by the Committee will form the basis for the Committee’s work during the year, but will be amended as issues arise during the year.
- 3.5 Members of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee are currently undertaken detailed scrutiny reviews into the areas of Hate Crime and the use of Fireworks across the District.
- 3.6 As well as this, Corporate Overview & Scrutiny members are currently undertaking a detailed scrutiny review into Domestic Violence across the District.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

4.1 None.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

5.1 None.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

6.2 None.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

None.

7.2 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

None.

7.3 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

A key priority of work for this Committee related to the Overview and Scrutiny of the strategies, plans, policies, functions and services directly relevant to the priority of Safer and Stronger Communities.

As well as this, the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee is also the authority's Crime and Disorder Committee under the provisions of Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006.

7.4 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

None.

7.5 TRADE UNION

None.

7.6 WARD IMPLICATIONS

Work of this Overview and Scrutiny Committee has ward implications, but this depends on that nature of the topic.

7.7 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING

None.

7.8 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

None.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None.

9. OPTIONS

9.1 The Committee may choose to add to or amend the proposed items to be included in the 2021-22 work programme for the committee.

9.2 Members may wish to consider any detailed scrutiny reviews that it may wish to conduct.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 The Committee may choose to add to or amend the topics included in the 2021-22 work programme for the committee.

10.2 That members consider any detailed scrutiny reviews that they may wish to conduct.

11. APPENDICES

Appendix One – 2021-22 Work Programme for the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Appendix Two – Unscheduled Topics.

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Council Constitution.

2020-21 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme.

Democratic Services - Overview and Scrutiny

Corporate O&S Committee

Scrutiny Lead: Mustansir Butt tel - 43 2574

Work Programme

Agenda Items	Description	Report Author	Comments
Thursday, 22nd July 2021 at City Hall, Bradford.			
Chair's briefing 01/07/21. Report deadline 08/07/21.			
1) 2019-20 Annual Performance Outturn.		Philip Witcherley.	
2) Finance Position Statement for 2019-20.		Chirs Chapman/Andrew Cross.	
3) First Quarter Financial Position Statement.		Chris Chapman/Andrew Cross.	
4) Insurance Long Term Tender Agreement.		Mark St Romaine.	
5) Draft 2021-21 Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme.			
Thursday, 16th September 2021 at City Hall, Bradford.			
Chair's briefing 26/08/21. Report deadline 02/09/21.			
1) Bradford District Anti-Poverty Co-ordination Group/Period Hygiene Poverty.	A more focused report in 12 months relating to how peoples lives are being improved through the work of the Anti-Poverty Coordinating groups. For Period anfd Hygiene Poverty to ialso include more detailed information relating to service needs and response	Kevin Brain/Michelle Taylor/Sarah Possingham.	Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommendation from Thursday 16 January 2020. Deferred from 8 April 2021 cancelled meeting.
2) VCS Infrastructure Procurement Strategy.	£2m Procurement Contract.	Mahmood Mohammed.	Constitutional Reqirement.
3) Work Planning.	There is a need to regularaly review the work programme, in order to prioritse and manage the work.	Mustansir Butt.	
Thursday, 14th October 2021 at City Hall, Bradford.			
Chair's briefing 21/09/21. Report deadline 30/09/21.			
1) Equalities Objectives.		Khalida Ashrafi.	Corporate Overviw & Scrutiny Committee recommendation from Thursday 24 September 2020.

Corporate O&S Committee
Scrutiny Lead: Mustansir Butt tel - 43 2574
Work Programme

Agenda Items	Description	Report Author	Comments
Thursday, 14th October 2021 at City Hall, Bradford.			
Chair's briefing 21/09/21. Report deadline 30/09/21.			
2) Bradford Council Workforce Development Strategy 2015-21.		Anne Lloyd.	Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee recommendation from Thursday 22 October 2020.
3) Progress against the Managing Attendance Scrutiny Review recommendations.		Anne Lloyd.	Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee recommendation from Thursday 22 October 2020.
4) Draft Fireworks Scrutiny Review.	Key findings and recommendations. There is a need to regularly review the work programme, in order to prioritise and manage the work.	Mustansir Butt.	
5) Work Planning.		Mustansir Butt.	
Thursday, 11th November 2021 at City Hall, Bradford.			
Chair's briefing 21/10/21. Report deadline 28/10/21.			
1) Armed Forces Covenant.	Further report on the work undertaken in line with the Council resolution be presented in 12 months. The findings of the Armed Forces Covenant be presented to this Committee within six months.	Gemma Paine.	Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommendation from Thursday 23 January 2020. To be considered in July 2021.
2) Second Quarter Financial Position Statement.		Chris Chapman/Andrew Cross.	
3) Impower Contract.	Specifically focusing on key outcomes. To be considered in the New Municipal Year.	Joanne Hyde/Mark Douglas/Iain Macbeath/Parveen Akhtar/Chris Chapman.	Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee recommendation from Thursday 3 December 2020.
4) Work Planning.	There is a need to regularly review the work programme, in order to prioritise and manage the work.	Mustansir Butt.	
Thursday, 9th December 2021 at City Hall, Bradford.			
Chair's briefing 18/11/21. Report deadline 25/11/21.			
1) Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Service - Finance and Performance.		Carol Stos.	Member request.

