

GM VCSE Accord 2021:

ANNEX – Context, governance and implementation

This Annex describes the context surrounding the GM VCSE Accord, and an explanation of how it will be delivered.

It should be noted that as the arrangements, budgets and governance for the GM Integrated Care System are currently in development, it may be necessary to update this document and seek further ratification over the coming months.

1.0 Background and context for the Accord

1.1 Context

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. It was an agreement for 5 years until November 2022¹.

The Memorandum of Understanding between GM Health & Social Care Partnership² and the VCSE sector in Greater Manchester is a 5-year agreement signed in January 2017, which built upon the work by the then VCSE Devolution Reference Group that supported the Partnership in its goals for improving the health and wellbeing of Greater Manchester.

The new Accord agreement will replace both the 2017 GM VCSE Accord and the Memorandum of Understanding with the GM Health and Social Care Partnership.

In January 2020, the GM VCSE Leadership Group published its VCSE Policy Paper³ which describes the role and potential contribution of the VCSE sector as a positive force in a ‘system’ which will strive for change and the future improvement of Greater Manchester. The Policy Paper sets out the sector’s ‘offer’ to build from successful work that is already in place, and play a greater role in system change, solutions with communities, and building a truly inclusive and equitable economy. It also describes a vision and the development and transformation which needs to take place within in the VCSE sector over the next 10 years.

In February 2021 the Government in the White Paper: ‘Integration and Innovation: Working together to improve health and social care for all,’ announced a number of new measures as part of a proposed Health and Care Bill which included the creation of statutory Integrated Care Systems.

It details how systems and their constituent organisations will accelerate **collaborative ways of working** in future to improve population health and healthcare; tackle unequal outcomes and access and put the citizen at the heart of their care.

¹ [Accord between Mayor and GM Combined Authority and the VCSE Sector | www.gmcvo.org.uk](http://www.gmcvo.org.uk)

² [MoU between GM Health & Social Care Partnership an the VCSE sector in Greater Manchester — VSNW](#)

³ [GM-VCSE-Position-Paper-Final.pdf \(vcseleadershipgm.org.uk\)](#)

Integrated Care Systems will do this through:

- Stronger **partnerships in local places** between the NHS, local government and others, including the VCSE sector,
- **Collaboration between partners in a place** across health, care services, public health, and voluntary sector to overcome competing objectives.
- Developing strategic **commissioning** through systems with a focus on population health outcomes.
- And driving innovation through the use of **digital and data** to drive system working, connect health and care providers to improve outcomes.

Since 2016 GM has evolved the way it works to move toward an approach which allows delivery of the maximum benefit for our population: more closely aligning and integrating different parts of the NHS, as well as bringing the NHS far closer to wider partners.

GM views **place**, and **partnerships within place** as very important. For most people their day-to-day support needs will be expressed and met locally in the place where they live. The VCSE sector can play a major role in these formal and informal partnerships, networks and collaborations which have been set up at local 'place' level, bringing local community knowledge and insight as well as the benefits of working at scale.

GM is now setting out the next five years of its journey through a refreshed GM health and care strategy. The VCSE sector as a vital cornerstone of a progressive health and care system and as such the sector needs to be positioned as a strategic partner in shaping, improving and delivering services and developing and delivering plans to tackle the wider determinants of health. This Accord provides an opportunity for the VCSE sector to be at the heart of the opportunities presented by the formal ICS and the new GM Health and Care Strategy.

The Accord will also be an integral mechanism for delivery of the refreshed Greater Manchester Strategy, due to be published later in 2021. This agreement will enable the VCSE and statutory sectors to collaborate around key GMS outcomes.

1.2 Process involved in the development of this Accord

The development of this Accord is the product of a series of structured conversations held in July and early August 2021 with the following stakeholders:

- GM VCSE networks
- Local VCSE infrastructure organisations
- Local VCSE leaders (invited via LIOs)
- A range of GMCA and GMHSCP Commissioners, policy leads and statutory sector stakeholders

As well as wide stakeholder engagement, this Accord agreement has been informed by reflection on the success of the original VCSE Accord undertaken by the GM VCSE Leadership Group and officers at GMCA, as well as by learning gleaned from the evaluation report of the GM VCSE Engagement Programme⁴ for the GM Health and Social Care Partnership, carried out by Cordis Bright in early 2021. Furthermore, the Accord has been developed following consideration of our learning and

⁴ <https://www.gmcvo.org.uk/publications/gm-health-and-social-care-vcse-engagement-project-evaluation>

reflections from the Covid-19 pandemic, the 2021 report of the GM Independent Inequalities Commission, and the Marmot report 'Building Back Fairer in Greater Manchester'.

On 29th July the *GM State of the VCSE Sector Report* was published, providing a snapshot of the role and health of the VCSE sector in GM. This report contained six key recommendations which were endorsed by the Mayor of Greater Manchester at the launch event. The six recommendations align closely to the eight commitments within the draft VCSE Accord.

