

Investing in Kirklees Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector, working alongside partners

March 2021

Version control

Date	Version number	Author or reviewer	Comments
10/05/2021	1	Helen Orlic	Full draft report issued, subject to final approval by Kirklees Council.
6/10/2021	2	Helen Orlic	Updated to include feedback from Housing and Democracy Portfolio Holder Briefing: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wording updated to more clearly reflect that the Covid pandemic is continuing (not ended)• Addendum included with an overview of VCSE organisations by area of work, to provide more information about inclusivity.
12/08/2022	3	Diane Sims	Shared outcome icons updated to include the Shaped by People foundational shared outcome.

Executive summary

When we talk about the VCSE sector in Kirklees, we are really talking about lots of different organisations who are driven by a passion to help others, and who want to work together to help our people and places thrive. They value their independence, ability to innovate and act quickly - they are (rightly) proud of the work they do. They also recognise that, with the right support, they can do so much more to help our citizens and communities.

We will all benefit by strengthening this diverse group of organisations who are so vital for people's wellbeing and for our local economy. But this strategy is about far more than just funding the sector. We also need to invest our time, skills, assets and understanding into the VCSE. This strategy is, above all, about our **connections** with each other – as VCSE organisations, our council, health partners and local businesses, and as individuals who are passionate about the places where we live, work and play.

Trust is what really matters most for all of us. New and more trusting ways of working together in our local places have flourished during Covid-19. Community, voluntary and mutual aid groups in all our local places, the anchor organisations network and Third Sector Leaders Kirklees have been at the heart of our Coordinated Community Response. The VCSE have worked alongside Kirklees Council, Health partners and local businesses during this time. Their local skills, insight and understanding are essential for our collective response.

Building on our place-based approach to Covid-19, Kirklees Council can (and should) now look for other opportunities to recognise and value the strengths of the sector, and recognise where the VCSE are best placed to support and enable local communities.

Our recommendations demonstrate how we can strengthen the different kind of relationship that we have begun to grow as we work alongside each other - as equals - to make our local places even better. It's a relationship in which we are more open and honest in our conversations, where whoever is the best placed to do something is trusted and enabled to do it, and which achieves better outcomes for our citizens and organisations.

We can achieve meaningful impact and outcomes together by **Investing to build trust and transparency** (creating an environment for partners to work alongside each other) by **Investing in whoever is best placed to provide the service or support** (recognising and valuing each other's strengths) and by **Investing to increase VCSE capacity and resilience** (empowering the VCSE to help themselves).

Through this place based approach, we will all be investing in meaningful outcomes – from individual citizens who are giving locally and helping to decide what happens in their community, to supporting the organisations who are best placed to provide support. A strong VCSE will help secure more investment from outside Kirklees.

Over 40 people and organisations have co-produced this strategy. We are putting our **shared values** for working together (“**We are working alongside**”) into action, both in our way of working and through the recommendations we're making together for the future.

VCSE Investment Strategy overview

8 Shared Outcomes for Kirklees



Our shared values - Working alongside

Priority 1

Invest to build trust and transparency :
creating an environment for partners to work alongside each other

Objectives

- Create more opportunities to get to know each other better, listening and sharing skills, resources and knowledge with each other
- Develop a joint understanding of what funds are available to the VCSE in Kirklees and identify the best way to maximise impact
- Collaborate more and compete less. Start the conversations early and keep them going
- Jointly assess social value within the VCSE

Measures of success

- Evidence of improved working together
- New partnerships and alliances
- Clear view of total funding available to VCSE
- Social value demonstrated by VCSE
- Partners know what's happening in their areas

Priority 2

Invest in whoever is best placed to provide the service or support:
recognising & valuing each other's strengths

Objectives

- Jointly agree the best process or organisations to manage funding, moving funding closer to the community
- Invest in further development of VCSE infrastructure support
- Don't divest assets, invest in communities – work together to develop a needs led approach to community asset transfers
- Look within Kirklees first

Measures of success

- Effective grants programme with no duplication
- More active community buildings meeting community needs – case studies
- Examples of Kirklees Council and partners using local social enterprises for support and services

Priority 3

Invest to increase VCSE capacity, resilience and sustainability:
empowering the VCSE to help themselves

Objectives

- Recognise the value of, and create conditions for, more Kirklees based community business (social enterprises, enterprise activity and cooperatives)
- Develop a commitment to a set of 'funding principles' to help improve VCSE capacity and resilience
- Invest in resource within the VCSE to enable the VCSE to attract more non Council funds.

Measures of success

- Number of new and sustained community businesses - social value achieved
- Value of non-council funding secured
- £ + social value of businesses working with VCSE
- Implement principles + evidence of impact

Background

In October 2020 the Executive Team within Kirklees Council received a paper entitled 'The Third Sector in Kirklees – A Strategic approach to funding and investment' which outlined the significant role the sector is playing in supporting communities during the pandemic, whilst also recognising some of the issues facing the sector as a result of it. Based on this paper the Executive Team agreed to commission work to produce and develop an investment strategy to identify how Kirklees Council can further support the Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise Sector including the faith sector (VCSE) within Kirklees.

Introduction

The VCSE Investment Strategy builds on the vision and shared outcomes set out in the Kirklees Council Plan 2020/21, and the aim to work with 'people, and partners using a place-based approach to achieve our shared outcomes and ultimately our vision'. Work over the past two years has set the intention to support the sector, and as outlined in Appendix 1 there are already some excellent examples of how VCSE organisations have worked alongside Kirklees Council to address local need and improve outcomes.

This strategy aims to harness the strengths and diversity of the VCSE within Kirklees – to welcome, capture and maximise their ability to innovate and be agile in response to changing need and to be easily accessible to the communities they serve. It is about supporting the sector to develop their own resources and build resilience so they can continue to address increasing health, economic and social inequalities and work to improve outcomes for the residents of Kirklees. With approximately 4% of the local workforce being employed by VCSE organisations, a healthy, vibrant, active and sustainable VCSE sector is integral to the economic recovery of Kirklees post Covid.

