

Accord Engagement Sessions feedback and response August 2021

The Greater Manchester VCSE Leadership Group is a collaboration between VCSE leaders in Greater Manchester.

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Overview

The original GM VCSE Accord was signed in November 2017 by the Mayor of Greater Manchester on behalf of the GMCA, with several hundred representatives of the VCSE sector. Similarly, a Memorandum of Understanding between the Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership and the VCSE sector in GM was signed in January 2017, setting out a new way for VCSE organisations and the health and social care sector to work together.

The new GM VCSE Accord will set out an agreement between the Greater Manchester Mayor, Combined Authority and the Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board with the VCSE sector, based on a relationship of trust.

The GM VCSE Leadership Group, GMCA, and GMHSCP, have been working together to review and renew the Accord and MoU into a single, forward facing agreement, building on the substantial engagement undertaken with our sector to produce the VCSE Policy Paper, which was published in January 2020 and sets out a 10 year vision for the VCSE sector in Greater Manchester.

The new Accord also takes into account our learning and reflections from the Covid-19 pandemic, the 2021 report of the GM Independent Inequalities Commission, the Marmot report 'Building Back Better in Greater Manchester', and the development of the GM Integrated Care Board (ICB).

The Accord will act as a framework for the VCSE sector's role in the delivery of the GMS vision and in the thematic strategies and delivery plans that exist to deliver the GMS vision. The VCSE sector will be involved in the development, governance and delivery of the GMS including co-design of relevant activities.

Representatives from the Accord working group have been facilitating engagement sessions across local infrastructure organisations and key GM VCSE networks, as well as with the GMCA, ICS and other key public sector partners. We brought along a first draft of the Accord and asked for feedback. We're grateful to everyone who has attended and shared their ideas and thoughts. We received a wide range of responses which have been incorporated into the next version of the Accord.

So that you can see how your feedback has been responded to we have organised the responses into a range of broad themes and detailed how we have responded to each area.

Broad Theme	You said	We did
Language and audience	Language feels 'system led' and not the language of the VCSE sector- feels vague and overly complex	We have aimed to remove unnecessary jargon and use language already adopted by the VCSE Sector- eg. From the VCSE Policy Paper and State of the Sector reports
	There are too many commitments- there should be fewer commitments that are more tangible	The commitments have been redrafted to a much simpler set of 8 shared commitments jointly shared by all signatories.
	Needs a clearer articulation of the big challenges- ending inequality and poverty, impact of austerity on communities.	The shared vision has been re-worded to explicitly reference our overall goal of ending poverty and closing the inequalities gap. Commitment 1 now references 'a permanent reduction in inequalities over the next five years'
Describing the VCSE Sector	Accord needs to emphasise the breadth and complexity of the VCSE sector and not to present the sector as a single thing	'Role of the VCSE sector' section has been strengthened with more detail on breadth of the sector added, including statistics from the 2021 State of the Sector GM report.
	Wording doesn't feel relevant to smaller organisations/organisations working at locality/neighbourhood level	Under each commitment we have now named specific priorities/areas of work so all parts of the sector can easily see which commitments and work areas are most relevant to them.
Describing the relationship	There needs to be something about the 'way we do business together' focusing on responsibilities and behaviours.	Under the shared vision we have added a paragraph focusing on 'how' we will work together and the expectations on all partners.
The commitments	The economic role needs to be much more clearly articulated in the Accord- 'more than just doing good jobs, we build things, make things, bring money into local economy'	Commitment 4 is specifically about the VCSE role in the GM economy. Other commitments also reference the economic impact of the VCSE sector (for example as a Living Wage employer)

	A commitment to effective commissioning with the VCSE sector, especially long term grants and contracts (5+ years is essential)	Commitment 3 focuses on the importance of the financial resilience of the sector including ‘an investment approach based on long-term, core funding’
Accountability	There needs to be clear accountability measures against each of the commitments, otherwise the Accord is just a piece of paper	Under each commitment we have listed some of the key priority areas of work. The Accord will be supplemented by a detailed annual implementation plan with KPIs with oversight from a VCSE Accord management group who will also lead on evaluation.
GM/locality working	The consistent issue impacting at locality level is that there is too much variation between local authorities. Want to see a minimum guarantee of support to VCSE sector in all 10 boroughs, recognising the ambition as a joint endeavour not just at GM level but adopted by localities.	Under commitment 5 we describe ‘Agreement of minimum standards of involvement for leaders from VCSE organisations in partnerships and delivery governance across each of the 10 local authority areas’ We have also clarified the scope of this agreement in the Accord Annex: “The role, function and purpose of the VCSE within new Provider Collaboratives and partnership arrangements both at GM and Place level.” “All projects and programmes led by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and through the GM Integrated Care System, including collaborative work across districts.”