



North West VCFSE Manifestos

**AN OVERVIEW OF MANIFESTOS FOR THE
VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY, FAITH AND SOCIAL
ENTERPRISE SECTOR FROM ACROSS THE NORTH
WEST**

Current Manifestos

Across the North West there are currently four manifestos covering four of the five sub-regions. These are:

**2024-28 GREATER MANCHESTER
VCFSE SECTOR MANIFESTO**
GREATER MANCHESTER VCFSE
LEADERSHIP GROUP



**VCFSE MANIFESTO FOR LIVERPOOL
CITY REGION 2024-2028**
VS6 PARTNERSHIP



**VCFSE SECTOR MANIFESTO FOR
LANCASHIRE**
LOCAL LANCASHIRE PROJECT
(LANCASHIRE ASSOCIATION OF CVS)



**CHESHIRE & WARRINGTON VCFSE
SECTOR DEVOLUTION MANIFESTO**
CHESHIRE & WARRINGTON
INFRASTRUCTURE PARTNERSHIP



Main themes

Each manifesto contains common themes which are summarised below and expanded upon throughout the rest of this document

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Poverty & Cost of Living

Shared Ambitions Across Regions:

Strategic Influence

Shaping regional frameworks, commissions, and strategies to address poverty and inequality.

Community-led Solutions

Supporting grassroots initiatives around food, housing, digital inclusion, and financial advice.

Infrastructure & Inclusion

Ensuring VCFSE infrastructure is recognised in planning and development, and that services are accessible to all.

Collaborative Action

Working with local authorities, developers, and networks to co-create sustainable, inclusive solutions.

Regional Highlights:

Liverpool City Region

- Implement recommendations from the *VS6 Sustainable and Affordable Food* report to improve food access and affordability.

Greater Manchester

- Embed “*Good Homes for All*” in housing strategy.
- Support community-led planning.
- Influence developers to increase community ownership in large developments.
- Strengthen coordination with VCFSE to tackle homelessness.
- Recognise VCFSE infrastructure in spatial planning
- Establish a *Socio-Economic Disadvantage Action Network* alongside homelessness and food security networks.

Lancashire

- Establish a Lancashire Commission to Address Poverty.
- Develop a shared framework for understanding poverty and inequality.
- Create community-based solutions for digital inclusion, fuel and food poverty.
- Improve access to debt and housing benefit advice.
- Build community food supply chains linked to allotments and gardening.

Cheshire & Warrington

- Launch a regional Poverty Truth Commission with strong VCFSE involvement.
- Address child and family poverty, food insecurity, fuel poverty, and digital exclusion.
- Contribute VCFSE expertise on poverty, housing, and health to local strategies.

Health Creation & Inequalities

Shared Ambitions Across Regions:

Early Intervention & Prevention

Prioritising preventative health approaches and securing long-term funding for early support.

Social Prescribing & Mental Wellbeing

Promoting inclusive, community-based models of social prescribing and mental health support.

Strategic Representation

Ensuring VCFSE voices are included in regional health and enterprise decision-making.

Reducing Inequalities

Targeting investment and action to address the root causes of physical and mental health disparities.

Regional Highlights:

Liverpool City Region

- Ensure Health and VCFSE representation on the LCR Business & Enterprise Board.
- Dedicated funding for early intervention and prevention initiatives.

Cheshire & Warrington

- Acknowledge VCFSE groups as key players in helping people stay healthy and reducing health inequalities.
- Secure long-term funding for services that prevent ill health and support people early on.

Lancashire

- Develop a VCFSE-led Mental Wellbeing model of support.
- Promote and build a transparent Lancashire Social Prescribing system based on 9 core principles.
- Commit to the *Minimum Model VCFSE Social Prescribing System*.

Greater Manchester

- Support the VCFSE sector to sustain and grow preventative health activity.
- Recognise the VCFSE's central role in health provision.
- Invest in tackling inequality and its impact on physical and mental health.

Employment & Skills

Shared Ambitions Across Regions:

Volunteering as a Pathway

Recognising and supporting volunteering as a valuable route into employment and skills development.