In March 2019 the National Lottery released a 'funding ecology' report for Yorkshire & Humber which stated that Yorkshire & Humber 'had proportionally the lowest level of voluntary sector funding of any region in England', with funding per person less than half the England average and only 14% of that secured by the London region. Of 53 funders analysed, very few of the national funders had made awards locally in the preceeding 3 years. Of the 21 Local Authorities in the Yorkshire & Humber area, Kirklees is 14th in terms of the funding awarded per head of population, with only Wakefield below it from the West Yorkshire region. When National Lottery funding is removed from this calculation Kirklees falls to 16th and is the lowest area in West Yorkshire for non-National Lottery grant awards.

Council grant funding opportunities for the VCSE in 2019/20 totalled approximately £800k. In 2020/21 this is forecast to have increased to £2.3million, primarily as a result of Covid 19 emergency funding. Work is already underway to consolidate funding and improve information that is available to the sector. As yet we do not have data regarding the percentage of contracts commissioned to local VCSE, or insight into how this relates to other areas of West Yorkshire. The Kirklees VCSE is however linking to regional work relating to capturing the value of, and current investment in, the sector.

Establishing an understanding our current funding position will be an important (but not the sole) element in being able to measure the success of any investment strategy. However, this strategy is about more than just funding the sector. It aims to cover a range of other investment options for Kirklees Council and partners, developing a range of options for strengthening a diverse group of organisations.

Over 30 VCS organisations and 14 different Kirklees Council officers and services have been involved in the co-production of this strategy, with additional input from other regional VCS organisations and specialist support organisations.

Implementation of the strategy will require elements of process, practice and culture change not only within the council but also with wider partners such as health services and local business. An immediate and important action from this strategy will be to establish the most appropriate approach or mechanism for involving Health and local Business. Given the current health and economic challenges, our health services (with the exception of Locala as a social enterprise) and local business were not approached directly as part of this work.

This Investment Strategy covers the period 2021 - 2024.

VCSE Investment Strategy aims - what this strategy is and isn't about

This Strategy is about....

Partners **working together to make our local places even better**, building an equitable partnership. It is about the council relinquishing power and bringing about cultural change. It is about partners and Kirklees Council building trust and transparency, **being honest and open** in our conversations so that the council becomes an enabler for the VCSE.

It is about the whole 'system' and those within it working together – Kirklees Council, Health and the 3rd Sector (and business).

It's not about Kirklees Council being paternalistic or 'doing to' the VCSE.

Ensuring that **whoever is best placed** to provide a service or support is providing it - 'the right people are doing the right things.'

It is about being community led, linking to local people and plans and recognising the need for equity - some communities need more support than others.

It's not about Kirklees Council giving the VCSE things or services to do 'on the cheap'.

Enabling VCSE organisations to help themselves to attract more external funding, to be able to invest to develop resources and resilience. It is about supporting the VCSE to access and develop a diversity of grant and income streams (grants, contracts, enterprise, fundraising).

It's not about creating a VCSE that are grant or contract dependent on Kirklees Council.

Building community capacity and resilience in VCSE to enable longer term planning and time to address increasingly complex or entrenched issues in communities. It is about being able to support a wide range of activity to help local people, creating impact and real long term outcomes that support residents of Kirklees, whilst recognising the need to be accountable for the use of public funds.

It's not about 'quick wins' and short term funding.

Recognising and maintaining the diversity of VCSE organisations and the communities they work with. It is about enabling local organisations, local assets, services and projects to respond to needs of local people (place) or the communities they serve (communities of interest).

It's not about having a 'one size fits all' approach.

Kirklees Council, along with other stakeholders, investing time, skills, assets and money into the VCSE.

It's not about just investing money.

Generating action, testing out new ways of working and new ideas, and **not being frightened of getting things wrong** sometimes - we will still gain insight and learning.

It's not about being a piece of paper that sits on a shelf. It's not about blame, when new ideas don't work. It's not about ignoring the opportunity to learn.

Building on the foundations of what's already begun to happen.

It's not about all new ideas.

Our VCSE Investment Strategy has 3 priority areas

In order to achieve effective and meaningful impact and outcomes, this strategy proposes Kirklees Council and partners invest across the following 3 overlapping priorities to support the sector:

- **Priority 1 - Invest to build trust and transparency:**
creating an environment for partners to work alongside each other
- **Priority 2 - Invest in whoever is best placed to provide the service or support:**
recognising and valuing each other's strengths
- **Priority 3 - Invest to increase VCSE capacity and resilience:**
empowering the VCSE to help themselves

Priority 1

Invest to build trust and transparency:

creating an environment for the partners to work alongside each other

Overview

The single word mentioned most throughout conversations with the VCSE sector was 'trust' – 'trust us to do a good job, trust in our ability, trust that we know our communities, trust that we will spend money wisely'. The need for individual VCS organisations to feel like trusted partners of Kirklees Council underpins all the priorities within this strategy – it's the building block for our ability to effectively work alongside each other. It was also recognised, by both the VCSE and council officers that the pandemic had enabled significant progress in this area, through the efforts of so many VCSE organisations and the Community Anchors as part of the Covid-19 Coordinated Community Response work.

Building trust and transparency requires both partners to be open and honest in their conversations, to be able to express concerns, share problems, be open about what went well and what didn't, and to be able to work on solutions together. It is about knowing who to talk to, developing these relationships and involving each other earlier in conversations about the needs of our local communities and the outcomes we all want to see, encouraging and developing a willingness to try new things and accepting a shared risk - not everything will work but we will learn together.