Corporate O&S Committee
 Scrutiny Lead: Mustansir Butt tel - 43 2574
Work Programme

Agenda Items	Description	Report Author	Comments
Thursday, 9th December 2021 at City Hall, Bradford.			
Chair's briefing 18/11/21. Report deadline 25/11/21.			
2) Safer Communities Plan Performance.		Ian Day/Michael Churley.	Corpoarte Overview & Scrutiny Committee recommendation from Thursday 19 November 2020.
3) Stronger Communities Strategy.		Ian Day/Mahmood Mohammed.	Corpoarte Overview & Scrutiny Committee recommendation from Thursday 19 November 2020.
4) Work Planning.	There is a need to regularaly review the work programme, in order to prioritse and manage the work.	Mustansir Butt.	
Thursday, 13th January 2022 at City Hall, Bradford.			
Chair's briefing 23/12/21. Report deadline 30/12/21.			
1) District Plan.	Annual Report to be presnted in 12 months and to also include actual targets against the District Plan.	Philip Witcherley.	Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommendation from Thursday 23 January 2020. Following disucssions with the Chair and Phil Witcherley - District plan priorities and how we are organising partnerships in the future COVID world.
2) Gambling.	The Cross Departmental and Cross Organisational Plan be presented to this Committee in 6 months. The departments involved in the devlopment of the Plan should include but not be limited to Public Health, Children's Social Care and probation/youth service	Sarah Muckle/Frances Towers/Sarha Exall.	Corporate Overview & Scrutiny recommendation from Thursday 16 January 2020.
3) Work Planning.	There is a need to regularaly review the work programme, in order to prioritse and manage the work.	Mustansir Butt.	

Corporate O&S Committee
Scrutiny Lead: Mustansir Butt tel - 43 2574
Work Programme

Agenda Items	Description	Report Author	Comments
Thursday, 10th February 2022 at City Hall, Bradford.			
Chair's briefing 18/01/22. Report deadline 27/01/22.			
1) Implementation of Universal Credit across the District.		Martin Stubbs.	Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee recommendation from Thursday 18 March 2021.
2) Council Tax.		Martin Stubbs.	Thursday 7 January 2021.
3) Business Rates.		Martin Stubbs.	Thursday 7 January 2021.
4) Work Planning.	There is a need to regularly review the work programme, in order to prioritise and manage the work.	Mustansir Butt.	
Thursday, 10th March 2022 at City Hall, Bradford.			
Chair's briefing 17/02/22. Report deadline 24/02/22.			
1) Prevent Programme for the District.		Ian Day/Danielle King.	Corporate Overview & Scrutiny recommendation from Thursday 18 March 2021.
2) People Can.	Detailed report specifically focusing on the added value of the People Can Programme across the District.	Mahmood Mohammed/Ian Day.	Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommendation from Thursday 12 March 2020.
3) Progress against the Hate Crime Scrutiny Review recommendations.		Ian Day/Rifaquet Ali.	Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee recommendation from Thursday 23 March 2021.
4) Work Planning.	There is a need to regularly review the work programme, in order to prioritise and manage the work.	Mustansir Butt.	

Democratic Services - Overview and Scrutiny

Scrutiny Committees Forward Plan

Unscheduled Items

Corporate O&S Committee

Agenda item	Item description	Author	Comments	
1	Verbal update from Bradford Councils representative on the West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel.	Cllr Richard Dunbar/Cllr Tariq Hussain/Cllr Russell Brown.	Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommendation from Thursday 13 September 2018.	
2	Draft Digital Strategy.	Parveen Akhtar.	Request from Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee members.	
3	Draft IT Strategy.	Dominic Barnes-Browne/Keith Hayes.	Request from Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee members.	
4	Hanson School's Financial Position.	Update on the School's Financial position be presented to the Committee at a future meeting.	Marium Haque/Chris Chapman/Andrew Redding.	Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommendation from Thursday 6 February 2020.
5	Domestic Violence Scrutiny Review.	Mustansir Butt.		
6	Frances foer the Recruitment and retention of Social Care workers.	Mark Douglas/Irfan Alam.	Member request.	
7	Police and Crime Commissioner - Safer and Stronger Community activities.		Member request.	
8	Legacy of Regeneration Schemes in Bradford.		Member request.	

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