1.3 Detailed Scope

This Accord agreement relates to the relationship between voluntary organisations, community groups and social enterprises and statutory sector organisations, including local authorities and NHS, in places and communities across GM. The success of the Accord and the shared commitments that it contains will rely on their recognition, adoption and action at a locality and neighbourhood level.

GMCA and the Health and Social Care Partnership will provide investment towards the following activities:

- The involvement of VCSE leaders, organisations and groups in the development and delivery of the Greater Manchester Strategy, the new Integrated Care System Strategic Plan and any strategies which have a GM footprint, including projects and programmes led by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and through the GM Integrated Care System, including collaborative work across districts.
- The role, function and purpose of the VCSE within new Provider Collaboratives and partnership arrangements both at GM and place level as part of the development of the new ICS, including the building of relationships with NHS Providers.
- VCSE sector leadership, infrastructure, capacity and support which takes place at a GM footprint.

1.4 Who is involved?

The Accord is a tripartite agreement between the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, and the Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership, and the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector in Greater Manchester, represented by the GM VCSE Leadership Group.

1.5 Time scales

This new Accord agreement will be for period of five years commencing on 1st October 2021. It will be subject to an annual review and reporting process through the GM VCSE Leadership Group, Combined Authority and GM Integrated Care System governance.

2.0 Examples of successes from which this Accord is built

2.1 Key strategic pieces of work

The increasing focus on the social, economic and environmental determinants of health and inequality has brought opportunities for the VCSE to show how its work can make an impact. Understanding the distinctive contribution that the VCSE sector can make to a shared aim to address inequality and improve the health and wellbeing of the population has helped to unlock some opportunities for the sector to be involved in conversations about how to bring about the desired change. The GM Devolution VCSE Reference Group (now the GM VCSE Leadership Group) has been a

key body for the statutory sector to work with around Taking Charge, the GM Health and Social care Partnership Strategic Plan and the Greater Manchester Strategy.

The **Living with Covid Recovery Plan** was developed in the summer of 2020 with the VCSE sector playing a major role – both in the delivery of key actions, but also in leading a number of the tasks identified in the implementation plan. The Plan has allowed work to move forward around volunteering, mutual aid, emergency support, and social value, for example.

In 2021, the **refresh of GMS** will be designed to link with the refresh of the VCSE Accord and will enable VCSE involvement across the main themes. Work around the VCSE Accord and through the GM VCSE Leadership Group has enabled the involvement of a diverse group of VCSE sector representatives in strategic discussions.

2.2 Improved Standards of Working with the VCSE sector

This is an area where a huge amount of progress has been made. VCSE organisations have been involved in and in some cases led some innovative and effective pieces of work. With the increased recognition of the role of the VCSE sector has come a strengthening of individual relationships. Both statutory and VCSE stakeholders report that people from VCSE sector are seen as valued and trusted colleagues and treated as equals in the formal and informal conversations.

Examples of relevant activities include:

- **Co-production** projects – there has been strong VCSE involvement and leadership in a number of joint programmes which explore the role of co-production in service reform and commissioning. Considerable co-production with the VCSE sector has also informed the development of the GM Homelessness Prevention Strategy by the VCSE-led Homeless Action Network.
- **VCSE Commissioning Framework**⁵ – building from the MOU with the GM Health and Social Care Partnership, and on behalf of the VCSE Leadership Group, a GM VCSE Commissioning Framework has been developed and agreed by the GM Commissioning hub. This Framework was the product of intense consultation and interaction with commissioners, commissioned VCSE groups, and leaders from both the health and social care environment and the VCSE sector across the ten localities. It will be important to build from this work in any future Accord and roll out across GMCA and local authority commissioners of services from VCSE organisations.

2.3 Partnerships and Policy development

Examples of relevant activities include:

- From their inception, VCSE representatives have had a strong role in the work of the **GM Reform Board and Tackling Inequality Board**⁶. The latter has an equal split in membership between VCSE representatives and the statutory sector. Through these partnerships, the VCSE sector is able to influence and shape policy developments such as the Greater Manchester Model.
- **Emergency structures** – during the Covid pandemic, VCSE representation has been strong across both the GM and locality level emergency structures, with the Chair of the Leadership group sitting on the GM SCG.

⁵ [VCSE Commissioning Framework and Delivery Plan | www.gmcvo.org.uk](http://www.gmcvo.org.uk)

⁶ [Tackling Inequalities Board - Greater Manchester Combined Authority \(greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk\)](http://greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk)

- **Equalities** – GM now has 7 Panels and partnerships⁷ which enable engagement and voice of communities of identity, including the GM Youth Combined Authority. These have all been established since the signing of the VCSE Accord and enable diverse communities to shape and challenge policy at a GM footprint.
- **The Mental Health Leaders Group** – facilitated by VCSE leaders has ensured that best practice is being shared and replicated between member organisations.
- **The Homelessness Action Network** - stands out as an example of best practice in bringing together the full range of statutory and VCSE sector partners, frontline workers and people with lived experience in an open and flexible digital forum which allows for collaborative problem solving.
- **Economy** – following an extensive recruitment process, the GM Local Enterprise Partnership has three members with roots in the VCSE sector. Furthermore, there has been VCSE Leadership Group involvement in the Brexit Resilience and other economic strategy group discussions
- **Environment** – VCSE representation has been key in the development of the GM Environment Plan and in the two Green Summits. It's clear that the sector has a strong influence on this agenda.
- **Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)** – the PCC team has worked extremely closely with the VCSE sector and with its services users. VCSE representatives have joined the GM Violence Reduction Unit programme, and lead activities as part of its operation.