Objectives

1. Create more opportunities to get know each other better, listening and sharing skills, resources and knowledge with each other

- Understand that **we are coming from different places** and find ways to make it easier to work together, ensuring there are meaningful interfaces and points of access between the council and VCSE. This will help us all navigate and connect with each other easier.
- Build relationships both between the council, partners and individual VCSE organisations, and within the VCSE and faith sector. Listen and invest time in strategic and operational conversations with VCSE organisations, for example through Senior Leaders Networks, Community Anchor networks, place based coordination and communities of interest. Understand the role of the VCSE on strategic boards to ensure mutual benefit and sharing of knowledge.
- Invest in joint workforce development opportunities to enable individuals at all levels to **share their time, skills and knowledge** and get to know each other, including secondment of skilled staff (for example, social workers and family support workers) into VCSE for mutual benefit; increased flexibility in Employee

Supported Volunteering to enable those with specific skills to better meet needs of the VCSE; develop and enable multi agency training for skills as well as knowledge, including management and leadership courses, professional development or safeguarding training (as provided by Kirklees Safeguarding Children's Board) (See Appendix 1 for case studies)

- Develop community business, charity and social enterprise hubs or centres (using existing VCSE assets) providing an opportunity for the sector to meet like-minded organisations, share learning, offer mutual support and generate ideas as well as access cost effective office or meeting space.
- Increase place-based communication, coordination and partnerships, encouraging local VCSE organisations, Councillors, the Active Citizens and Places team and other, community based council teams to work better together through a mechanism that enhances communication of what is happening where, by who and when.
- Build on each other's stories – use corporate and internal communications to share more VCSE stories and the outcomes they achieve. Help raise the profile of what the VCSE are doing and achieving within the council, within Kirklees as a whole and regionally or nationally.

2. Develop a joint understanding of what funds are available to the VCSE in Kirklees, and identify the best way to maximise impact to achieve Kirklees outcomes

- Combine, consolidate and coordinate funds - understand how much is being invested into the VCSE already across the 8 shared outcomes and where the need is now. Involve other strategic partners such Locala and Health (CCGs) to maximise this opportunity, and proactively identify outcomes, where working with the VCSE could help attract more external funds.

3. Collaborate more and compete less. Involve and start the conversations early and keep them going

- Provide support to VCSE to develop alliances and partnerships to respond to local tenders, and proactively attract external funds.
- Assess the need for a more strategic vehicle for procurement, for example consisting of TSL, KYA, Health and Kirklees Council, to enable contracts to be commissioned by this alliance or procurement vehicle solely to local VCS organisations (a model which already exists in Calderdale).
- Make it easier for Kirklees Council to work with relevant sector organisations within the systems and structures we have to consult, share information, bring lived experience to the fore, and shape pre-tender discussions through informal conversations.
- Overcome VCSE barriers and attitudes towards contracts and commissioning – look at development routes to help grow organisations to be contract ready,

build on early relationships to provide open, honest and supportive feedback to unsuccessful tenders, provide clarity on why the choice of contract not grant has been made as the preferred funding mechanism.

- Work together to identify alternative ways the VCSE can fund themselves to help achieve outcomes for Kirklees, such as through the use of social investment, social impact bonds, crowdfunding or community shares (see also Priority 3).

4. Jointly assess and develop a mechanism to assess Social Value at a VCSE level

- VCSE to be involved in the development of a Social Value Strategy, to develop a joint understanding of how Kirklees assesses and values social impact.
- Raise awareness within the VCSE of Social Value and how to measure outcomes and impact so the VCSE can start to effectively measure the impact of its own work.
- Involve the VCSE in assessing social impacts and outcomes in other corporate tenders - for example, for capital projects - in order to help maximise and ensure their realistic achievement.
- Link to wider regional partners to develop understanding, and impact of Social Value

Measures of success

- Evidence and examples of improved working together. For example, networks exist, feedback from sector and Kirklees Council regarding working relationships.
- New partnerships and alliances – securing more Council, Health and other external funding.
- Clear view of the total funding currently available for VCSE in Kirklees across the Council, Health and other local funders.
- A method and mechanism in place for VCSE to understand and assess social value, with case studies and examples in support of this.
- Partners report that they know what's happening in their area regarding funding and activities.

Priority 2

Invest in whoever is best placed to provide the service or support:
recognising and valuing each other's strengths

Overview

Learning from the first wave of the pandemic showed that by enabling and facilitating the community's response, and the council 'getting out of the way' of this work, a more effective and efficient service was created. Within the Covid-19 Coordinated Response work there developed a clear understanding (and appreciation) of the roles and responsibilities of the community and mutual aid organisations, VCS infrastructure and Anchor organisations and Kirklees Council; a reduction in confusion and duplication, and a very local based response reflective of the differing needs of the different communities. Building on this approach the council can look for other opportunities to recognise and value the strengths of the sector and where it is best placed to support and enable communities.

Objectives

1. Jointly agree the best process for organisations to manage grant funding (who is best placed to do what) moving funding closer to the community

Traditionally the council has been involved in issuing grants, for example from £500 to £50,000 per year. In most cases the process to issue these grants is the same, making it time and cost inefficient for the council to be involved in smaller grant processes, especially when the knowledge of the many and varied VCS organisations involved is limited.

- Bring funding closer to local communities and empower those working in the communities. For example:
 - Micro grants – those closest to the community are best placed to manage micro grant funds, where very local knowledge, agility and speed of response are often important factors.
 - Small grants – Local infrastructure organisations such as One Community, KYA and TSL are best placed to issue these funds which are often project or theme specific, and can act as seed funding, **acting on people's ideas and testing things out in local places**. Again, knowledge of the smaller VCSE who work in or with these specific communities is essential to the process. For example, Kirklees Youth Alliance Healthy Holiday grants and the Financial Hardship Fund administered by TSL. (see Appendix 1)
 - Medium or large grants – These more strategic based grants, linking to the Kirklees outcomes and key themes would be best managed by

Kirklees Council, with shared decision making panels across the council, Health and VCSE. For example, the larger 'Do Something Now' grants offered by Community Plus.

