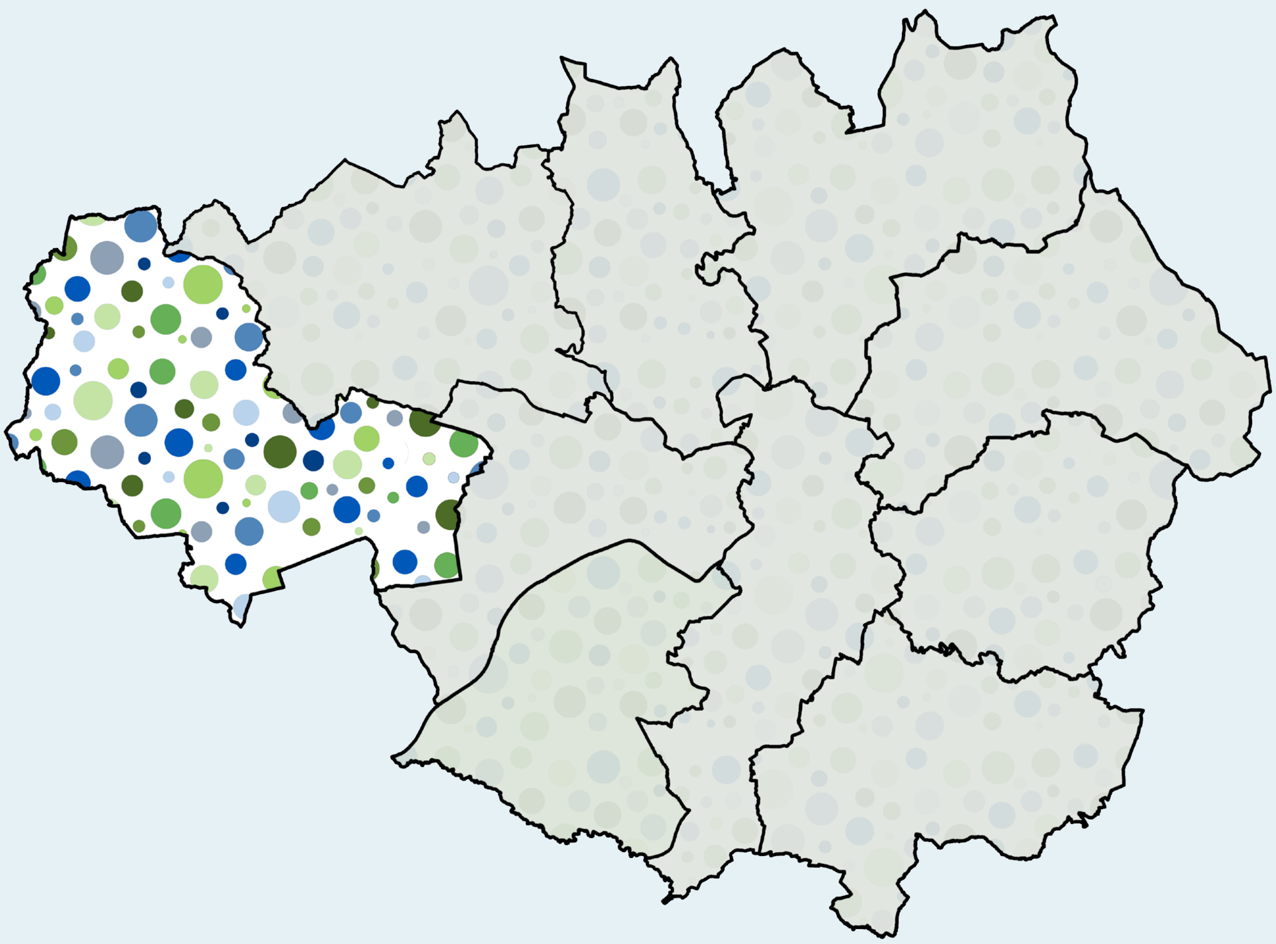
10GM

Wigan & Leigh CVS
supporting the voluntary
and community sectors

Wigan State of the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector 2017

A report on social and economic impact



Sheffield Hallam University
Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research

Wigan State of the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector 2017

June 2017

Definitions

This report is about the 'state of the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector in Wigan'. At various times the voluntary sector has been known as the 'voluntary and community sector' or the 'third sector' whilst the current Government talks a lot about 'civil society'. In this report, when we talk about the voluntary sector in Wigan, we mean **voluntary organisations**, **community groups**, the **community work of faith groups,** and **those social enterprises** where there is a wider accountability to the public via a board of trustees or a membership and all profits will be reinvested in their social purpose.

Contents

Executive Summary

This report provides the main findings of research aimed at improving the understanding of the social and economic impact of the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector in Wigan and Leigh. The key objective of the research was to provide an overview of the sector in Wigan and Leigh at the start of 2017

The research involved a web-based survey of organisations supporting the people and communities of Wigan. Despite widespread circulation across the borough responses were received from 55 organisations between September 2016 and January 2017. This is an unfortunately low number of responses which has limited the conclusions which can be drawn from the data.

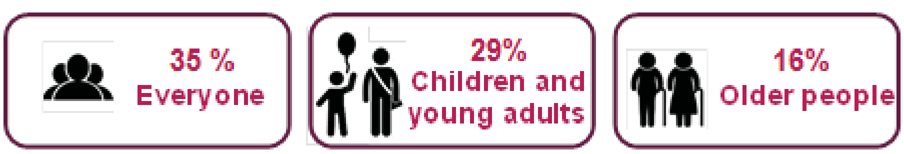
The responses provide a limited snapshot of the picture for Wigan borough. Where possible, the data available on the VCSE sector in Wigan in 2016/17 has been supplemented by data for the Greater Manchester area and data presented in a report on the VCSE sector in Wigan in 2013 to provide a more comprehensive picture. Nevertheless, caution should be applied in drawing conclusions from this data and it cannot be assumed that the situation across Greater Manchester, or in Wigan in 2012/13, is reflected in Wigan in 2016/17.

Q1. How many organisations are there?

There are an estimated **15,890 organisations** working in the VCSE sector in Greater Manchester and the vast majority of organisations are micro or small (90 per cent less than £100,000).

There are an estimated **1,566 organisations** working in the VCSE sector in Wigan which are involved in many areas of activity.

Q2. Who benefits from their work?



The VCSE sector in Wigan serves a diverse and wide ranging population. VCSE organisations work with a range of different people, especially children and young people and older people, but also people from vulnerable groups (for example those with health problems or unemployed people).

Q3. What does the VCSE sector in Wigan do?

The areas with the greatest proportion of organisations working in them are

Health & wellbeing	Community development	Education, training & research

Q4. What is the economic value of the VCSE sector in Wigan?

A robust estimate of the total income of the VCSE sector in the borough cannot be included in this report due to the low response rate to the 2016/17 survey in Wigan. In 2013 it was an estimated that the economic value of the VCSE in Wigan in 2011/12 was **£58 millio**n. Across Greater Manchester the economic value of the VCSE has fluctuated over the intervening years ending with a small reduction (around 3%) in 2016/17.

Q5. Where does the VCSE sector receive its funding from?

86% **have at least one source of non-public sector funds**

71% **have at least one source of public sector funds**

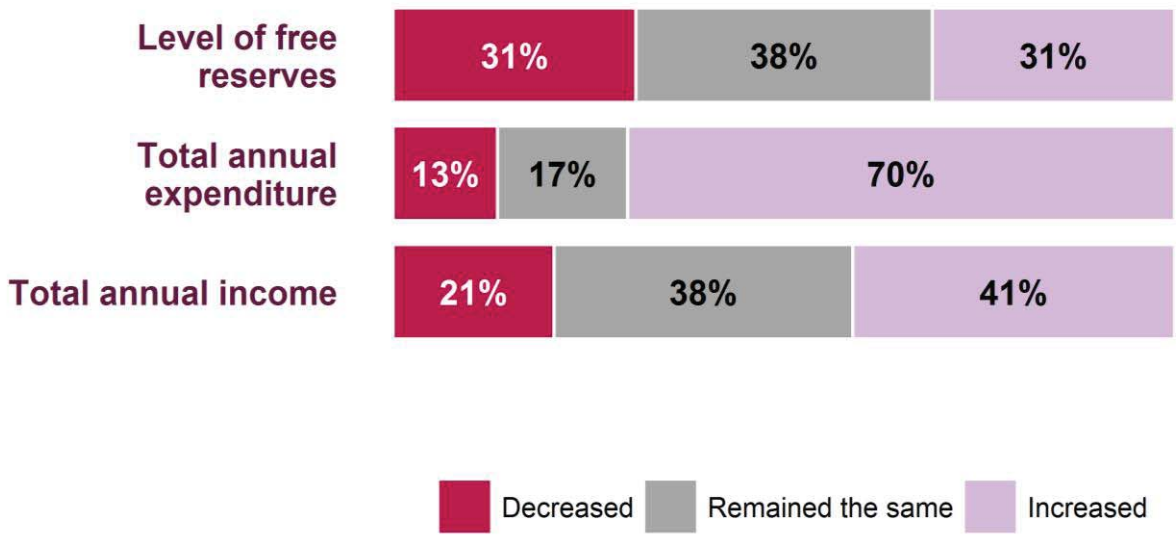
Fundraising was the most frequently identified source of non-public sector funding: received by **57%** of respondents.

Grants from charitable trusts and foundations received by **43%** of respondents.

Grants from National Lottery Distributors received by **38%** of respondents.

Wigan Council was the most frequently identified source of public sector funding: received by **41% of respondents**.

Q6. How sustainable is the VCSE sector in Wigan?



Q7. Who works and volunteers in the VCSE sector in Wigan?

The Wigan State of the Voluntary Sector 2013 report estimated there were

- 1,500 FTE paid staff (2,200 employees) in 2012/13
- 30,000 volunteers, providing an estimated 85,800 hours of their time per week in 2012/13.

Q8. How good are relationships with public sector bodies?

93% of respondents in Wigan had some dealings with **Wigan Council**

54% of respondents were satisfied with their ability to influence Wigan Council's decisions of relevance to their organisation

57% said Wigan Council had a positive influence on their organisation's success.

Q9. How well does the VCSE sector work with private businesses?

69% of organisations had some direct dealings with private businesses, with 29 per cent having a 'great' or 'fair' amount of contact.

Q10. How well does the VCSE sector work together?

The majority of organisations had some direct dealings with other VCSE sector organisations in Wigan.

77% had a 'great' or 'fair amount' of contact with other VCSE organisations.

21% are members of a formal VCSE sector consortium.

Q11. What are the key issues facing the VCSE sector in the future?

Respondents were asked to consider the factors they anticipated assisting or constraining their organisation over the next 12 months. The top factors were

Assisting	Constraining
Ability to retain staff / staff turnover	The local economy
Ability to secure other sources of income	Ability to recruit volunteers with sufficient skills
Engagement with public sector bodies	

Respondents were also asked about the strategies they are actively pursuing / planning to pursue:.