Strategic Partnerships

Ensuring VCFSE organisations are recognised as key partners in employment and training strategies.

Youth Employability

Prioritising support for young people through VCFSE-led initiatives and programmes.

Capacity Building

Strengthening the sector's ability to access funding and deliver employment and skills programmes.

Regional Highlights:

Liverpool City Region

- Partners to champion the role of the VCFSE sector and recognise the value of volunteering.

Cheshire & Warrington

- Recognise VCFSE organisations as partners in helping people develop skills and find employment.
- Support volunteering as a way for individuals to gain skills and move towards work.
- Involve the sector in planning and delivering local training and employment programmes.

Lancashire

- Use the VCFSE sector to prioritise youth employability.
- Support the sector's role in Kickstart and future employment schemes.
- Collaborate with partners to build an evidence base showing volunteering as a route into employment.

Greater Manchester

- Provide more support to improve the capacity of local VCFSE organisations to tender for employment and skills funding.

Advancing Equalities

Shared Ambitions Across Regions:

Inclusive Services & Representation

Ensuring services are fair, inclusive, and shaped by diverse voices and lived experience.

Support for Marginalised Groups

Strengthening networks and programmes that support refugees, asylum seekers, and disadvantaged communities.

Strategic Alignment & Co-Production

Aligning with regional equality strategies and promoting co-produced approaches with dedicated resources.

Partnership & Advocacy

Working with national and local partners to promote equality and challenge systemic inequalities.

Regional Highlights:

Liverpool City Region

- Align the work of *Phoenix Way* with the *LCR Combined Authority Race Equality Hub*.
- Prioritise genuine inclusivity, engagement, and co-production, with dedicated resources to support this work.

Lancashire

- Launch the *Welcome Programme*: a network to support asylum seekers across the county.
- Identify mechanisms to voice inequality challenges and promote equality partnerships and panels.

Cheshire & Warrington

- Ensure all services are inclusive and fair to everyone.
- Collaborate with national and local networks supporting marginalised and disadvantaged groups.

Greater Manchester

- Build a city-region of welcome, centred on lived experience and co-produced strategy.
- Support the VCFSE sector's role in welcoming refugees and asylum seekers.
- Advocate for devolution of asylum and immigration support.

Environment & Sustainability

Shared Ambitions Across Regions:

Empowering Communities

Supporting community-led climate action and sustainability initiatives.

Collaboration & Networks

Establishing cross-sector forums and networks to share knowledge and drive joint green efforts.

Capacity Building

Providing funding, guidance, and tools to help VCFSE organisations reduce their environmental impact.

Green Infrastructure & Spaces

Enhancing public spaces and promoting green transport and active travel.

Health & Wellbeing Integration

Linking environmental initiatives with social prescribing and wellbeing strategies.

Regional Highlights:

Liverpool City Region

- Climate change champion role to guide the sector.
- “Going Green Together” portal for carbon reduction support.

Greater Manchester

- Grants for VCFSE buildings to reduce environmental impact.
- Borough-level environment forums

Cheshire & Warrington

- Support for community-led climate emergency projects.
- Development of green transport and active travel with community input.

Lancashire

- Review of public spaces with partners.
- Creation of a Green Lancashire Network.
- Development of a green prescribing model.

Community Empowerment

Shared Ambitions Across Regions:

Community Decision Making

Placing local people, especially those with lived experience, at the heart of decision-making and service design.

Infrastructure & Investment

Supporting community buildings, groups, and local economies to strengthen community ownership.

Collaborative Governance

Promoting models like community boards, champions, and cross-sector partnerships to ensure inclusive and democratic decision-making.

Recognition of VCFSE Role

Establishing clear points of contact and representation for the sector in regional governance and planning.

Regional Highlights:

Lancashire

- Build on the *Preston Model* to democratise the economy and strengthen community assets.
- Improve access to local credit unions.
- Explore Community Boards to unite local authorities, groups, and residents in community-led partnerships.
- Establish a network of community champions in each health neighbourhood to amplify the VCFSE voice.
- Develop a community-led, cross-sector development model for specific interests (e.g., workforce).