- Continue to work alongside organisations during the pre-application process to increase the chance of success, building supportive, iterative processes which are accepting of the project, trust in their knowledge and don't attempt to change it. Be clear on what co-production is and isn't to ensure it is accurately captured in the process.
- Ensure that resources are appropriately located to support the funding process - but avoid transferring bureaucracy.

2. Invest in further development of VCSE infrastructure support

- Ensure there is a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of those involved in supporting the VCSE infrastructure (for example, KYA, TSL, One Community and Kirklees Council) and that resources and activities are shared to avoid duplication. Establish clear communication mechanisms and consider if a more formal alliance structure is needed involving the council and Health.
- Identify gaps in infrastructure support linked to social, economic and health inequalities and equity, and develop workstreams of specific support. For example, to widen membership from Black communities and South Asian communities to ensure their voices are heard, increase involvement of faith communities, to encourage access and offer peer support.
- Identify where there are places, communities or themes of work where we need VCSE organisations to meet local need, and support existing Kirklees based VCSE to fill the gaps.
- Continue to help build individual organisation capacity, tailoring the support offered to the many and varying needs of the sector. For example, digital, and IT, promotion, public relations, fundraising, marketing, financial planning, governance, writing a good application and insurance. Encourage business and other VCSE organisations to help and support with the sharing of knowledge, skills and resources. (See also Priority 3, objective 3)

3. Don't divest assets, invest in communities - Develop a needs-led approach to Community Asset Transfers, working together across communities, VCSE and Kirklees Council

- Adopt a needs-led approach to community asset transfers, being clear on why ownership matters, where the needs are and avoiding duplication with other community resources.
- Increase awareness of Community Asset Transfers within the whole VCSE sector, encouraging partnerships to develop new community businesses. Integrate into

VCSE offer and be proactive in the approach to encourage and support. Change the narrative from 'liability' transfer to 'asset' transfer.

- Provide a bespoke package of support for each asset transfer linked to the needs of the community as well as the building (consider including financial, building and marketing expertise), allow some 'commercial' use to balance community support and support overall sustainability.
- Invest in the expertise that already exists to support this process, such as the Local Services 2 You and Locality partnership.
- Further develop the Community Buildings network group for mutual support (especially post Covid) to share ideas and learning, and work together. Include Kirklees Council and partner community buildings, faith buildings and access to external local expertise for guidance as needed. Recognise that non-council run community and faith buildings offer a safe non-judgemental space for the delivery of community services and support.

4. Look within Kirklees first

- Ensure external specialists work with local VCSE organisations to develop local knowledge and expertise on work relevant to VCSE.
- Keep it local – Kirklees Council and other key stakeholders use and promote local social enterprises, community business, and charities for their own support and services.

Measures of success

- Effective grants programmes delivering outcomes with no duplication.
- More active community buildings meeting community needs.
- Examples of Kirklees Council using local social enterprises for support and services.

Priority 3

Invest to increase VCSE capacity, resilience and sustainability: empowering the VCSE to help themselves

Overview

The VCSE and those within these organisations are driven by a passion to help, they value their independence, ability to innovate and act quickly, and are (rightly) proud of the work they do. They also recognise that with the right support they can do so much more to help the communities they work with, and that by working together with other VCSE, Kirklees Council and Health they can be even more effective in reducing inequalities and achieving improved outcomes for even more people. By enabling, encouraging and creating the conditions to help VCSE organisations to invest in themselves we aim to generate an improved and far greater return for Kirklees in terms of both VCSE sustainability and improved outcomes for residents.

Objectives

1. Recognise the value of, and create conditions for, more Kirklees based community businesses (social enterprises, enterprise activity and cooperatives)

This is already part of the Inclusive Economy with the Kirklees Local Economic Recovery Plan. The recommendations from this report are to:

- Support what we have already - Define and identify current community businesses in Kirklees, and assess the need for re-start grants as support for existing enterprise activity affected by the pandemic, in order to prevent closure and maintain current employment.
- Build on work which had started in 2019 to grow more social enterprises - Develop local expertise and dedicated support through a joint funded role (VCSE and Kirklees Council) working with external experts (for example, SEYH, Social Enterprise mark, Locality, Cooperative specialists) to identify opportunities for new community business (such as with the Blueprint projects, Health & Social care, Youth work and the environment) raising awareness across Kirklees of the support available. Develop easy access to start up funding and support. Acknowledge also that there are many aspects of VCSE work that cannot be funded by self-generated income.
- Raise awareness of, and develop opportunities for, cooperatives within Kirklees via Employee or Community Share Ownership so that individuals, businesses and communities can build confidence and invest in cooperative community businesses sharing in 'the risk, the power and the reward' and in doing so secure

longer term sustainability. Offer advice, incentives and support for these cooperatives.

- Encourage more 'cross business type' working, removing the 'silo' operating between business, community business and the voluntary and community sector to create a truly inclusive economy which generates start up and support options for new and existing organisations of any type.
- Develop an ambition for some of those groups worse affected by the pandemic (including young people and women) to be proactively supported in developing social enterprises and cooperatives.