73% increasing earned income

64% working more closely with another voluntary/not-for-profit organisation.

Introduction

1

This report provides the main findings of research aimed at improving the understanding of the social and economic impact of the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector in Wigan borough.

The research was commissioned by Wigan & Leigh CVS as part of 10GM[1] with GMCVO and undertaken by the Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research (CRESR) at Sheffield Hallam University. The report has been prepared by CRESR and 10GM.

The key objective of the research was to provide an overview of the sector in Wigan at the start of 2017.

The research involved a web-based survey of organisations supporting the people and communities of Wigan to which at least partial responses were received from **55 organisations** between September 2016 and January 2017.

When reading the report it is important to acknowledge that this is a small number of responses which provide a limited snapshot which may not be representative of Wigan as a whole. Where possible the data available for the VCSE sector in Wigan in 2016/17 has been supplemented by data for the Greater Manchester area in 2016/17 and data presented in a report on the VCSE in Wigan in 2013 in order to provide a more comprehensive picture. Caution should be applied in drawing conclusions from this data and it cannot be assumed that the situation across Greater Manchester, or in Wigan in 2012/13, is reflected in Wigan in 2016/17.

The survey was undertaken as part of a wider study in seven other Greater Manchester boroughs: Bolton, the City of Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport and Tameside.

Appendix 1 provides further detail on the research methodology.

[1] 10GM is a joint venture by the Greater Manchester Voluntary Sector Infrastructure Organisations including Salford CVS (lead partner on this research), Action Together in Oldham and Tameside, Bolton CVS, CVS Rochdale, Macc and Wigan and Leigh CVS.

Summary

1. The VCSE sector in Wigan occupies an important position in the borough.

There are an estimated 1,566 organisations working in the VCSE sector in Wigan which are involved in many areas of activity.

The thematic areas with the greatest proportion of organisations working in them are health and wellbeing, community development, and education, training and research.

2. There are some concerns around the sustainability of organisations working in the sector.

70 per cent of respondents reported increasing their expenditure but only 41 per cent had experienced an increase in income and only 31 per cent report an increase in reserves.

In addition, 21 per cent of respondents reported a decrease in income but only 13 per cent reduced their expenditure.

3. The VCSE sector in Wigan serves a diverse and wide ranging population.

VCSE organisations work with a range of different people, especially children and young people and older people, but also people from vulnerable groups (for example those with health problems or unemployed people).

4. There is a mixed picture in Wigan regarding relationships between the VCSE sector and public sector bodies.

Overall, 93 per cent of respondents in Wigan had some dealings with Wigan Council. Of these, 31 per cent had a great amount of dealings with the Council and 36 per cent had a fair amount of dealings.

54 per cent of respondents were satisfied with their ability to influence Wigan Council's decisions of relevance to their organisation while 57 per cent said Wigan Council had a positive influence on their organisation's success.

5. Engagement with private businesses is relatively low.

69 per cent of organisations had some direct dealings with private businesses, with 29 per cent of these having a ‘great’ or ‘fair’ amount of contact.

6. The VCSE sector in Wigan is well connected internally although most contact appears to be informal.

The majority of organisations had some direct dealings with other VCSE sector organisations in their local area, including 77 per cent who had a ‘great’ or ‘fair amount’ of contact.

21 per cent of respondents said their organisation is a member of a formal VCSE sector consortium.

7. The sector faces an uncertain future.

With austerity measures set to continue for the foreseeable future and public sector funding for the sector continuing to be squeezed, there are still reasons for caution within the sector.

Respondents appear to recognise this uncertainty and are pursuing a range of strategies to ensure their sustainability, in particular: generating earned income from other sources, partnership working and organisational change.

Context for the Research

2

This research comes during both a period of slow economic recovery following the recent long-term economic downturn and a rapidly changing political backdrop as the UK prepares to exit the European Union and the devolution agenda gains pace.

NCVO report that between 2012/13 and 2013/14 the income and spending of the voluntary and community sector in the UK increased, the first notable net growth since the peaks of 2007/08 and 2009/10 respectively.[2] Total income has increased by just over £2.4bn to £43.8bn and now exceeds the 'peak income' seen in 2007/08 (£43.2bn). NCVO also report that following a decrease in income from government after 2009/10, income from government increased between 2012/13 and 2013/14 by around £0.5bn, although this remains below 2009/10 levels. The majority of this increase was in the largest charities which means the impact might not be felt as keenly at a local level. Income from individuals has also increased by just over £1bn between 2012/13 and 2013/14 and is now at its highest ever level.

While these figures provide reasons to be optimistic there is still need for caution. With the election of the Conservative Government in May 2015, austerity measures are set to continue for the foreseeable future and VCSE organisations are likely to feel the impact of these measures. This includes the Government's commitment to a continuing programme of welfare reform which is likely to result in increasing demand for some services as benefits are restricted or withdrawn. The total anticipated reduction by 2020/21, from both pre and post-2015 welfare reforms in Wigan, is predicted to be £150m per year or equivalent to £740 per working age adult per year.[3][4] These reforms are likely to continue to put pressure on VCSE organisations both in terms of their financial health and the need to meet greater levels of need from existing and new beneficiaries.

Locally, the reductions in public expenditure have been felt acutely in Wigan. As part of the Coalition Government's plan to reduce the deficit, it reduced funding for local government in England. Across Greater Manchester local authorities have experienced, and are continuing to experience, a decline in Government funding.

Against this background this research provides data about the 'state of the VCSE sector' in Wigan at the start of 2017. The research provides an overview of the sector in Wigan for partners to draw upon and help harness the potential of the sector.

[2] UK Civil Society Almanac (2016) NCVO.
[3] Beatty and Fothergill (2016) *The Uneven Impact of Welfare Reform: The financial losses to places and people.*
[4] Note: These figures are based on HMRC Budgets and Autumn Statements from between 2010 and 2015. In the 2016 Autumn statement the Pay-to-stay measure was scrapped and so this has been taken account of in the figures. The estimate of cuts due to the LHA Cap in social housing was increased by a further £160m p.a. which is not taken account of in the figures. The Universal Credit Taper was also increased by 2p in the pound, an increase in funding of £570m p.a., which is not included in the figures presented here.

3

What the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise Sector in Wigan does

This chapter develops a picture of the core features of the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector in Wigan. It focuses on a series of general questions in which respondents were asked about their group or organisation, what it is and what it does.

3.1. How many VCSE organisations are there in Wigan?

Estimating the number of organisations represents a major challenge. This is because a large proportion of organisations are small, local and **not formally registered** as charities, limited companies or other recognised forms which require registration (e.g. industrial and provident societies). As a result they do not appear on formal central records such as those held by the Charity Commission or Companies House so are considered **'below the radar' (BTR).** Any estimate of the total number of organisations in an area therefore requires information on the numbers of registered and unregistered (i.e. BTR) organisations.

In estimating the total number of organisations in Wigan we drew on information from the following sources:

- The Register of Charities in England and Wales, which indicated **306** registered charities with postcodes in Wigan.
- The ratio of charities to non-charities provided in the 'National Survey of Charities and Social Enterprises' (NSCSE), undertaken by Ipsos MORI for the Cabinet Office in 2010. This was used to gross the estimate upwards to a total of **387** registered organisations, to take account of non-charitable social enterprises.
- Research by NCVO and the University of Southampton[5] which found that on average there are 3.66 BTR organisations per 1,000 population. If this figure is applied to Wigan[6], it can be estimated that there are **1,179** BTR organisations in the borough.[7]

[5] Mohan, J et al. (2010). *Beyond 'flat-earth' maps of the third sector: enhancing our understanding of the contribution of 'below-the-radar' organisations*. Northern Rock Foundation Briefing Paper
[6] Based on Office for National Statistics 2015 population estimates
[7] It is important to note that the BTR figure is an estimate based on an average across 46 local authorities. The BTR research found significant variability, with some local authorities reaching over seven BTR organisations per 1,000 population, and in one case exceeding 10.

Summing the estimated numbers for both registered and BTR organisations produces an estimated figure of

1,566 groups and organisations *in total operating in the VCSE sector in Wigan.*

This bears some comparison with the 2013 report for Wigan borough which produced a similarly estimated figure of 1,467 for the total number of organisations. This report also noted that in addition to organisations based in Wigan, there were a number of organisations based elsewhere in Greater Manchester providing services to people in the borough. Based on responses to surveys undertaken in other areas as part of this study, it was estimated that there are at least 45 of these organisations.

3.2. What size are the VCSE organisations operating in Wigan?

Because of the low response rate to the 2016/17 survey in Wigan it is not possible to provide an up to date estimate of the balance between different sizes of organisation in the borough. In the 2013 report on the VCSE sector in Wigan, the balance was estimated as follows

Micro (under £10k)	1,286 (88%)
Small (£10k to £100k)	123 (8%)
Medium (£100k to £1m)	39 (3%)
Large (over £1m)	19 (1)
Total	1,467

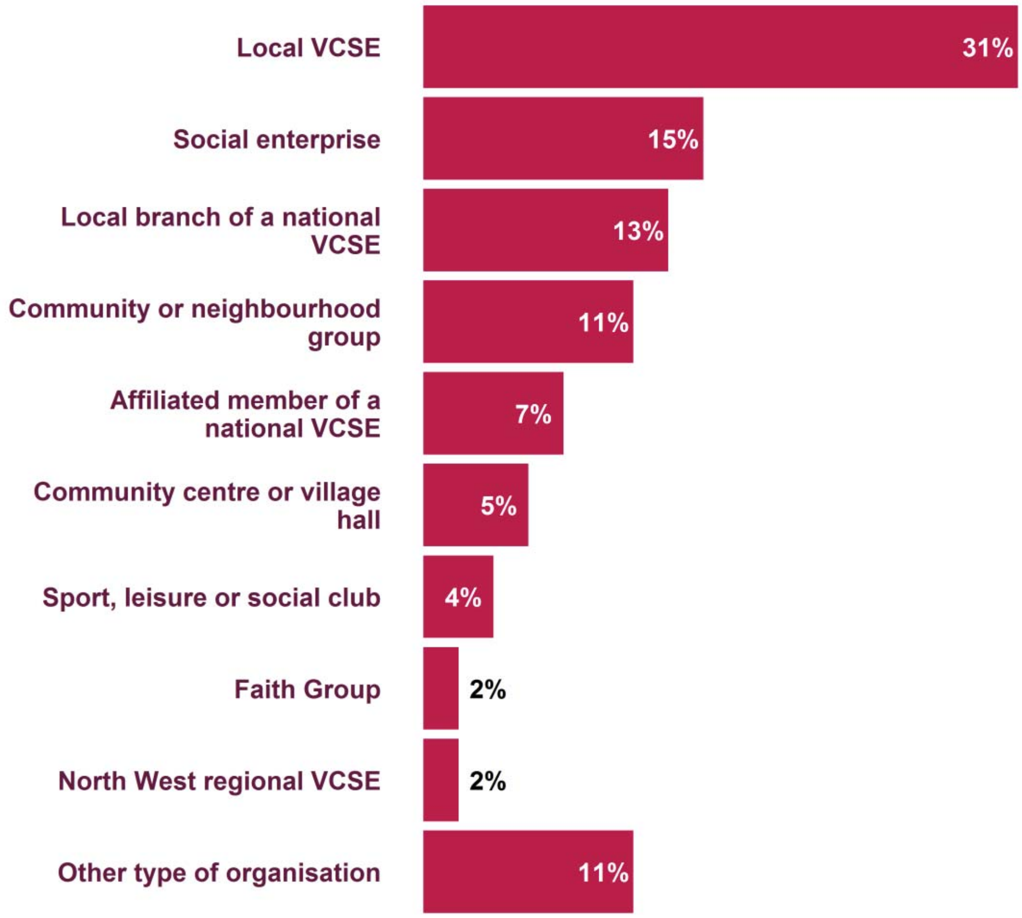
In 2017, across Greater Manchester as a whole, the balance is:

Micro (under £10k)	12312 (77%)
Small (£10k to £100k)	1983 (12%)
Medium (£100k to £1m)	1221 (8%)
Large (over £1m)	374 (2%)
Total	15,890

3.3. What types of organisations operate in the VCSE sector in Wigan?

Respondents to the questionnaire were asked to identify which category from a list of 'organisation types' best described their organisation. The results indicate that many of the responding organisations have a local focus. Figure 3.1 shows that the largest proportion, **31 per cent, identified their organisation as being a local voluntary organisation**. A further 13 per cent identified themselves as a local branch of a national voluntary organisation, while 11 per cent identified themselves as a community or neighbourhood group. The second most common type was social enterprise.

Figure 3.1: Type of organisations



Source: Wigan State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 55

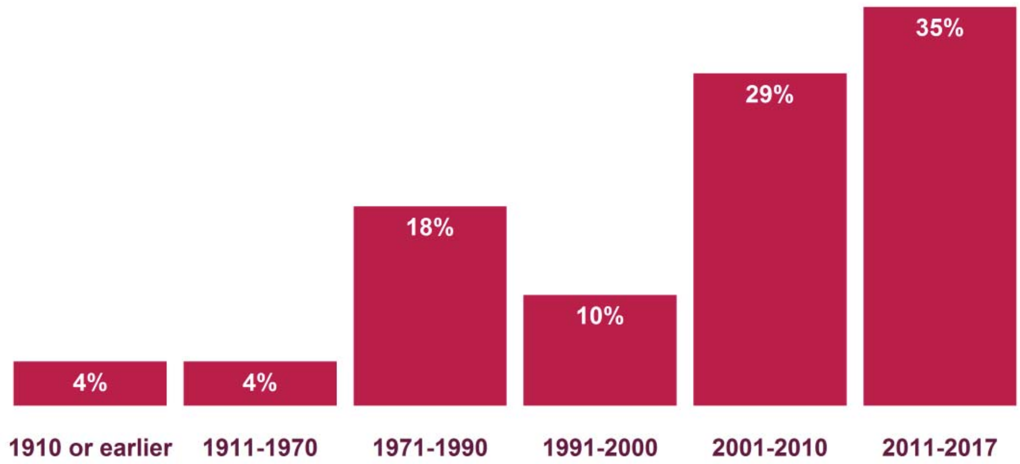
3.4. How long have organisations in the VCSE sector been operating?

The questionnaire asked respondents to indicate when their organisation was formed. Assessment of organisations by the year in which they were formed provides an indication of how established the VCSE sector is in Wigan. It is important to highlight that the figures displayed only provide information on surviving organisations. Therefore although the results suggest that it is likely that the VCSE sector in Wigan has experienced growth in the number of organisations established in the last 20 years or so, it may not be as dramatic as the figures suggest.

Figure 3.2 shows that 65 per cent of organisations responding to the survey had been formed since 2001, including 53 per cent in the past 10 years (i.e. since 2006). Furthermore, an additional 10 per cent were formed between 1991 and 2000; this means **three-quarters (75 per cent) of responding organisations were formed in the last 25 years.** At the other end of the spectrum eight per cent of responding organisations had been formed before 1971, including four per cent formed in 1910 or before.

Across Greater Manchester, 43 per cent of responding organisations had been formed in the past 10 years. Six per cent of Greater Manchester organisations had been formed before 1911.

Figure 3.2: Year in which organisations were formed



Source: Wigan State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 51

3.5. What does the VCSE sector in Wigan do?

To elicit a picture of what the VCSE sector in Wigan does, the survey asked respondents to identify up to three main themes in which their organisation operates. Figure 3.3 presents the top ten main themes selected.

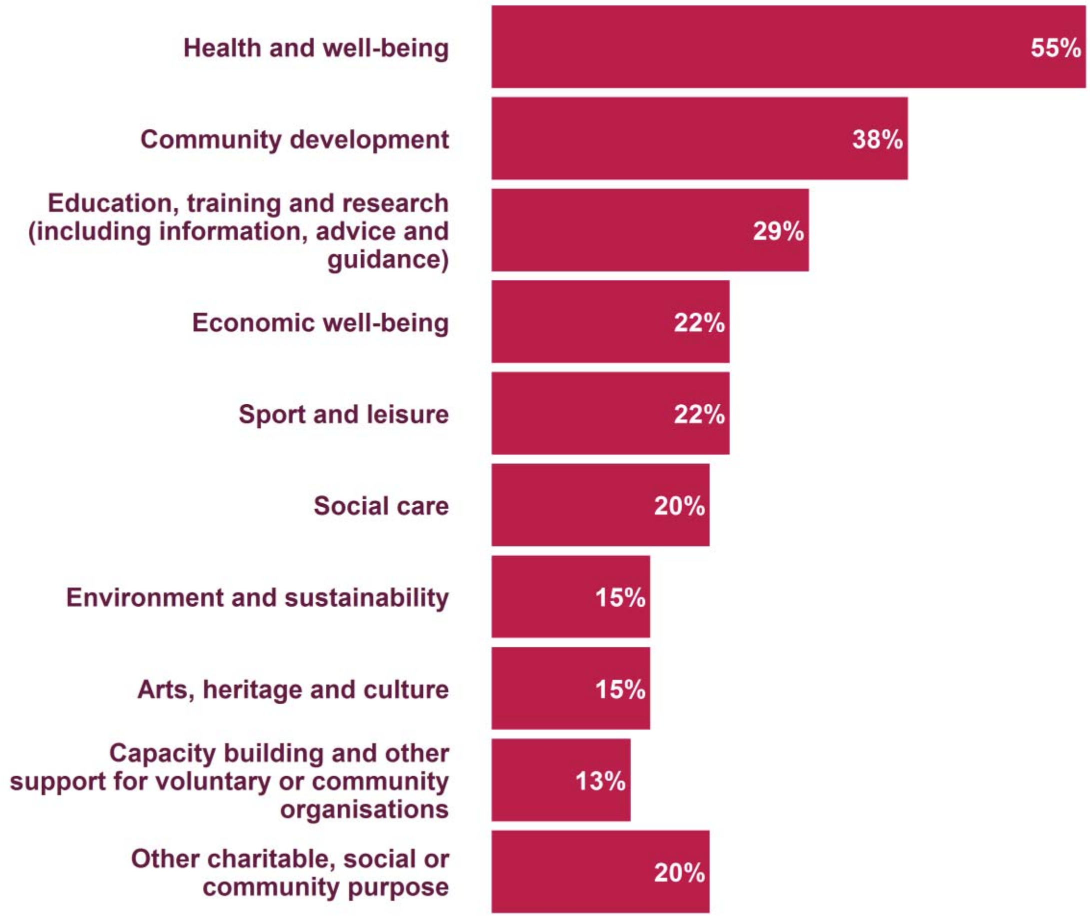
Figure 3.3 shows:

- 55 per cent **of responding organisations worked in the area of health and well-being**
- 38 per cent worked in community development
- 29 per cent worked in education, training and research.

Across Greater Manchester as a whole the same three themes of work were reported as being the most common to work within:

- health and well-being (46 per cent)
- community development (39 per cent)
- education, training and research (26 per cent).

Figure 3.3: Top 10 main themes in which organisations work



Source: Wigan State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 55

Respondents indicating that they worked in the theme of health and well-being were asked to specify the areas they worked in within this theme. Of the 29 respondents who answered this question, 23 (79 per cent) stated they worked in health and well-being in general, while 14 respondents (48 per cent) indicated they worked in mental health.

In a similar vein, respondents who identified education, training and research as a main theme of work were asked to specify the areas they worked within this theme. Of the 16 respondents who answered this question, 13 (81 per cent) stated they worked in employability skills and 11 (69 per cent) said they worked in education.

4

Who the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise Sector in Wigan works with

This chapter focuses on who the VCSE sector in Wigan works with and where.

4.1. Who are the clients, users or beneficiaries of the VCSE sector in Wigan?

The questionnaire asked respondents to provide the total number of individual clients, users or beneficiaries that their organisation had supported in the last year. Analysis of responses to this question by size and type of organisation revealed that in many cases organisations had provided the number of 'interventions' or 'contacts' that they had had with clients, users or beneficiaries. So for example an individual who visited a community centre once a week would have been counted 52 times within the year. Whilst some organisations will have provided the number of unique clients, users or beneficiaries, so as not to overestimate, in our analysis we have assumed the number provided represents the total number of interventions.

Due to the low response rate for the 2016/17 survey it is not possible to give a figure for the number of interventions made by the VCSE sector in 2016/17 in Wigan in this report. In it was estimated that **Wigan organisations had 1.5 million interventions with clients, users or beneficiaries** in the past year. *(Wigan State of the Voluntary Sector 2013)*

The questionnaire asked respondents to identify up to three groups that make up the main clients, users or beneficiaries of their organisation.

Figure 4.1 shows that, as might be expected, the VCSE sector in Wigan serves a diverse and wide ranging population. The client groups served by the largest proportions of organisations are

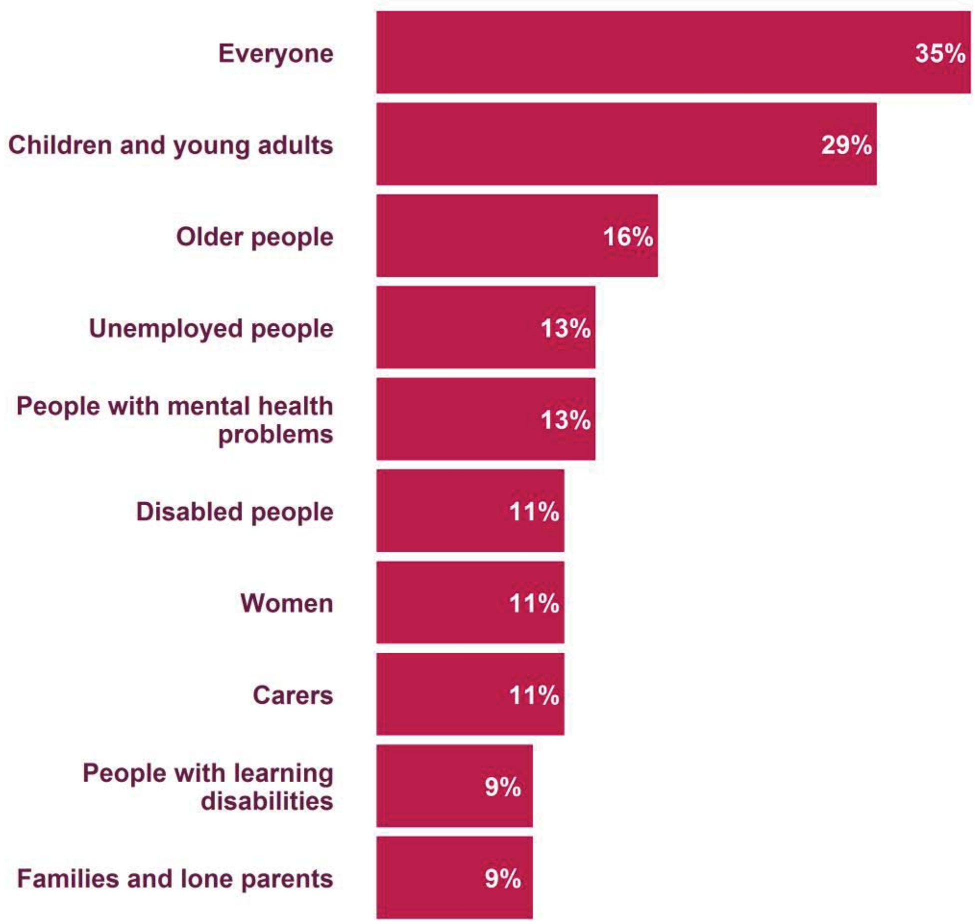
- Children and young adults (29 per cent)
- Older people (16 per cent)
- Unemployed people (13 per cent)
- People with mental health problems (13 per cent).

Over one third (35 per cent) of organisations identify 'everyone' as their main clients, users or beneficiaries.

The most common beneficiary groups identified across Greater Manchester were:

- everyone (33 per cent)
- children and young adults (23 per cent)
- older people (17 per cent)
- women (15 per cent)
- men (12 per cent).

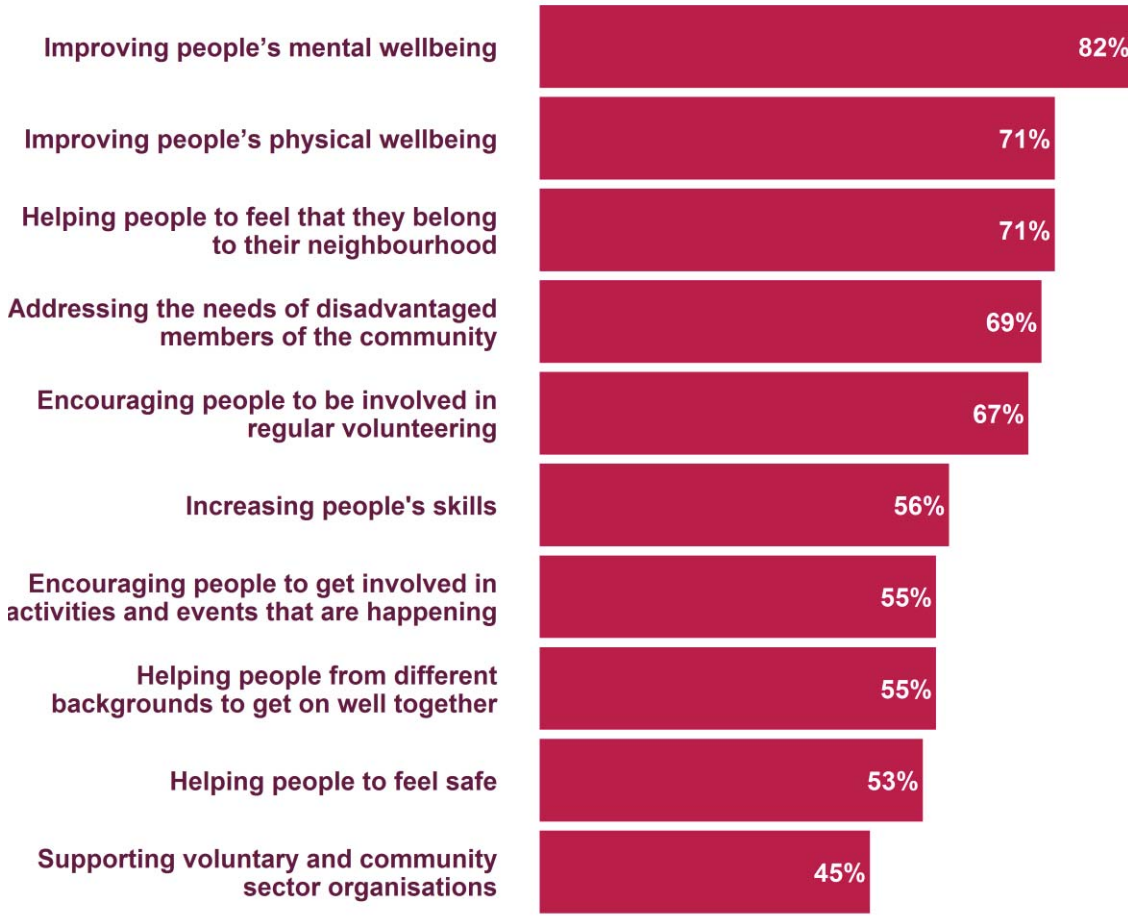
Figure 4.1: Top 10 main client groups of Wigan organisations



Source: Wigan State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 55

Respondents were also asked to identify the ways in which their organisation makes a difference for its service users/client group(s). As figure 4.2 shows, over seven out of ten organisations felt they are improving people's mental wellbeing (82 per cent), helping people to feel that they belong to their neighbourhood (71 per cent) or improving people’s physical wellbeing (71 per cent).

Figure 4.2: Top 10 ways in which organisations make a difference



Source: Wigan State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 55

The top categories across Greater Manchester as a whole were improving people's mental wellbeing (68 per cent), increasing people's skills (60 per cent), and addressing the needs of disadvantaged members of the community (63 per cent).

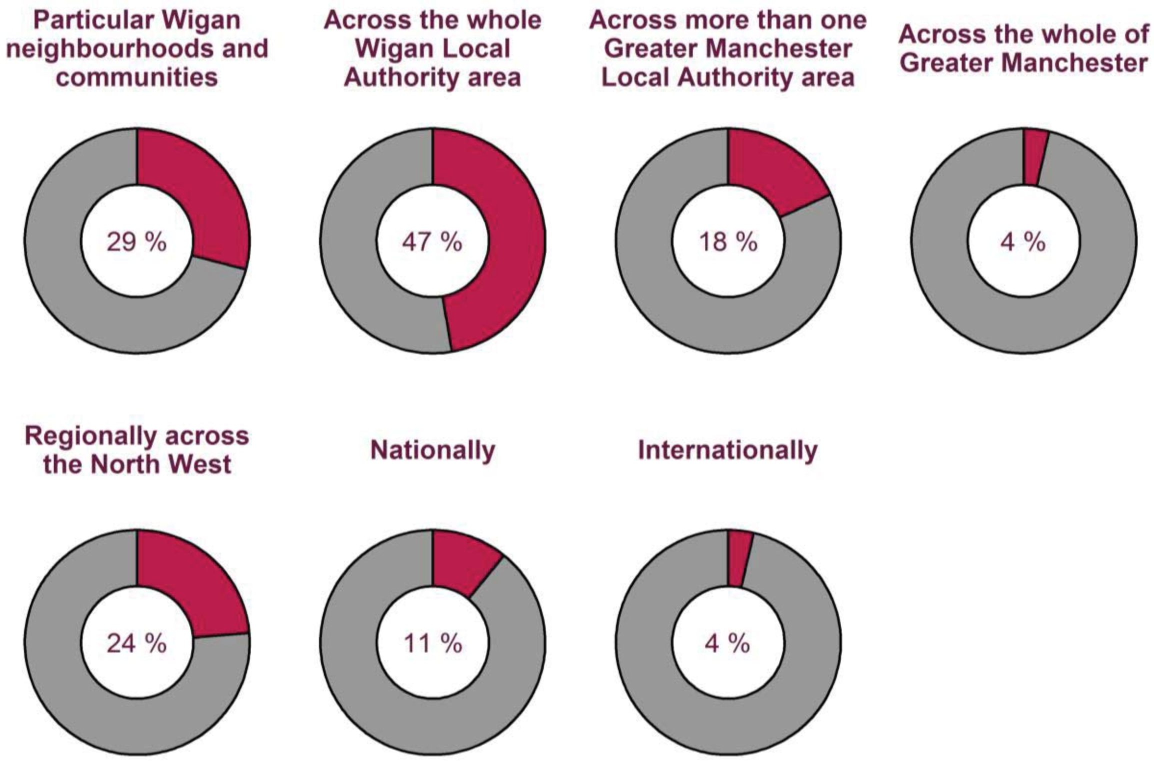
4.2. What geographical levels does the VCSE sector operate at?

The survey asked respondents to identify the main geographical levels at which they operate – this ranged from the neighbourhood level, to those operating across England, the UK or overseas. In this question respondents were asked to pick out up to three main geographic levels, the results of which are presented in figure 4.3. This shows that the **local area is a main focus for a majority of organisations**:

- almost half (47 per cent) identified the whole of the Wigan local authority area as a main focus of their work
- a further 29 per cent identified particular Wigan neighbourhoods or communities as a main focus.

The picture for Greater Manchester organisations shows that 44 per cent identified particular neighbourhoods and communities as a main geographic focus and 40 per cent identified the whole of their local area as a main focus.

Figure 4.3: Main geographic focus



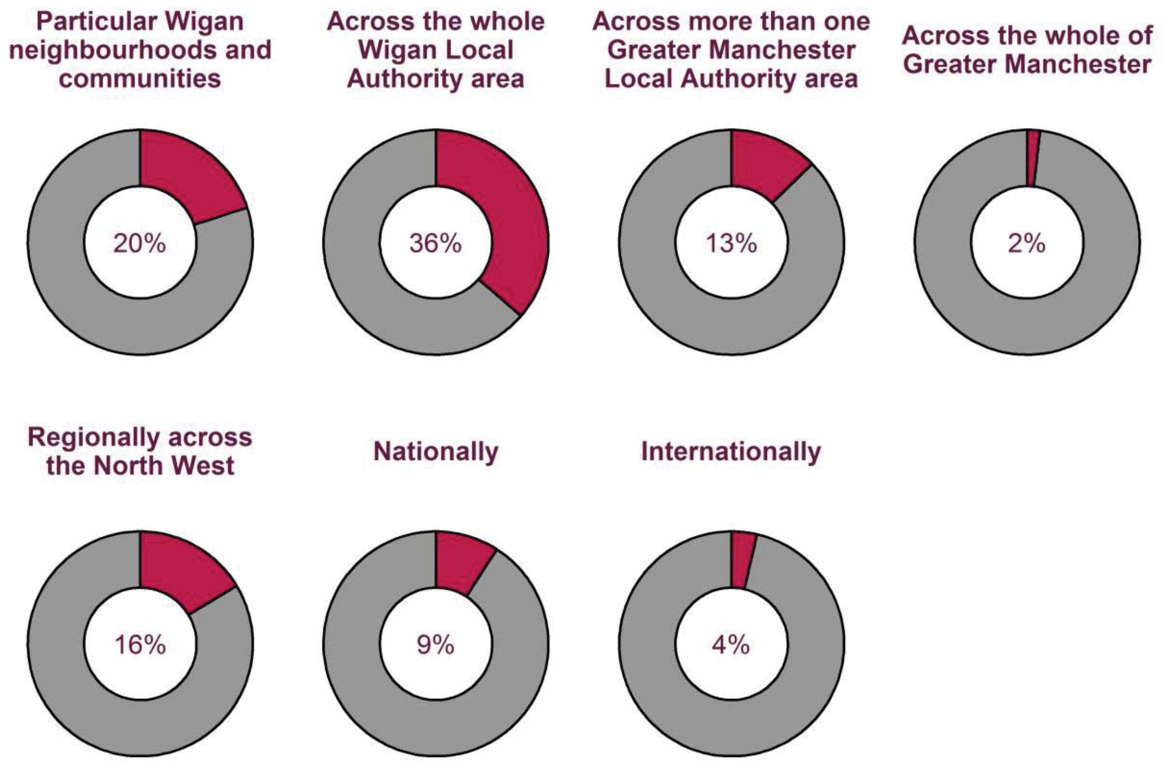
Source: Wigan State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 55

Using the responses to this question it is also possible to identify the highest main geographic area that an organisation carries out its activities (see figure 4.4 below). The highest geographic area that could be identified was internationally.

This analysis finds that for over one third (36 per cent) of responding organisations their highest main geographic focus was across the whole of the Wigan local authority area and for 20 per cent it was particular Wigan neighbourhoods and communities.

Across Greater Manchester as a whole 34 per cent of respondents identified particular local neighbourhoods and communities as the highest main focus, while for 27 per cent of respondents their local authority area was their highest main focus.

Figure 4.4: Highest geographic focus



Source: Wigan State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 55

Finances and Income

5

This chapter provides an overview of the finances and income of the VCSE sector in Wigan. It includes analysis of the different sources of income received (public sector and non-public sector) and an assessment of the financial sustainability of the VCSE sector.

5.1. Income

The low response rate to the 2016/17 survey from local VCSE organisations means it is not possible to establish a robust current figure for the VCSE sector's income in Wigan. In the 2013 report it was estimated that the total income of the voluntary sector in the borough was almost £58 million in 2011/12[17] - around six per cent of the total income of the voluntary sector in Greater Manchester. *(Wigan State of the Voluntary Sector 2013).*

The total number of organisations in Greater Manchester, it is estimate that the total income of the VCSE sector in Greater Manchester in 2014/15 is estimated[8] as £1.321 billion. This total income estimate is higher than the figure of £1 billion estimated as being the total income for the Greater Manchester VCSE sector in 2011/12 from the 2012/13 survey. It also represents an increase of three per cent compared to 2013/14 when the total income of the VCSE sector was an estimated £1.281 million. This follows a reduction between 2012/13 and 2013/14 of an estimated six per cent in the total income of the sector.

This change in income for the Greater Manchester VCSE sector should be viewed in the wider national context discussed in Chapter 2. The picture is somewhat more positive than in the previous 2013 study which came shortly after the recent long-term economic downturn. Between 2012/13 and 2013/14 the income and spending of the VCSE sector in the UK increased, the first notable net growth since the peaks of 2007/08 and 2009/10 respectively. While the data above shows a decrease in Greater Manchester between these two years results indicate a more recent upturn in the local area. However, with austerity measures set to continue for the foreseeable future and public sector funding for the sector continuing to be squeezed, there are still reasons for caution.

When the Greater Manchester VCSE sector's income is explored in more detail it shows significant variations according to organisation size[9]. In 2014/15, the majority of income was concentrated in large and medium sized organisations even though the majority of organisations were micro or small.

[8] This figure is based on a weighted average (mean) for each size category for respondents from across Greater Manchester. The methodology is explained in more detail in the methodological appendix.
[9] In exploring organisation size we used the categories developed by NCVO for use in their Almanac series (see e.g. Clark *et al*,. 2010)

5.2. Sources of Income

5.2.1. *Public sector income*

Survey respondents were asked to identify the public sector bodies from which they received funding in their most recent financial year. Overall, **70 per cent of respondents in Wigan reported having at least one source of public sector funds**. This is slightly higher than the figure for Greater Manchester as a whole (68 per cent).

Funding from Wigan Council was the most frequently identified source of public sector funding (41 per cent). Across Greater Manchester, local authorities consistently emerged as the most frequent source of public sector funds.

5.2.2. *Other sources of income*

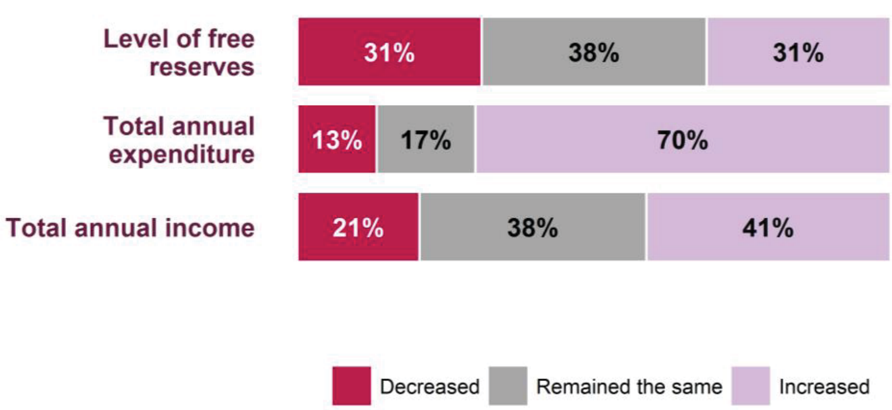
Survey respondents were also asked to identify any other sources of income (i.e. non-public sector) they received in 2014/15. Overall, **86 per cent of respondents received funds from at least one non-public sector source**. Across Greater Manchester 84 per cent of respondents received non-public sector income.

Fundraising was the most frequently identified source of other funds (57 per cent of respondents) followed by grants from charitable trusts and foundations (43 per cent) and grants from National Lottery distributors (38 per cent). Fundraising was also the most common type of other funding received Greater Manchester as a whole.

5.3. Financial Sustainability

The survey asked respondents about how their organisation's financial situation had changed in the past 12 months (i.e. during the current financial year). The results are outlined in figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1: Change in financial circumstances in the last 12 months

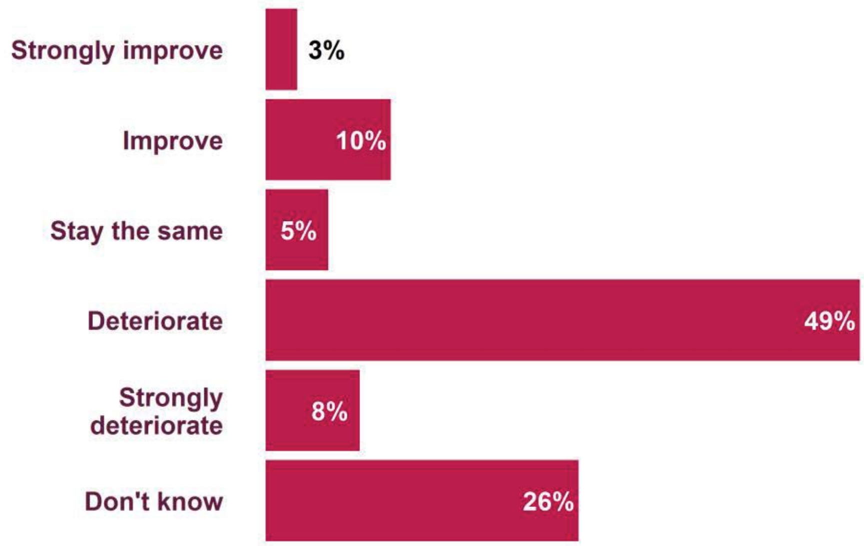


Source: Wigan State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 34 (income), 30 (expenditure), 29 (free reserves)
Note: 'cannot say' response has been excluded from the analysis

This raises some concerns: 70 per cent of respondents reported increasing their expenditure but only 41 per cent had experienced an increase in income and only 31 per cent reported an increase in reserves. In addition, 21 per cent of respondents reported a decrease in income but only 13 per cent reduced their expenditure.

Survey respondents were also asked how they thought the environment for funding/income for the VCSE sector will change over the next year. Figure 5.2 shows the responses received to this question. This shows that over half (56 per cent) of organisations in Wigan thought the environment will deteriorate compared to just 13 per cent who felt the environment is set to improve. Five per cent saw the environment for funding/income staying the same. Across Greater Manchester as a whole 56 per cent thought the environment will deteriorate and just seven per cent saw the environment improving.

Figure 5.2: Change in the environment for funding/income in the next year



Source: Wigan State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base:39

Paid Employees

6

This chapter looks at the paid workforce of the VCSE sector in Wigan.

6.1. How many FTE paid staff are employed in the VCSE sector in Wigan?

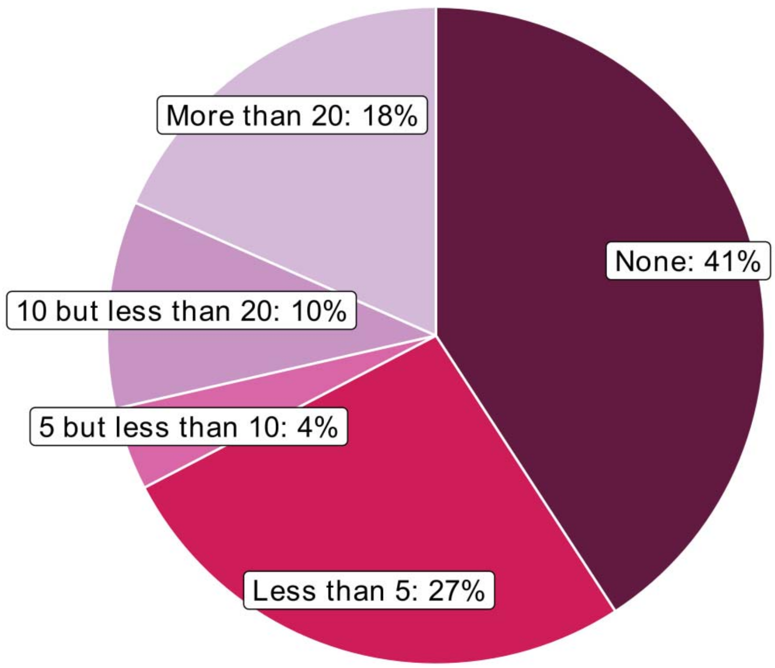
Establishing a robust figure is problematic due to the limited number of responses to the 2016/17 survey from local VCSE organisations. The Wigan State of the Voluntary Sector 2013 report estimated that the 1,467 organisations in Wigan employed 1,500 FTE paid staff (2,200 employees) in 2012/13. This was six per cent of the estimated total number of FTE paid staff working within the voluntary sector in Greater Manchester for the period.

In the 2017 report on Greater Manchester as a whole, it is estimated that 28,600 FTE paid staff were employed in the VCSE sector in Greater Manchester in 2016/17, representing 42,600 employees. If it is assumed that as in 2012/13six per cent of Greater Manchester's VCSE paid staff were in Wigan organisations this would suggest a figure of approximately 1,700 FTE staff in Wigan's VCSE sector. However this cannot be evidenced due to the low response rate.

The data does allow for some analysis of the paid workforce, however. Figure 6.1 presents a breakdown of responding organisations by the number of FTE paid staff they employed. Two-thirds (67 per cent) of organisations employed less than five FTE paid staff members. Included in this figure were 41 per cent of organisations that did not employ any paid staff. At the other end of the spectrum 18 per cent of organisations employed 20 or more FTE paid members of staff.

Compared with the Greater Manchester sample as a whole, a greater proportion of organisations within Wigan appear to have FTE paid staff: 59 per cent in Wigan compared with 49 per cent in Greater Manchester.

Figure 6.1: Organisations by numbers of FTE paid staff



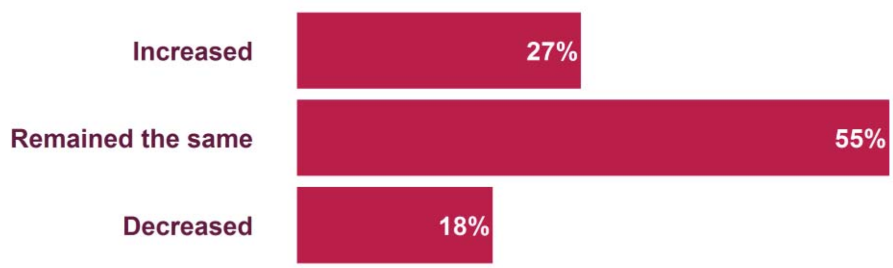
Source: Wigan State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 49

6.2. How has the VCSE sector's workforce changed in the last 12 months?

The survey asked respondents whether the number of staff in their organisation's workforce had ‘increased’, ‘remained the same’ or ‘decreased’ this year compared to the previous year. Figure 6.2 presents the results to this question, the key findings of which are:

- 55 per cent of organisations employed a similar number of paid employees compared to a year ago
- 27 per cent of organisations reported an increase in paid staff compared to 18 per cent that reported a decrease
- across Greater Manchester 22 per cent of organisations reported an increase in their number of paid employees, while 16 per cent reported a decrease.

Figure 6.2: Change in aspects of the workforce (paid staff) in the last 12 months



Source: Wigan State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 49
Note: 'cannot say' response has been excluded from the analysis

Volunteers

7

This chapter looks at the volunteers within the VCSE sector in Wigan.

7.1. How many volunteers are part of the VCSE sector workforce in Wigan?

The low response rate to the 2016/17 survey means it is not feasible to give a robust estimate of the voluntary workforce in Wigan's VCSE sector. The 2013 report noted:

- *30,000 volunteers were part of the voluntary sector's workforce in Wigan in 2012/13; this represents nine per cent of Wigan's total population (318,100) and nine per cent of the estimated total for Greater Manchester organisations*
- *these volunteers provided an estimated 85,800 hours of their time per week; this was eight per cent of the estimated number of volunteer hours for all Greater Manchester organisations.*

(Wigan State of the Voluntary Sector 2013)

It is estimated there are 461,800 volunteers in the VCSE sector's workforce in Greater Manchester in 2016/17. This includes 355,800 volunteers plus 105,900 committee/board members. This figure for volunteers is equivalent to 13 per cent of Greater Manchester's total population (2,756,200). It is also estimated 1.1 million hours of their time is provided by these volunteers and committee/board members per week. These figures have been calculated using responses to the 2016/17 survey across Greater Manchester on numbers of volunteers and committee/board members and the hours which they contribute. They also draw on the assumptions used to estimate the total number of organisations in Greater Manchester.

The 2013 study of the VCSE sector across Greater Manchester estimated that there were 334,200 volunteers in Greater Manchester who provided 1.1 million hours per week. This represents an increase of approximately 40 per cent in the number of volunteers (including committee / board members) but the amount of hours they provide would appear to have remained the same. The previous study however did not ask for volunteers and committee/board members to be recorded separately so caution should be applied when making comparisons.

There are two broad approaches to valuing the contribution of volunteers. One method, and this study's preferred approach, is to value the output that they produce. In effect this is the value to society of the goods and services that volunteers produce. This can be estimated by multiplying the number of FTE volunteers by the estimated gross value added (GVA) per FTE employee.[10] From this calculation, the 2013 report

[10] This study used Greater Manchester GVA per employee averaged across the following two VCSE sectors: education and human health and social work activities.

estimated the economic contribution of volunteers in Wigan organisations to be £76.9 million per annum.26

In the second method, the value of the input of volunteers is used to value the contribution of volunteers.[11] This is the amount that it would cost to pay employees to do the work carried out by volunteers. As such, this can be considered to be the benefit to organisations.[12] However, this benefit might also be passed onto society via lower prices for goods and services due to lower costs of production. The input value of volunteers can be calculated by multiplying the number of hours that volunteers give per week by an estimate of how much it would cost to employ someone to do that work. There are a number of widely accepted hourly rates that could be used to estimate this value; these include: the national minimum wage, the local median wage, the local mean wage and the reservation wage. The latter, the hourly rate associated with the actual role of volunteers is the preferred option; however incomplete responses to the breakdown of volunteers by their role prevented an accurate calculation using this method. Therefore the preference in these studies has been to provide a range using the national minimum wage (low estimate) and the local median wage (high estimate). In reality the true value of the input provided by volunteers will lie between the two estimates. The 2013 Wigan study estimated the following:

- *assuming the national living wage at the time (£6.19 per hour for adults over the age of 21) it would have cost £27.6 million annually to employ staff to do the work provided by volunteers in Wigan organisations.*
- *assuming the median gross hourly wage for full time employees in the North West at the time (£11.94 for 2012) it would have cost £53.3 million annually to employ staff to do the work provided by volunteers in Wigan organisations.*

(Wigan State of the Voluntary Sector 2013)

Although the overall number of volunteers and the economic value of their contribution cannot be estimated from the 2016/17 data, it has been possible to develop a breakdown of responding organisations from the VCSE sector in Wigan by the number of volunteers that they use. Figure 7.1 shows that seven per cent of respondents indicated they had no volunteers. At the other end of the spectrum, 31 per cent indicated they had 50 or more.

Figure 7.1: Organisations by numbers of volunteers

Source: Wigan State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 55

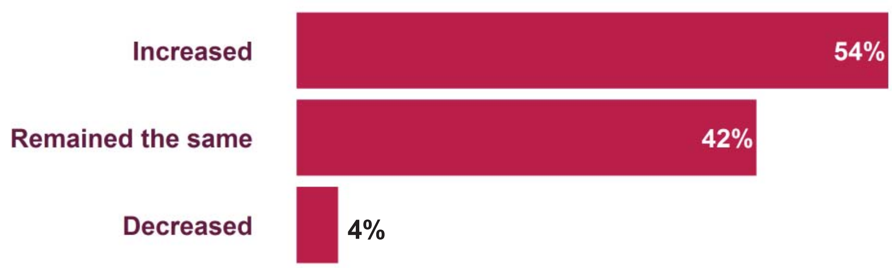
[11] This is the approach recommended by Volunteering England.
[12] This assumes that there are no additional costs faced by organisations in using volunteers: for example extra management costs.

7.2. How has the VCSE sector's workforce changed in the last 12 months?

The survey asked respondents whether the number of volunteers in their organisation's workforce had 'increased', 'remained the same' or 'decreased' this year compared to the previous year. Figure 7.2 presents the results to this question, the key findings of which are

- 54 per cent of respondents reported increased numbers of volunteers now compared to a year ago
- in comparison just four per cent of organisations reported a decrease in volunteer numbers
- just over two fifths (42 per cent) of Greater Manchester organisations reported an increase in their number of volunteers over the previous year, compared with 13 per cent who reported a decrease.

Figure 7.2: Change in aspects of the workforce (volunteers) in the last 12 months



Source: Wigan State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 50
Note: 'cannot say' response has been excluded from the analysis

7.3. Qualitative responses on volunteering

The following extract is from findings across the whole of Greater Manchester.

The benefits of volunteering

Focus group participants from across Greater Manchester highlighted volunteering as an essential and highly valuable feature of the 'identity' of the VCSE sector and its work supporting people and communities. A range of benefits were consistently identified with volunteering:

- **Innovation and skills:** bringing new ideas, experiences, perspectives and expertise to VCSE organisations
- **Service delivery:** enabling VCSE organisations to maintain and improve existing services or develop new ones
- **Reach:** enabling organisations to support parts of the community which otherwise could not be reached, to enter new fields of activity, and to better understand service-users with whom they are already working
- **Governance and accountability:** improving staff accountability and responsibility, bringing their broad experiences and 'grounded' perspective to VCSE organisations' work and revitalising internal democratic processes
- **Active citizenship**: acting as role models within VCSE organisations, both for service-users and the wider community, including promoting the work of VCSE organisations prompting more people to become involved
- **Pathway to employment:** using volunteering as a springboard to new careers, often the health, social care, social work, education and community-development fields.

Changes in volunteering

The focus groups provided a mixed picture of whether or not levels of volunteering had changed in recent years. Participants in a number of areas reported an increase in the number of volunteers whilst in other areas this was said to have remained relatively stable.

> *"We see more people coming in and seeking opportunities from a variety of backgrounds. The 'drivers' are similar, but we just see more people coming through."*

> *"We use many volunteers. But I don't think there is a significant increase or decrease. Once we get them, we do keep them."*

In general larger VCSE organisations were more likely to have reported an increase in volunteers whist smaller organisations were more likely to be struggling to retain and recruit volunteers.

Where volunteering levels had increased this was equated, in part, to an increase in the number of young people seeking to volunteer.

> *"We have a lot more students now and we can help them focus on the jobs they want."*

It was reported that young people increasingly saw volunteering as 'stepping stone' to a professional career, gaining valuable work experience to enhance their CVs.

Challenges associated with volunteering

Focus group participants identified a number of challenges associated with volunteering. Foremost amongst these was the need for 'quality volunteers': VCSE organisations either needed dedicated and skilled volunteers with knowledge and experience of the type of work being undertaken, or they needed sufficient resources to support recruit, train and co-ordinate volunteers on a consistent basis. In a climate of limited funding opportunities from the public sector, processes of development and maintaining a suitable volunteer 'workforce' was increasingly challenging.

> *"Volunteers are invaluable for what we do and what we are, but the time and resources needed to manage all that and get something out of it, can be exhausting."*

The focus groups highlighted differences in the *intensity* and *extent* of these challenges and the *effect* they have for different types of VCSE organisation. Smaller organisations seemed to be most acutely affected due to their more limited resources and personnel, as well as their higher dependence on volunteering for continuing to offer their services against a backdrop of increasing demand. Many of these smaller organisations faced difficulties when 'competing' for grants and contracts, which expect certain standards and policies with respect to volunteers that they do not have the capacity to implement.

> *"Of course, there is a cost to think of. An organisation of our size…who pays for their DBS? We do. Who pays for their training certificates to get them to level 1? We do. Who pays for my wage? Well, somebody got to. There is a cost element to it but the argument is, when you go out for bids, 10 per cent of your marks is the added value you can bring in from volunteers."*

8

Partnership Working: the Public Sector

This chapter considers the relationship between the VCSE sector and the public sector, exploring organisations' experiences of partnership working with Wigan Council and other public sector bodies.

8.1. Dealings with local public sector bodies

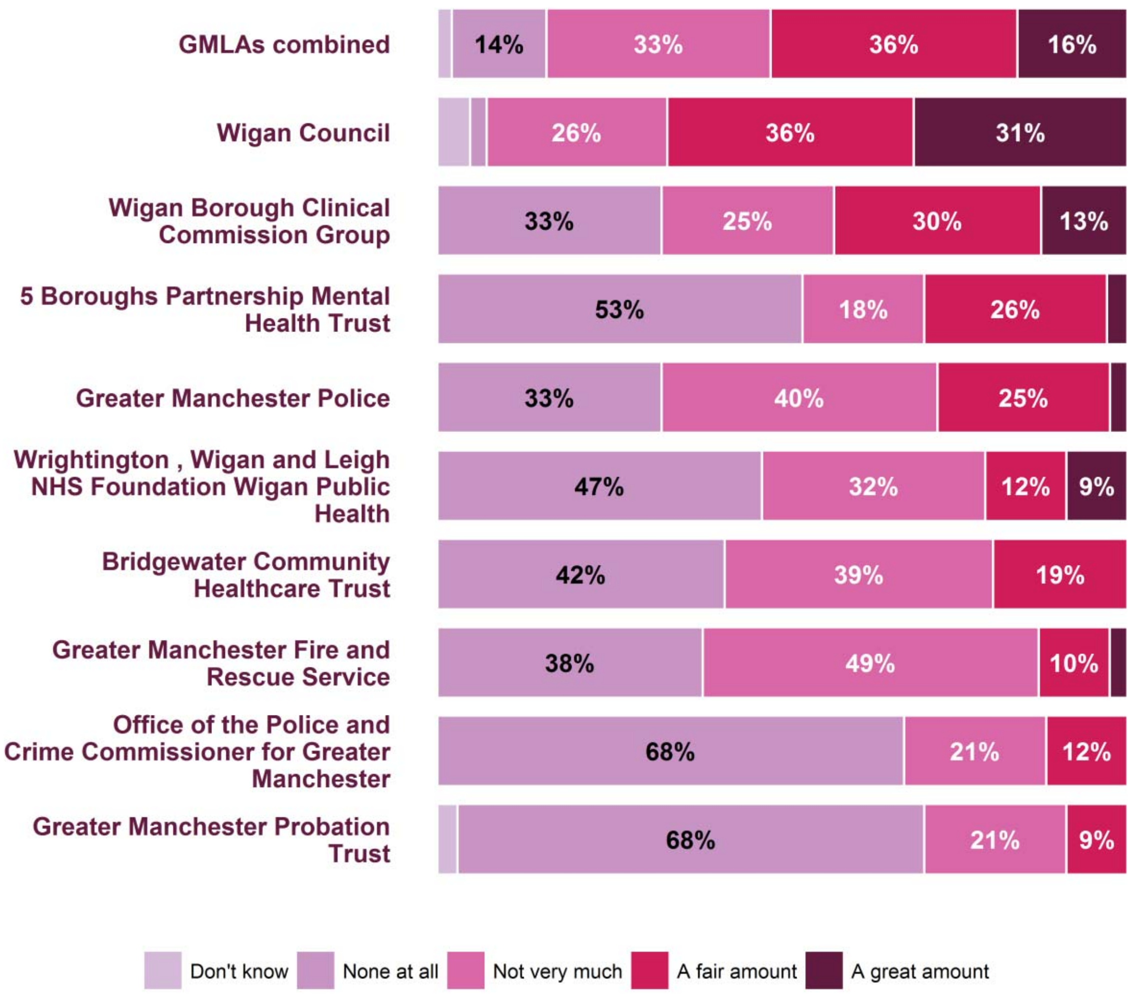
Survey respondents were asked about the extent of their dealings with each of the main public sector bodies covering Wigan. An overview of their responses is provided in figure 8.1, along with the local authority figure for Greater Manchester combined.

This shows that survey respondents had dealings with a range of local public sector bodies. The two most prominent were Wigan Council and Wigan Borough Clinical Commission Group:

- **Wigan Council:** 93 per cent had some dealings with the Council; including 31 per cent who had a 'great amount' of dealings and 36 per cent who had a 'fair amount' of dealings
- **Wigan Borough Clinical Commission Group:** 68 per cent had some dealings with Wigan Borough Clinical Commission Group; including 13 per cent who had a 'great amount' of dealings and 30 per cent who had a 'fair amount' of dealings.

Local authorities consistently emerged as the most prominent public sector contact for respondents to this study across Greater Manchester. Overall, 16 per cent of respondents said they had a 'great amount' of dealings with their local authority and 36 per cent said they had a 'fair amount'.

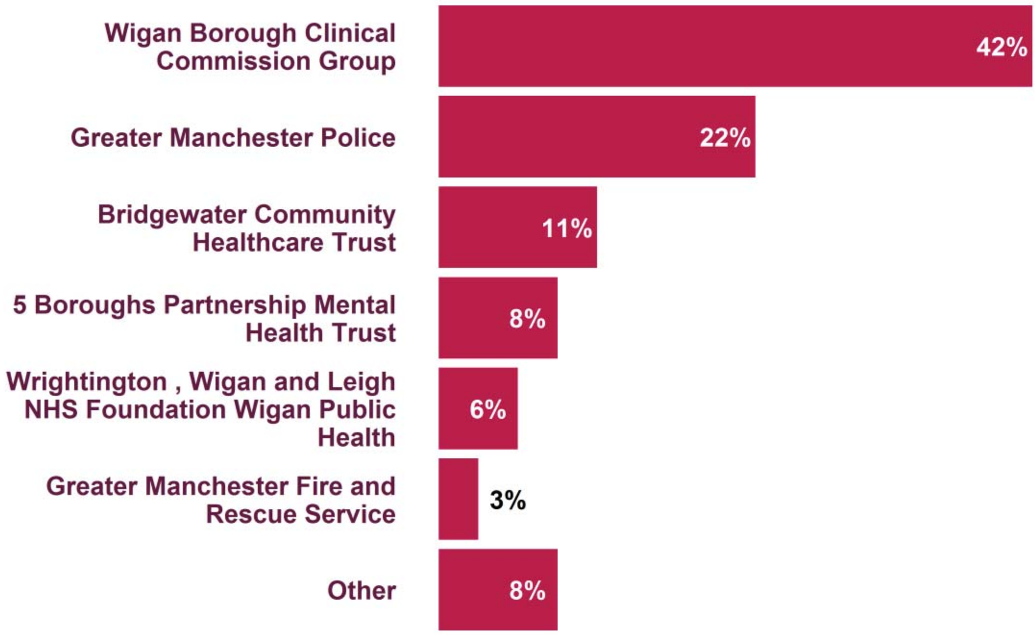
Figure 8.1: Dealings with local public sector bodies



Source: Wigan/ Greater Manchester State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 14-40 (Wigan), 1,080 (Greater Manchester)

Survey respondents were asked to indicate their most frequent public sector contact other than their local authority. Figure 8.2 shows the responses received to this question with Wigan Borough Clinical Commission Group the most commonly cited.

Figure 8.2: Most frequent public sector contact other than local authority

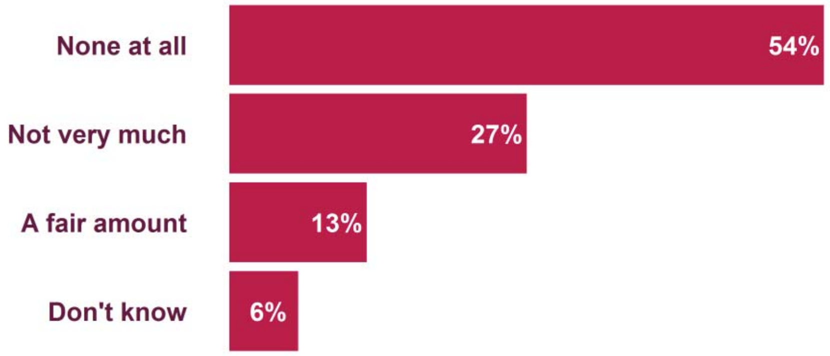


Source: Wigan State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 36

Respondents were also asked to consider the extent to which their organisation has direct dealings with any emerging Greater Manchester structures (e.g. Greater Manchester Combined Authority, The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, The Health and Social Care Devolution Team etc.). Figure 8.3 presents the results to this question.