Cheshire & Warrington

- Empower local people, especially those with lived experience, to shape services and policies.
- Invest in community buildings, groups, and local economies.
- Support neighbourhood-level partnerships to give communities more say.
- Provide funding to keep community buildings open, safe, and welcoming.

Greater Manchester

- Ensure lived experience guidance is included in policymaking.
- Promote a city-region that speaks truth to power and values community influence.

Liverpool City Region

- Embed community consultation and empowerment in decision-making and service design.
- Use the *VS6 Partnership* as the first point of contact for the VCFSE sector, with identified contact points.

Commissioning & Investment

Shared Ambitions Across Regions:

Fair & Inclusive Commissioning

Ensuring commissioning processes are transparent, person-centred, and inclusive of VCFSE voices from the outset.

Sustainable Investment

Advocating for long-term, inflation-adjusted funding that reflects the real costs of service delivery, including the Real Living Wage (RLW).

Strategic Engagement

Building stronger relationships with commissioners and funders to shape priorities and frameworks that support VCFSE growth.

Support for Local Organisations

Enhancing access to funding opportunities and capacity to bid for contracts, especially for smaller and community-based groups.

Regional Highlights:

Liverpool City Region

- Embed VCFSE partnership working with recompense for representation.
- Ensure commissions and contracts reflect inflation and RLW, with cost of living increases built in.
- Support local VCFSE organisations to access public sector commissioning opportunities.
- Maintain consistent engagement throughout contract development, especially during recommissioning.
- Launch a small grants investment programme.
- Ensure new investment is additional to existing funding.

Commissioning & Investment

Regional Highlights:

Lancashire

- Secure adequate economic investment to address local challenges.
- Engage commissioners to support RLW adoption across the sector.
- Incorporate a person-centred approach into commissioning and procurement.
- Establish a Lancashire Funders Forum to meet quarterly and link with strategic VCFSE agencies.
- Develop and consult on a Lancashire VCFSE Commissioning Framework.
- Create a VCFSE “ask” of the Shared Prosperity Fund.
- Ensure adequate resources for the VCFSE sector to play a full role in Lancashire’s future.

Greater Manchester

- Introduce new tendering mechanisms like 18-month bidding pipelines and published commissioning intentions.
- Promote parity of esteem for investment in mental and physical health care across all age groups.
- Commit long-term to the Greater Manchester Inclusive Ownership Platform to support co-operatives, mutuals, and social enterprises.
- Advance recommendations from the Independent Inequalities Commission, including a Community Investment Platform.

Cheshire & Warrington

- Ensure local authority funding is fair, transparent, and sustainable.
- Involve the VCFSE sector in setting funding priorities.
- Secure investment from all public sector partners to help VCFSE organisations grow and thrive.

Demonstrating Impact

Shared Ambitions Across Regions:

Evidence-Based Advocacy

Building tools and mechanisms to showcase the sector's value and influence policy and funding decisions.

Local Knowledge & Lived Experience

Promoting localism and the importance of lived experience in shaping effective partnerships and services.

Strategic Engagement

Strengthening relationships with decision-makers, including MPs and public bodies, to ensure VCFSE impact is recognised.

Policy Influence

Encouraging adoption of duties and frameworks that embed socio-economic awareness in public sector decision-making.

Regional Highlights:

Liverpool City Region

- Lobby for a long-term vision for the *UK Shared Prosperity Fund* (UKSPF).
- Balance the need for innovation with support for established services.

Greater Manchester

- Advocate for GM local authorities and public bodies to adopt the socio-economic duty to better address inequalities.

Lancashire

- Create a Lancashire VCFSE sector explainer video to showcase impact and improve understanding of the sector.
- Develop mechanisms for collective engagement with Lancashire MPs.
- Embed the principle of localism and local knowledge as a core value in partnerships.

Workforce & Volunteering

Shared Ambitions Across Regions:

Unified Workforce Vision

Promoting a “one workforce” approach that includes paid staff, volunteers, and carers across sectors.

Volunteering Infrastructure

Strengthening volunteering through hubs, coordination, and recognition of its role in skills development.

Fair Pay & Conditions

Advocating for wages that reflect inflation and the cost of living, including commitments to the Real Living Wage.

Workforce Development

Supporting training, apprenticeships, and development programmes tailored to the VCFSE sector.

Regional Highlights:

Liverpool City Region

- Promote a *One Workforce* approach through coordinated cross-sector workforce planning.
- Unlock *Apprenticeship Levy* opportunities for the VCFSE sector.
- Establish the *LCR Volunteering Hub* as a single point of contact for volunteering opportunities.

Lancashire

- Develop a support model for Lancashire’s wider workforce, including paid staff, volunteers, and carers.

Greater Manchester

- Expand workforce support programmes for the VCFSE sector, including the 10GM Workforce Development Programme.
- Ensure wages keep pace with inflation and cost-of-living pressures.
- Become the UK’s first Living Wage City-Region.

Equal Partnerships

Shared Ambitions Across Regions:

Strategic Involvement

Ensuring the VCFSE sector is actively involved in shaping public service reform, funding priorities, and devolution arrangements.

Fair Recognition

Promoting parity of esteem between the VCFSE sector and statutory partners, with agreements turned into meaningful action.

Innovative Collaboration

Creating new models and panels to drive innovation and integrated working across sectors.

Transparent Investment

Advocating for fair funding mechanisms, including discretionary rate relief and protocols that support sustainable VCFSE growth.

Regional Highlights:

Lancashire

- Include the VCFSE sector in conversations around national and devolved funding to co-design economic investment.
- Implement the Lancashire Accord to formalise the sector's role.
- Develop a new model of Corporate Social Responsibility.
- Establish a Services for the Public Innovation Panel to identify areas for improvement, inspired by NHS Realising the Value work and integrated models.

Greater Manchester

- Involve VCFSE representatives in shaping operational arrangements for the GM Trailblazer Devolution Deal, Single Settlement, and Public Service Reform.
- Ensure VCFSE agreements with public sector partners are translated into action.
- Promote the GM VCFSE Fair Funding Protocol with local authorities and the NHS Integrated Care System.
- Secure full discretionary rate relief for charities on business rates across Greater Manchester.

Community Safety & Cohesion

Shared Ambitions Across Regions:

Collaborative Safety Planning

Building formal agreements and partnerships between the VCFSE sector and public safety bodies to improve joint working.

Youth & Online Safety

Reviewing and improving youth provision and online safety guidance to better support young people and communities.

Tackling Discrimination & Violence

Increasing resources for VCFSE organisations to address prejudice, discrimination, and violence.

Promoting Cohesion

Supporting initiatives that bring people together across differences to foster understanding, community spirit, and cohesion.

Regional Highlights:

Lancashire

- Develop a joint working agreement between the *Police and Crime Commissioner* and the VCFSE sector
- Conduct a PCC-commissioned review of local and national models of joint VCFSE/PCC working.
- Review youth provision, especially after-school clubs and cross-sector support for young people.
- Review online safety guidance and the role of *Neighbourhood Watch* in different communities.

Greater Manchester

- Provide more resources to support the VCFSE sector's role in tackling prejudice, discrimination, and violence.

Cheshire & Warrington

- Support projects that bring people from different backgrounds together to promote understanding, community spirit, and cohesion.

Arts & Culture

Shared Ambitions Across Regions:

Inclusive Access

Ensuring everyone, regardless of background or income, can access cultural activities and creative opportunities.

Community-Led Initiatives

Supporting arts, culture, and physical activity projects that are rooted in communities and contribute to wellbeing and cohesion.

Health & Regeneration

Recognising the role of culture and creativity in improving health outcomes and regenerating communities.

Sustainable Funding

Securing ongoing investment for VCFSE arts and culture organisations, especially those contributing to health and wellbeing.

Regional Highlights:

Greater Manchester

- Increase funding for VCFSE arts and culture organisations that support health.
- Promote equitable access to free and open cultural assets across the city-region.

Cheshire & Warrington

- Fund community-led arts, cultural, and physical activity initiatives that bring people together and improve wellbeing.
- Ensure universal access to cultural activities, regardless of background or income.
- Embed culture and creativity as central to community regeneration and health improvement.