2. Develop a commitment to a set of 'funding principles' to help improve capacity and resilience

Work has already begun to ensure easier access to Kirklees Council grant funding, information and agree a standardised process for accessing it. Designing and jointly agreeing a set of principles which underpin the practical elements of funding the VCSE will be important to ensure clarity, consistency and transparency in the process of applying for council funds (including Councillor Ward Project budgets). As a minimum it is recommended that the following form the basis of some of those principles, and commitments are made to the following:

- Multi year funding. This not only supports the stability of the organisation or project and helps with planning and project development but, more importantly, helps those organisations unblock issues that are now entrenched in many communities.
- A 'Funding front door' where all potential funds are visible and in one place, and with links to wider funding opportunities (building on work already started).
- Focus on funding local organisations, clearly connected to the local community and that funds existing activities and developments that come from these not just new ideas.
- Support for funding of 'overheads' – Making a meaningful and realistic contribution towards the overheads of a VCSE organisation helps them invest and grow capacity and reserves which in turn supports their resilience and sustainability.
- Developing grants that are needs led and outcome – not output – focussed.
- Open and transparent communication – identify standard and consistent routes that all funders will use to raise awareness of funding opportunities as well as ensuring local groups and communities are aware of what has been funded and the associated outcomes.
- Transparency and standardisation in the application, assessment and decision making processes for all Kirklees Council grants, with support from the VCSE in the development process.
- Develop a clear position regarding access to funds for faith based organisations.

- Proportionate financial accountability and outcomes monitoring which acknowledges the use of public funds but is proportionate to the funding issued.
- A single Kirklees Council and Health mechanism for Quality Assurance, jointly developed by representatives from Health, Kirklees Council and the VCSE that supports the diversity of the sector.
- Recognises (and if possible avoids) the 'recycling' of Kirklees Council money or budgets – for example, rent payments from Kirklees Council grants which are used to pay for the use of a council property.

3. Invest in resource within the VCSE to enable them to attract more external (non-council) funds

Providing additional capacity and expertise to help VCSE organisations of all sizes improve the diversity of the funding streams attracts more funds into Kirklees, helps develop more sustainable organisations with less reliance on the council, and enables them to help more people.

- **Development work and bid writing support** – grants and contracts - TSL already have some capacity to support the VCSE in the development of partnerships and the subsequent bid writing activity, especially for larger grants and tender responses. These roles are undoubtedly valued by many within the VCSE as they help address the immediate capacity issues with many organisations in the development and subsequent writing of funding applications but also, by working closely with the relevant organisations helps support the development and understanding of the grant or bid writing process and approach. Within the last 2 years these resources have helped the sector secure £1.3m funding from external sources generating a return of £25 for every £1 invested in bid writer support. As a straightforward return on investment the financial value of this approach is clear. In addition, identifying easier ways for the council to match fund or endorse external applications will further add to this success.
- **Support to engage with local business** – work is already underway by both TSL and One Community to increase engagement with local business and link into their social responsibility agendas. This work focuses on helping match local businesses with local VCSE according to the needs of both, and then encouraging them to develop direct long term relationships. In most cases it does not start as direct financial donations, an important point to note given the current economic climate. To date this work has been part of an existing role but with increased investment into a 'Business or Community Connector' role across both North and South Kirklees, this work could be expanded to have a far greater impact for both local business and the community, increasing the financial and non-financial support (for example, volunteering, skills workshops, practical help and advice) given to local, rather than national charities, to help them achieve their outcomes. Offering access to business support alongside grant funding can further help build VCSE capacity (as seen in the National Lottery Building Capabilities fund or the Lloyds Bank Foundation Enhance Fund).

- **Action 'Give local' fundraising campaigns** – develop and action local giving campaigns to encourage local citizens to give to local charities, and ensuring they see the benefit of their donation locally is a compelling message, yet it is estimated that the majority of Kirklees citizens donating to charity are still supporting national campaigns such as Children in Need, Comic Relief or national charities. Identifying and developing a way where local giving could be supported will further help keep the Kirklees £ in Kirklees.
Crowdfunding - strengthen opportunities to lever additional funds for local projects through civic crowdfunding and explore how we can integrate crowdfunding into existing funding schemes or programmes. There is a need to invest in crowdfunding skills and capacity building, including support to run crowdfunding campaigns.

Measures of success

- Number of new and sustainable community businesses and social value achieved.
- Value of external, non-council funding secured by VCSE
- Number of local businesses working with VCSE and the estimated financial equivalent value of this work (for example, the equivalent cost of Trustees time or business expertise).
- Implementation of agreed funding principles can be evidenced and the impact demonstrated via case studies.

VCSE Investment Strategy action plan

High level DRAFT - 6 workstreams

1

Enablers

- Data – agree data capture requirements for all workstreams. Initiate project to capture. Link to WYHHP work
- Quantify measures of success
- Agree and action approach for Health involvement
- Agree and action approach for Business involvement
- Finalise Programme Steering Group
- Identify links to other partnerships and strategic boards

2

Community Businesses

- Draft role profile, identify and agree joint funding for dedicated post to support development of community business (social enterprises and cooperatives)
- Re-establish Social Enterprise working group to help identify and promote existing social enterprises, and support with re-start funding if needed
- TSL and Business & Skills to work together to identify 'routes' into business support

3

Community Assets

- Arrange meeting of 'Community Buildings' network – gain understanding of current issues and support needed
- Link to Place Based Working – identify current community assets and gaps
- Develop plan to address these gaps

VCSE Investment Strategy action plan continued...

4

Infrastructure

Identify and agree funding for resources linked to:

- Development and bid writers
- Business Connector role
- Give Local fundraising campaign
- Arrange meeting of infrastructure orgs and teams to agree ways of working.

Agree roadmap of 'infrastructure support work' to include:

- Development of meaningful interfaces between Kirklees Council and VCSE
- Funding Principles and protocols – to include any transfer of resources to support
- VCSE hubs in North & South Kirklees
- New workstreams re infrastructure support for eg. specific BAME groups
- Links to other workstreams

5

Engagement and communications

Develop joint Communications and Engagement plans – TSL and Kirklees Council, which aim to:

- Share the strategy, linking to shared outcomes and our shared values
- Promote VCSE across Kirklees
- Link to Community Asset Transfer and Community Business workstream
- Encourage Kirklees Council staff to work differently with the VCSE
- Link to Place Based Working and coordination of local engagement and communications

6

Commissioning and procurement (including social value)

- Joint workshops to develop joint understanding of different finance models for commissioning, being contract ready and routes to do this
- Jointly assess need for strategic procurement vehicle
- Develop joint understanding of Social Value Portal, and improve local VCSE knowledge of how to assess social impact
- VCSE involved in tender assessment for large capital or corporate tenders

Appendix 1 – Case studies

Priority 1 - Invest to build trust and transparency:

creating an environment for the partners to work alongside each other

Skills sharing – Secondment of a Family Support Worker from the Early Help team to the Brunswick Centre, with mutual benefit

The Brunswick Centre works across all of Kirklees providing support to LGBT young people aged 11-24, their parents and carers. They understand that by working holistically with the whole family and encouraging parental or carer involvement, then outcomes for LGBT young people will be improved.

On a monthly basis the Brunswick Centre run a Trans Parents Group, which both young people and their parents attend in separate safe spaces. At the end of each session the young people are encouraged to share what they have been doing and discussing with their parents. However, some young people have reduced contact (or loss of contact) with parents or carers as a result of their sexual orientation or gender identity. This was recognised as a gap in provision within Kirklees and was placing increased pressure on existing resource trying to address it.

The Brunswick Centre identified that a solution to this would be the employment of a Family Support Worker (FSW) to work with these young people and their parents or carers and discussions began with Kirklees Council about funding a full time FSW. The council's Early Support Service had also identified a lack of knowledge and experience within their team in relation to working with LGBT young people and their parents or carers. An alternative solution to direct funding was therefore proposed, and it was agreed that a FSW from Kirklees Council would be seconded to The Brunswick Centre for 12 months, and work as part of The Brunswick Centre staff with access to all associated training, support and resources. In return, the FSW would then develop and deliver training to FSWs located in Kirklees Support Service and support their upskilling and ability to work with LGBT young people and their families.

An additional benefit was also identified in terms of the time saved by the FSW having quicker and easier access to Kirklees Council staff, and an easier referral route into the Early Support.

Recruitment for this secondment has now closed and this pilot project will be reviewed after the initial 12 months.

When asked what made this possible now, Russell Oxley at The Brunswick Centre identified a number of factors

- Leadership with Kirklees Council that was willing to listen, acknowledge gaps and look at different ways of working.

- A relationship between the Brunswick Centre and Kirklees Council that was built on trust and a reputation for delivering in an outcomes focussed way.
- Continuing support and understanding for what The Brunswick Centre were trying to achieve throughout Covid enabling them to change the nature of their delivery to be less face to face.
- A mutual understanding of who is best placed to do the work.

Skills sharing – A different type of support – Huddersfield Mission supported with their financial planning by Kirklees Council Internal Audit & Risk team

Huddersfield Mission provide advice and support to anyone who needs it. They have been based in Huddersfield town centre for over 100 years and are particularly well known for advising and supporting those struggling with multiple and complex needs such as homelessness, mental health, addiction and more.

During the early months of the Covid-19 pandemic, with their year-end (August) approaching trustees recognised an increasing need and difficulty to plan for future financial years. The Mission spoke to their named officer Public Health about some of the challenges they were facing through the pandemic and asked if they knew of anyone who could help them with the process of financial and business planning. The particular challenges of Covid mean that their usual forecasting process was not sufficient and additional skills were required. Huddersfield Mission were put in touch with the Audit and Risk team within the Council and a member of that team was subsequently asked to support the development of financial plans for the Mission.

The Manager and Trustees were really pleased with the resulting financial plans, which include financial projections for 4 different scenarios, and which helped give the board confidence in their decision making.

When asked what made this such a valuable piece of work, Paul Bridges at Huddersfield Mission identified the following factors:

- It had the support of a senior manager who could identify, and recognise the need for the work to be completed.
- It was developed as a 'proper' piece of work, not a bolt on to someone's job. They were given the time to complete the work properly and to the standard needed for Trustees to make informed decisions. It felt like it was given the same level of importance as an internal (Kirklees Council) piece of work.
- The right person, at the right level, was allocated to do the work. The importance of accurate and informed financial planning for an organisation like Huddersfield Mission meant this was not a job for a new or junior member of staff. It needed an individual with experience and financial understanding to complete it. Several conversations were held with the Manager at Huddersfield Mission to ensure they had captured and understood all the preparatory information.

Priority 2 - Invest in whoever is best placed to provide the service or support: recognising and valuing each other's strengths

TSL – Distribution of £100k financial hardship fund to almost 100 organisations in a matter of weeks

Kirklees Council has worked with Third Sector Leaders on a creative scheme to get funds for essentials to the most vulnerable families in Kirklees.

The £170 million Government Covid Winter Grant Scheme was made available to local authorities in early December 2020 to assist vulnerable families with children and other households most affected by the pandemic.

The aim was to give vulnerable households peace of mind in the run up to Christmas and over the winter months during the pandemic by helping provide food and other essentials, to ensure every child was warm and well fed this winter.

Support was not restricted to households in receipt of benefits and councils were urged to use a wide range of data and information to support to a broad cross section of vulnerable households in their area.

Kirklees Council opted to work with local charity Third Sector Leaders, making use of TSL's connections with very small community groups across the borough, to ensure the funding reached as many people as possible in Kirklees.

Working with small community groups, food banks and food share schemes, TSL approved almost 100 grants, totalling around £100,000 over less than a 3 month period. Funding ranged from £300 to £1,000 and projects included providing supplies for food banks, food parcel and cooked meal deliveries, school holiday meal schemes. Several groups also organised online cooking sessions, with ingredient packs to delivered participants, to help them develop skills to better manage their household budgets and cook affordable healthy family meals.

Kirklees Youth Alliance CIO (KYA) – Healthy Holidays Programme – an example of the VCSE and local communities working together

Towards the end of 2018, KYA, supported by TSL, led on a funding application to the Department for Education (DfE) in order to secure funding to address holiday hunger for children in Kirklees. Although this application was unsuccessful, Kirklees Council decided to fund their own programme – using the original application and programme as the basis of their support. The success of the 2019 Healthy Holidays programme led to a 3 year grant being awarded to KYA for delivery of future Healthy Holiday programmes.

The KYA-coordinated Healthy Holidays Programme is a school holiday activity programme to engage children in informal learning in the 6 weeks holiday period, Easter holidays, and at

half term breaks. It aims to provide fun enrichment programmes, varied physical activities and healthy food. The programme is designed to support better learning, health and social outcomes for Kirklees children – especially those living in areas of high deprivation.

A key part of the KYA's coordination responsibility is the management and administration of a grant programme and ensuring providers adhere to minimum standards.

However, just as this agreement was signed the Covid 19 and lockdown happened and the original plans for Summer 2020 had to change. Over the subsequent months, the Healthy Holidays steering group considered ways to meet the needs of local children and young people in an ever-changing context of full lockdown, schools slowly re-opening, restrictions being relaxed and last minute directives from central government about school meal vouchers. This made it incredibly difficult for organisations like KYA across the country to plan effectively. It was not until mid-June that a plan for 2020's Healthy Holidays Programme was agreed with the Council and Public Health.

As a result of Covid 19 restrictions and a lastminute decision by Government to extend FSM provision through the holidays using food vouchers, it was agreed that this year's Healthy Holidays Provision should have a slightly different focus. The programme for the 7 week Summer holiday consisted of a universal offer for all school age children and young people as well as a targeted offer for those more vulnerable and/or disadvantaged by the pandemic.

A huge strength of the Healthy Holidays Programme is its ability to mobilise large numbers of statutory partners, local VCSE organisations and volunteers for fixed periods of time in school holidays. With outcomes that align with partners' priorities, it is not difficult to get people onboard! The core paid team co-ordinating the effort is very small; one manager and one administrator, working on this for around four months of the year in total. In summer 2020 however there were around 337 others involved in all aspects of the projects delivery including the production, collection and delivery of activity packs and the development of the online offer. Funding from the grant was distributed by KYA to 22 local organisations to make this happen.

To receive a copy of the full evaluation of the Summer 2020 programme and for information about future plans please contact Susan Greenwood on susan@tslkirklees.org.uk (or from April www.kirkleesyouthalliance.org)

Priority 3 - Invest to increase VCSE capacity, resilience and sustainability: empowering the VCSE to help themselves

A new partnership in North Kirklees to empower South Asian Women – Ravensthorpe Community Centre, Indian Muslim Welfare Society and PERS (Pay and Employment Rights Service)

Recognising that women's involvement, leadership and support is needed to enable us to survive and recover socially and economically, this partnership of 3 local charities supported by the TSL grant writer developed and were successful in a funding application to The Tudor Trust.

Working from the ground up, and starting within their own organisations, they will enable women to take-on central and influential roles commanding status and respect. They then aim to spread this approach throughout civic life in North Kirklees and more broadly. They will invest in skills and opportunities for Asian women, address the race and gender-based discrimination faced by Asian women in employment, education and in life generally, challenge that prejudice, equip women to challenge it for themselves, and support women to deal with it as constructively as possible. They also want to spread the story of their project and inspire the same courage to confront the deep-set cultural patterns and counteract prejudice in other predominantly Asian communities, and in other disadvantaged communities.

The partnership was successfully awarded £150k funding in February 2020.

Thornton Lodge Action Group in partnership with Crosland Moor Community Learning Centre and CUP (Communities United Project) working to address inequalities in the local area, and building on learning from the pandemic.

In August 2020 Thornton Lodge Action Group (TLAG) was awarded National Lottery Covid Response funding to work in partnership with Crosland Moor Community Learning Centre (CMCLC) to deliver a programme of support to local BAME residents affected by both the health and economic impacts of the pandemic. This support included delivery of culturally appropriate food parcels and essentials, activities to promote wellbeing, access to benefits and welfare advice and support to volunteer or gain employment. This was the first time the 2 organisations had worked 'formally' together but it is the success in delivery of this initial funding has led to a further and much larger application to the National Lottery Partnership fund.

Now joining up with CUP, this partnership has taken learning from their work with the whole community to develop a project to support unemployed or economically inactive women to learn new skills and be more enterprising. If the application to the National Lottery Partnership funding is successful (Stage 2 information has been submitted and is currently being assessed by National Lottery) each organisation will be working to their strengths delivering specific, but complimentary support to women in the Crosland Moor/Thornton Lodge area – engaging women in enterprise activity, developing their digital skills, and helping build leadership and volunteering skills.

When asked about the process to get this far with the application and what has been key to it happening, Ibrar Hussain, Chair of Thornton Lodge Action Group highlighted the following:

- The support from the ward officer to help bring the organisations together, suggesting the partnership working so they can work together to meet community need during the pandemic.
- The support from TSL in the writing of the applications to the National Lottery, and their ability to encourage, motivate and bring the partners together to share and build on ideas as the application developed, and enable each to play to their strengths
- The local knowledge of all the partners involved and how they could develop a service in response to local need.

The VCSE helping itself

The Chair of TLAG has also been instrumental in supporting several other local groups develop and access funding. During the pandemic TLAG were approached by Masoom Care and Gap Shap Chai, operating in Fartown and Birkby, for support to help their local residents with delivery of culturally appropriate food parcels. Instead of picking this work up themselves, TLAG supported both groups to develop their own services; providing volunteer training, DBS checks, developing policies, and guidance on all aspects of managing a project. As a result of this support both groups received Do Something Now funding from Kirklees Council to support their food project during the pandemic.

The support offered recognises that as VCSE organisations we can't do it all ourselves, and that the issues we each address are often part of much wider and far reaching social, economic and health issues or inequalities. By specialising in what we are good at, and supporting other organisations to develop their specialisms we are ultimately supporting communities, often bridging the gap between residents and mainstream services.

Appendix 2 – Participants

List of individuals and organisations involved in the co-production of this strategy

From the VCSE sector in Kirklees:

- Andi Briggs & Andy Petrie – LS2Y
- Paul Bridges – Huddersfield Mission
- Mark Farmer – Yorkshire Children’s Centre
- Michael Crowther – The Kirkwood
- Susan Greenwood & Alasdair Brown – KYA
- Tom Taylor – Northorpe Hall Child & Family Trust
- Portia Roberts Popham – Locorum
- Ibrar Hussain – Thornton Lodge Action Group
- Paveen Butt – Jo Cox Foundation
- Saied Laher – IMWS
- Christine Stephen – KVIN
- Simon Ashbee – Paddock Trust
- Russell Oxley – The Brunswick Centre
- Heidi Dawson - Glint
- Mr Aslam – Ravensthorpe Community Centre
- Lorna Peacock, Emma Dickens & Karen Jackson – Locala
- Rev Canon Rachel Firth – Vicar of Huddersfield, Bishops officer for Community Engagement Kirklees
- People Helping People Network meeting participants
- Community Anchor meeting participants
- TSL Board Meeting participants
- Hilary Thompson, Val Johnson, Sean Leonard, Bridget Hughes & Alison Archer - TSL

From Kirklees Council:

- Rachel Spencer Henshall – Strategic Director Corporate Strategy, Commissioning and Public Health
- Mel Meggs – Director for Children’s Services
- Jill Greenfield – Service Director Customer and Communities
- Jo Richmond – Head of Communities
- Carol Gilchrist – Head of Local Integrated Partnerships
- Michelle Wheatcroft – Head of Service, Early Support
- Chris Dufill – Head of Service, Business and Skills
- Jane Lockwood & Stacey Gilman – Procurement
- Andy Simcox – Service Director for Strategy and Innovation

- Kate McNicholas – Head of Policy, Partnerships and Corporate Planning
- Jonathan Nunn - Strategy and Policy Officer (Sustainable Economy)
- Funding managers
- Commissioning managers
- Active Citizens and Places team
- Carl Whistlecraft, Head of Democracy and Place Based Working

Other participants:

- Ali Ward – Social Enterprise Yorkshire and Humber
- Rachel Dodson – Leeds Community Spaces
- Maddie Sutcliffe – Chief Executive, Nova, Wakefield
- Dipika Kaushal – Chief Executive, Calderdale Voluntary And Community (CVAC)
- Steve Brennan – Kirklees Place Programme Director, North Kirklees CCG
- Emma Woods-Bolger – One Community
- Jeff Scales – Head of Services North and Central, Locality
- Jo Baker – Programme Lead – Third Sector, Harnessing Power of Communities, West Yorkshire & Harrogate Health and Care Partnership
- Graham Mitchell – Cooperatives (Green Valley Grocer & Colne Valley Care)

Addendum: Inclusivity

Profile of organisations consulted:

Black African Caribbean Community

- Portia Roberts Popham - Locorum

South Asian Community

- Saied Laher – IMWS
- Ibrar Hussain – Thornton Lodge Action Group
- Mr Aslam – Ravensthorpe Community Centre

LGBTQ

- Russell Oxley – The Brunswick Centre

Faith

- Rev Canon Rachel Firth – Vicar of Huddersfield, Bishop's officer for Community Engagement, Kirklees

Poverty and Homelessness

- Paul Bridges – Huddersfield Mission

Physical disability

- Christine Stephen – KVIN

Mental Health

- Tom Taylor – Northorpe Hall Child & Family Trust

Young People

Susan Greenwood & Alasdair Brown – Kirklees Youth Alliance

Small or Micro organisations

- People Helping People Network meeting participants – smaller micro community organisations
- Heidi Dawson - Glint

Medium or Large organisations

- Andi Briggs & Andy Petrie – Local Services 2 You
- Mark Farmer – Yorkshire Children's Centre
- Michael Crowther – The Kirkwood
- Paveen Butt – Jo Cox Foundation

- Simon Ashbee – Paddock Trust
- Lorna Peacock, Emma Dickens & Karen Jackson – Locala
- Community Anchor meeting participants

These organisations are intended to be representative of the communities in which the VCSE work within Kirklees but are NOT representing the views of the entire community.

There are currently no formal mechanisms in place for capturing the views of these varying communities and the report makes recommendations within Priority 2 to ‘invest in further development of the VCSE infrastructure support’ in an attempt to address this:

“Identify gaps in infrastructure support linked to social, economic and health inequalities and equity, and develop workstreams of specific support. For example, to widen membership from Black communities and South Asian communities to ensure their voices are heard, increase involvement of faith communities, to encourage access and offer peer support”

This is further supported by Priority 1 ‘investing to build trust & transparency’ which highlights the need to create more opportunities to get know each other better

“Build relationships both between the council, partners and individual VCSE organisations, and within the VCSE and faith sector. Listen and invest time in strategic and operational conversations with VCSE organisations, for example through Senior Leaders Networks, Community Anchor networks, place-based coordination and communities of interest.

Understand the role of the VCSE on strategic boards to ensure mutual benefit and sharing of knowledge.”

Work has already begun via the Community Champions programme to develop a (Learning & Physical) Disability Network and to understand how the legacy of the Champions programme can be supported. We are also working to understand how Kirklees Council can support the development of Community Networks as a whole.