

VCSE in Greater Manchester

Chair of the Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel

Councillor Teresa Smith

gmcvo@gmcvo.org.uk

Tameside One
Market Place
Ashton-under-Lyne
OL6 6BH

Email: Teresa.smith@tameside.gov.uk
Phone: 0161 342 2199
Ask for Paul Radcliffe
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To whom it may concern,

VCSE in Greater Manchester – the next 10 years

I write on behalf of Tameside Council's Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel. The Panel seeks to submit a response to the consultation on the VCSE in Greater Manchester – the next 10 years, which closes on 30 September 2019. This letter therefore aims to provide a summary of points and to express any areas of issue and concern. I would be extremely grateful if on receiving this letter you are able to take the appropriate action to ensure the response is suitably recorded and submitted to the consultation.

The policy paper is ambitious by nature and presents a regional offer that aims to remove emphasis from service provider and sector, by introducing an agreed set of principles to develop a fully integrated model. The Panel agree that this is a positive step in creating a platform for greater co-operative working across each authority area and the city region.

A whole system approach is required when taking account of the range of services our most vulnerable residents receive and the localised efforts to build resilient and self-reliant communities. Tameside's VCSE sector is vibrant and diverse, with a legacy of closely connected organisations working to achieve a shared vision. Local core values are underpinned by the need for services to be planned and delivered in a more co-operative way, Tameside PACT is an agreement between Tameside's voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector (VCFSE) and public sector agencies. The PACT features three main principles:

- Involving community groups and charities in advising and delivering services
- Better communication to build partnership working
- Working together to secure investment

Practical examples can be drawn from across the borough in the way organisations and partners are coming together to engage and to influence service provision. The Partnership Engagement Network (PEN) was created in autumn 2017 and forms a multi-agency approach to provide the public and our partners with an identified and structured method to influence the work of public services and to proactively discuss issues and share ideas. The key principles of the PEN are to:

- Engage in an ongoing conversation with the public, patients and other stakeholders
- Reach across the whole of the public and community sectors to ensure engagement doesn't happen in organisational silos

- Begin discussions early, enabling the public, patient and other stakeholders to be part of designing solutions.

In November 2018, Tameside and Glossop Strategic Commissioning Board adopted new Social Value Guidance. The guidance, developed in partnership with STAR Procurement, builds on the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Social Value Policy and the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012.

Tameside Council has now also outlined its ambition to become a Co-operative Council and to join the Co-operative Councils Innovation Network (CCIN). The application for membership will be reviewed on 2 October 2019.

As a place, we continue to invest in the development of a system-wide model whereby greater opportunities are made available for cross-sector engagement and service delivery. I have listed some of the main points below, which are to be viewed under the collective of Tameside's Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel.

- The Panel supports the publication of a VCSE Policy Paper, which brings together a number of aspirations that will require agreement and buy-in across all Greater Manchester authorities. It is felt that a combined ambition can only be fully achieved by learning from local practice, relationships and organisational linkages.
- The vision that sits within the paper is clear in parts, with a need to build on the vital role of all public and non-public agencies with the framework to focus on people, place and partnerships. To remove organisational boundaries and to achieve greater opportunity and transparency within decision making and general governance arrangements.
- There may be a need to determine required mechanisms for a GM vision to become a practical and branded reality for all councils. To measure and take account of the steps authorities across Greater Manchester have already taken and to build on the learning already made.
- To identify the most practical opportunities to test the offer. With the Council holding a number of statutory roles, there may be a practical need to identify where cross sector working can improve outcomes and complement the current approach.
- Across Tameside a number of voluntary and community groups work very well through what is effectively a disassociation with public partners. Further consideration may be required to ensure the paper is one that does not remove the individual identity and operational success of an organisation.
- Council's across Greater Manchester remain stretched and it is yet unclear how much resource will be required, at a local level, to deliver a sustainable vision to both enable and sustain a GM-wide VCSE 'ecosystem'.
- There is a need for individual areas to identify and enable transformation across all sectors, therefore providing suitable opportunities for greater influence for the VCSE sector.

If further clarity is needed on any of the above points, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,
Councillor Teresa Smith
Chair, Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel