

## Manchester City Council Report for Information

**Report to:** Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee - 5 September 2023

**Subject:** Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Impact Report 2023 - 2026 Update

**Report of:** Assistant Chief Executive

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### Summary

This report provides a brief introduction to the Our Manchester Voluntary and Community Sector grant programme (OMVCS) 2018-2023 impact report, which is appended for the committee's information and comment. The alignment of the OMVCS fund with the aims of the Our Manchester Strategy is included, along with an indication of next steps for monitoring and reporting on the 2023-26 programme of funded activity.

### Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to note and comment on the contents of this paper and its appendix.

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### Wards Affected: All

**Environmental Impact Assessment** – the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city

The OMVCS impact report reflects on how funded groups aligned with the Our Manchester strategy, including its zero-carbon considerations. Building on the effectiveness of the first round of OMVCS funding, the current round of funding (2023-2026) has strengthened the requirements of funded groups around zero-carbon, to support the zero-carbon city ambitions set for 2038.

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion** - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments

Advancing equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) has been central to the OMVCS fund from its inception. The OMVCS impact report describes how funded organisations have worked with a diverse range of communities of identity and individuals, to reduce disadvantage, promote equality and wellbeing, and tackle poverty. The second round of OMVCS funding builds on the effectiveness of the 2018-2023 funding, with a strengthened focus on EDI as a stated aim, and with particular attention on organisations that are Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic-led or focused.

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS
<p>A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities</p>	<p>Manchester's VCSE sector generated a total income of around £500 million in 2019-20 and in addition to its paid workforce, created over 160,000 volunteering opportunities, with volunteers giving about 481,000 hours each week, which has been valued at about £242 million per year (<i>Manchester State of the VCSE Sector report, 2021</i>). The OMVCS impact report demonstrates how the OMVCS fund plays a critical role in supporting the health and sustainability of the sector and contributes to these outcomes.</p>
<p>A highly skilled city: world class and home-grown talent sustaining the city's economic success</p>	<p>The VCSE organisations supported through this funding are run and supported by a diverse range of skilled workers, including boards of trustees, those in paid roles and those providing support voluntarily. In addition to providing work opportunities, many of the funded organisations provide employability support (including but not limited to skills development through volunteering), often working with those communities and individuals requiring specific types of support to benefit from Manchester's economic success. The OMVCS impact report provides case studies that demonstrate this.</p>
<p>A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities</p>	<p>A critical feature of the OMVCS Fund is to support organisations whose primary funded activity is to work in a strengths-based way with individuals and communities, to maximise their potential and have an active contribution in Manchester. The OMVCS impact report provides case studies that outline how funded organisations provide activities targeted on a geographical, community or characteristic basis, delivered through a diverse range of supportive approaches.</p>
<p>A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work</p>	<p>OMVCS funded organisations frequently work with residents to celebrate their achievements, contributions and identities. The OMVCS impact report describes how organisations promote Manchester as a place of choice by celebrating the value and diversity of the City and its people. The programme has been enhanced in its second round (2023-2026) to promote the City's commitment to be a Real Living Wage City, with all funded groups progressing towards paying the Real Living Wage during the funded period.</p>

A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	VCSE organisations supported by the OMVCS fund have progressed the digital inclusion agenda significantly in the last three years, adapting service delivery to online and / or blended options (accelerated by the response to the coronavirus pandemic), and working with key stakeholder groups to address and remove digital barriers. As a result, some resident groups (i.e. older people, people with English as an Additional Language, people with sensory impairments) are more able to connect with VCSE services than previously.
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Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

#### **Financial Consequences – Revenue**

Not applicable

#### **Financial Consequences – Capital**

Not applicable

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#### **Background documents (available for public inspection):**

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

- Our Manchester Voluntary & Community Sector (OMVCS) Fund, Scrutiny Committee – Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee, 7 March 2023

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. The *Our Manchester Strategy: Forward to 2025* describes the importance of Manchester having a diverse, thriving, resilient, effective and sustainable Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector, in order to deliver the shared vision and outcomes for the city.
- 1.2. The Our Manchester Voluntary and Community Sector (OMVCS) Fund is the Council's largest grant funding programme to support the VCSE sector, providing £2.4 million of grants per annum on a three-year cycle (£7.2 million across three years). The fund was initially launched in 2018 – 2021 and was extended, due to the impact of Covid-19 on the sector, for a further two years to 31 March 2023.
- 1.3. The first round of the fund provided grants to 63 organisations across the city. These groups provide wide-ranging types of support to various communities of identity and geography, with delivery across the city. The Our Manchester Funds Team (programme team) was established to administer and oversee the programme of work, ensuring progress against funded organisations' objectives was being made, and providing a point of contact and support for them.

## **2. Background to the OMVCS Impact Report**

- 2.1 The programme team committed to providing updates on the outputs and outcomes of the funded activity in annual reports at the end of each financial year. Annual reports were produced for years one and two but were paused during 2021 and 2022 due to Covid-19. It is therefore important to capture the achievements of the funded groups for Manchester residents, throughout the duration of the 5-year programme.
- 2.2 The OMVCS impact report aims to do this, detailing a number of real-life outcomes for Manchester residents, as well as reflecting the relationship between the funded groups and the programme team during the funding period. The report contains some of the voices of the funded groups and their service users, with direct quotes and case studies, along with reflections on the fund's purpose and delivery.
- 2.3 The report has been created using monitoring data from the programme's quarterly monitoring arrangement, and direct feedback from funded groups, which reflects their perspective of the programme. This provides an authentic and transparent review of the programme's success and how it is valued by those that are supported by it, either as organisations or as residents.

## **3. Report highlights and key findings**

- 3.1 The report provides reflections on the outcomes and benefits of the Council's £12 million investment in the OMVCS programme, from the perspectives of people working in the VCSE sector and from Manchester residents that have benefitted from their support.

- 3.2 The report outlines that over 588,000 service users were supported across all of the 63 funded organisations, with over 827,000 access visits funded by the programme.
- 3.3 The groups generated an additional £28 million of funding into the city by accessing other, non-Council funding sources. These are wide-ranging but typically include the National Lottery, charitable trusts and foundations, other public sector funds, business donations and sponsorships.
- 3.4 The organisations funded by the programme have provided over 374,000 volunteering hours across the 5-year period, with a monetary value of around £4.2 million (based at the rate of £10 per hour Real Living Wage).
- 3.5 The report provides case studies aligned to each of the strategy priorities and also includes a number of quotes from service users reflecting directly on the programme and its value. This aims to express the purpose and benefit of the programme as it is felt by those who it is ultimately aiming to support, in addition to the statistical outputs of the investment.

#### **4. Next Steps**

- 4.1 A second round of the OMVCS programme went live on 1 April 2023. The current programme runs from 2023 – 2026, and progress against its aims and priorities (as reported to this committee in March 2023) will be reported via continuation of the annual report commitment for the next three years. The annual reports will highlight impacts and outcomes for residents, as well as challenges and solutions for funded groups.
- 4.2 A further impact report will be published at the conclusion of the current programme in 2026, to provide a cumulative assessment of the programme's impacts.

#### **5. Conclusion**

- 5.1 The OM Funds Team invites members to read and comment on the OMVCS impact report.