2.4 Engagement and lived experience

Over the last 5 years there has been increased information sharing and dialogue between the statutory and VCSE sectors, through the creation of formal communication and engagement channels which had not previously existed. As a result, stakeholders have reported that there had been an increase in the understanding of the VCSE sector and the communities it represents amongst statutory partners, that processes had become more inclusive and that more “community voice” is evident in the thinking of statutory organisations.

2.5 Specific pieces of work

- Genuinely inclusive engagement has been evident in the **Big Alcohol Conversation**, which provided grant funding to small voluntary sector and community groups to conduct consultations with the communities they represent and which would not have been reached by a mass media campaign.
- **Response to COVID-19.** The close involvement of the VCSE sector in the response to COVID-19 in GM, particularly in the homelessness and mental health sectors, has been seen to have been successful in providing a huge impact on people's lives.
- **GM smoking campaign.** The VCSE sector led on the campaign and its evaluation highlighted evidence of clear impact in terms of smoking quits.
- **Homelessness provision.** The homelessness sector in GM is a clear example of where significant progress has been seen, for example in the offer to street homeless through the A Bed Every Night programme.
- **Social prescribing.** The active involvement of VCSE leaders in the social prescribing work in GM has substantially helped build the programme, and research carried out by Salford CVS developed guidelines on how to improve social prescribing services.

⁷ [Equalities - Greater Manchester Combined Authority \(greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk\)](https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk)

3.0 Delivery of this Accord Agreement

3.1 Governance / management arrangements for the Accord

The VCSE Accord will be signed off through individual 'governance' structures but **will be owned jointly by the GM Combined Authority, the GM Health and Social Care Partnership (with approvals through the GM Partnership Executive Board and Health and Care Board) and the GM VCSE Leadership Group.**

Representatives from the three parties will meet every 3 months as a VCSE Accord Management Group to review progress made towards the shared objectives and targets set out in the Implementation Plan, to monitor the budget and spend, and to make any necessary adjustments to delivery.

The VCSE Accord Management Group will be jointly and equally accountable to the three parties in this agreement and will also be responsible for evaluation of the effectiveness of the Accord agreement. The Group will be made up of members of the GM VCSE Leadership Group, and officers from the GMCA and ICS.

3.2 Role of the GM VCSE Leadership Group

Formerly known as the VCSE Devolution Reference Group, the GM VCSE Leadership Group works to support VCSE sector engagement across Greater Manchester's devolution agenda.

This Accord agreement has been brokered by and is signed by the GM VCSE Leadership Group on behalf of the VCSE sector in Greater Manchester.

For the purpose of delivering this Accord agreement, the GM VCSE Leadership Group will sit at the heart of a collaborative representative 'social architecture' for the VCSE sector at a GM level, recognising the complexity and diverse nature of that sector. It will take responsibility on behalf of the VCSE sector to drive forward the Accord agreement and the work to implement it at a GM footprint.

The Leadership Group has reviewed its operation and membership to ensure that it can be fully accountable to the wider VCSE sector for delivery of the Accord agreement. Members of the Leadership Group are expected to be 'catalysts and connectors' on behalf of the sector. They will be supported by other collaborations and networks, leadership at a thematic and locality level, and will commit to engaging with leaders and stakeholders operating across all 10 boroughs of Greater Manchester.

For the VCSE Accord to be successful strong relationships and stabilities across the VCSE and statutory sector must also play out in individual localities and neighbourhoods. This will mean that the VCSE Leadership Group must have strong links into the 10 local authority areas, include representation of VCSE Infrastructure (LIOs), providers (Provider Federation) and equalities (GM Equal) as members.

3.3 Implementation plan and funding agreement

Delivery of the Accord will be progressed through the development of a detailed GM Implementation Plan. This will contain the shared commitments set out in the Accord agreement, together with a comprehensive framework for delivery. The 5-year vision and objectives will be underpinned by annual delivery plans which will provide information on the agreed actions, responsibilities, timescales, targets and outcomes for delivery of this Accord agreement.

The GM Implementation Plan will be used as the basis for a partnership funding agreement between the GMCA, Health and Social Care Partnership and the GM VCSE Leadership Group, which will cover the length of this Accord agreement, but be subject to annual review and confirmation of budgets for the GMCA and GM Integrated Care System.

3.3 Evaluation and review

The Accord will be a living document to be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it remains relevant and fit for purpose. An annual report will be provided to the GM VCSE Leadership Group, the Combined Authority and Integrated Care System governance arrangements.