Greater Manchester
VCFSE Leadership Group
The sector's voice in devolution

Key messages for VCFSE Representatives in Greater Manchester

November 2026

Key messages and information on voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) sector priorities to support colleagues in their work and meetings.

The Greater Manchester VCFSE Accord 2026-2035

Signed in March 2026 by Greater Manchester leaders, the renewed GM VCFSE Accord sets out **a framework for collaboration** between the public sector, including the health and care system, and the VCFSE sector in Greater Manchester to help us improve things for residents, communities, places and the environment. It is underpinned by shared values of **Honesty, Ambition, Accountability and Trust.**

The Accord is Greater Manchester's version of the national Civil Society Covenant. It serves as a key route to deliver the England's 10-Year Health Plan and the GM Strategy and should be used alongside locally developed and owned agreements that share its aims. **Its signatories include** the GM VCFSE Leadership Group (on behalf of the wider sector), GMCA, NHS GM, TfGM, GMFRS, the 10 Local Authorities and NIHR ARC-GM.

It contains **a series of commitments** to be implemented across the next 9 years centred around three areas:

1. **Involve and Devolve:** shift more power into communities and strengthen VCFSE participation in decision-making.
2. **Resource and Enable:** Support more fair, flexible and sustainable funding for VCFSE organisations – and keep more investment local.
3. **Recognise and Value:** recognise the vital role of VCFSE organisations, their insight, and their contribution to shaping a better city-region.

To read/watch: GM VCFSE Accord | Accord summary | Accord Explainer Video | Accord microsite & further resources | The Role of the VCFSE Sector in Greater Manchester

VCFSE sector priorities for Greater Manchester

Based on the priorities shared with the new Mayor of Greater Manchester, Bev Craig, in August 2026:

1. Investment in **community ownership** and the growth of **community power**. We want to see charities, social enterprises, and employee-owned businesses have a stronger share & more say in local economies.
2. **Community wealth, co-production & climate resilience** must be core to definition of 'Good Growth'.
3. **Ending extraction** by redesigning procurement: Public spending should **build local wealth**, not extract.
4. **Reimagining the Purpose of Town Centres**. We want to see support for VCFSE use of vacant high street lots.
5. Scaling the role of the VCFSE sector role in **work and skills support.**
6. Maximising the VCFSE role in **early years, education and pathways to work support for young people**
7. Investment in **community-led housing** and planning
8. Use of VCFSE to unlock **health and care transformation**. We want to see a Live Well/Neighbourhood health fund to support the NHS left shift towards prevention. VCFSE are key to this shift.
9. **Safer, stronger and more resilient communities** should be a priority. VCFSE collaboration is key.
10. GMCA to deliver on the Fair Funding Protocol to create sector stability needed for VCFSE to be a full partner in devolution.

Further reading: GM VCFSE Manifesto 2024-2028 (2024) | Ten Priority Actions for the new GM Mayor

Call for a National Anti-racism Strategy

The GM VCFSE Leadership Group as a collective have signed **an open letter calling on the Prime Minister to implement a national antiracism strategy.** It's asks include:

1. The developing and implementing a cross- governmental anti-racism strategy and delivery framework to advance racial justice across all policy areas.
2. The strategy must be co-produced from the outset with civil society organisations and impacted communities.
3. That engagement must be representative and inclusive, ensuring that women, young people and those most affected by racism are directly involved in shaping both priorities and delivery.

Further reading: Runnymede Trust Open Letter | GM VCFSE Leadership Group 10 areas for action to tackle rising community tensions,

NHS GM Strategic Commissioning Intentions

The below are the headline commitments made to our sector in the new NHS GM Strategic Commissioning Plan (2026-31):

1. A growing proportion of investment directed to prevention, neighbourhoods, community services & VCFSE delivery.
2. A clear baseline and annual trajectory for funding showing the shift towards prevention, primary care, community services and VCFSE.
3. Shifting investment into integrated support models including sustainable VCFSE sector delivery.
4. VCFSE commissioning will move towards fairer, longer -term and more flexible funding, with specific action to reduce barriers for small and grassroots organisations.
5. To meet the commitments within the GM VCFSE Accord incl. fair, transparent and long -term investment and, crucially, to increase the total proportion of public-sector funding invested in VCFSE.

To read/watch: NHS Greater Manchester Strategic Commissioning Plan - A Summary of Commitments for VCFSE Sector | What we mean by 'prevention' and the role of VCFSE | GM Prevention Demonstrator Explainer video

Key figures

The overall sector, **State of the Greater Manchester VCFSE Sector 2026**: *Explore the new online dashboard.*

18,783 VCFSE organisations operating in Greater Manchester.	There are **483,252 volunteers** (including board members and trustees), who give **52.5million hours** each year, **worth £707million.**	
11,014 organisations are 'below-the-radar' - not captured on official registers.	There are **40,228 paid, full-time employees** in the VCFSE sector	They provide **8.63million instances of support** to people or communities each year.

Social Enterprise in Greater Manchester (State of Social Enterprise in Greater Manchester, SEUK, 2024)

6,812 social enterprises in Greater Manchester, creating around 127,600 jobs for the region	They generate ~£68 million in annual profit, **re-investing £57 million into achieving their social mission**
Social enterprises generate around **£3.5bn in turnover** - equivalent to 4% of city-wide GDP	

Other useful reading & resources

- GM=EqAl Key Principles to meaningfully including lived experience
- Social Value and the VCFSE sector: key messages for our commissioners
- Understanding the VCSE sector: a shared language for thriving communities (NAVCA, 2026)