Two-fifths had some dealings with any of the emerging structures including 13 per cent who had a 'fair amount' of dealings. Results were similar across Greater Manchester where 38 per cent had some dealings, including two per cent who had a 'great amount' of dealings and 10 per cent who had a 'fair amount' of dealings.

Figure 8.3: Dealings with emerging Greater Manchester structures



Source: Wigan State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 48

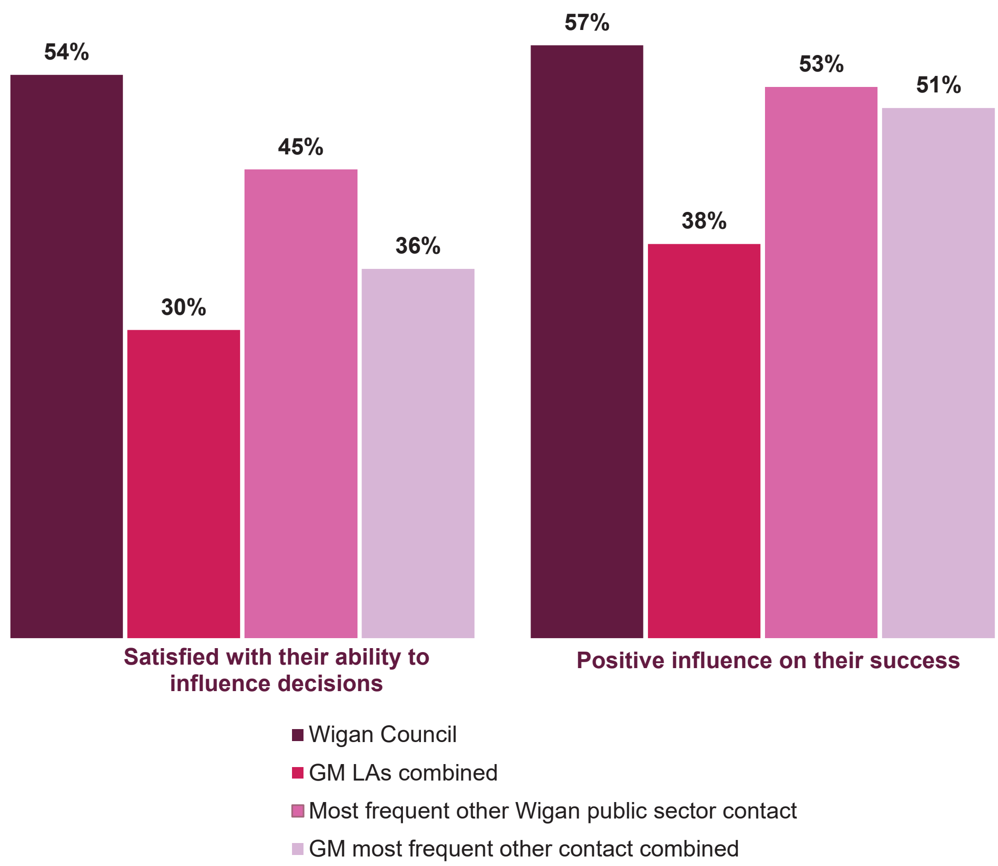
8.2. Relationships with local public sector bodies

Survey respondents were also asked two further questions about the extent to which their organisations were satisfied with their ability to influence public sector decisions of relevance to their organisation and the extent to which they thought local statutory bodies influenced their success[13]. The results of these questions are summarised in figure 8.4. A comparison with the Greater Manchester average is also provided.

Figure 8.4 shows that 54 per cent of respondents were satisfied with their ability to influence Wigan decisions of relevance to their organisation and 57 per cent said that the council had a positive influence on their organisation's success. Results are more positive than the Greater Manchester combined figures (30 per cent were satisfied with ability to influence their local authority and 38 per cent agreed their local authority has a positive influence on their success).

In addition, 45 per cent of respondents said they were satisfied with their ability to influence the key decisions of their most frequent other public sector contact and 53 per cent said this contact had a positive influence on their success. These are more positive than the Greater Manchester combined figures (36 per cent and 51 per cent respectively).

Figure 8.4: Proportion of organisations who said they were satisfied with their ability to influence public sector decisions of relevance to their organisation and who said local public sector bodies influence their organisation's success



Source: Wigan / Greater Manchester State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: Wigan: 35/31 (ability to influence), 35/32 (positive influence); Greater Manchester: 897/570 (ability to influence), 889/605 (positive influence)

[13] This latter measure was used in 2008 and 2010 to provide evidence of local authority performance against 'National indicator 7: the environment for a thriving third sector'.

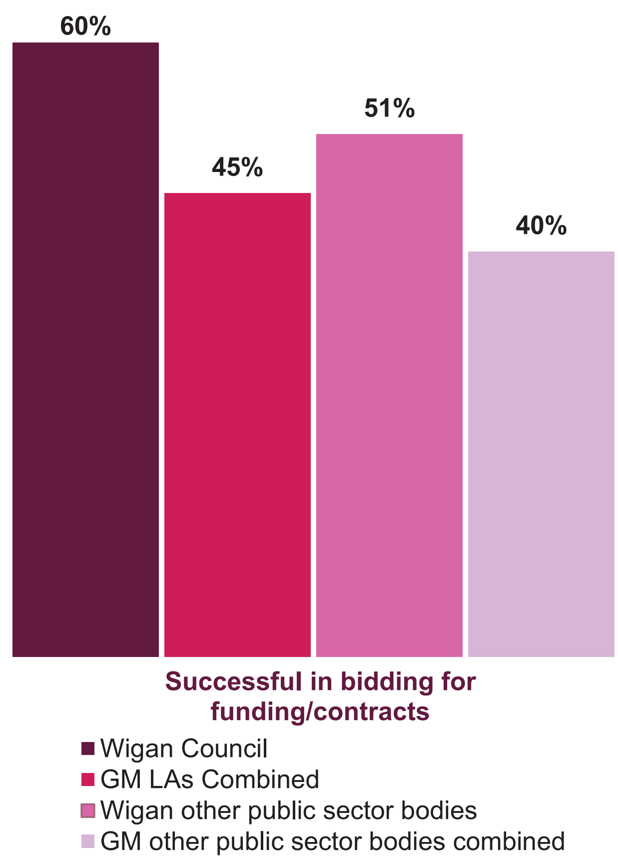
8.3. Funding from local public sector bodies

Respondents were also asked to reflect on their experiences of public sector funding in terms of how successful they had been, how satisfied they were with bidding arrangements, and how satisfied they were with the level of opportunity to bid for long-term funding.

Figure 8.5 shows responses to the question which asked organisations to consider how successful they had been in applying for funding or bidding for contracts. Results are split between perceptions of Wigan Council and of other public sector bodies. A comparison with the Greater Manchester average is also provided.

This shows that 60 per cent of respondents were successful in bidding for funding or contracts with Wigan Council compared to a 51 per cent success-rate with other public sector bodies. At the Greater Manchester level, smaller proportions had been successful in bidding for funding or contracts from their local authority, and other public sector bodies (45 per cent and 40 per cent respectively).

Figure 8.5: Success bidding for funding and contracts



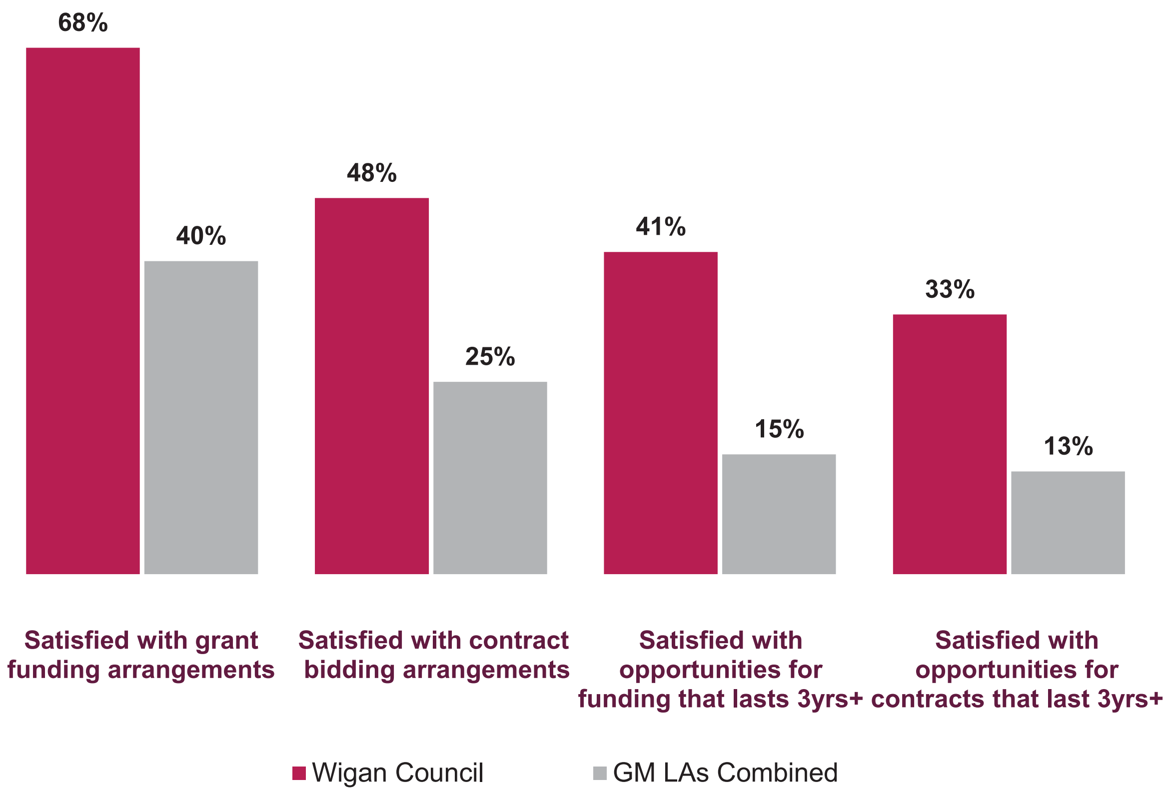
Source: Wigan / Greater Manchester State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: Wigan: 40/47; Greater Manchester: 1,060/1,036

Respondents were asked specifically about Wigan Council and how satisfied they were with their grant funding and contract bidding arrangements and opportunities for funding and contracts lasting three years or longer. The responses are illustrated in figure 8.6. A comparison with the Greater Manchester local authority average is also provided.

Almost seven out of ten (68 per cent) were satisfied with grant funding arrangements. Satisfaction with contract bidding arrangements was lower at 48 per cent.

Satisfaction with opportunities for funding lasting three years or longer was also lower at 41 per cent and lower still for opportunities for contracts lasting three years or longer (33 per cent). The pattern was similar among the Greater Manchester combined figures although on every measure the proportion satisfied was lower.

Figure 8.6: Experiences of bidding for funding and contracts with local authorities

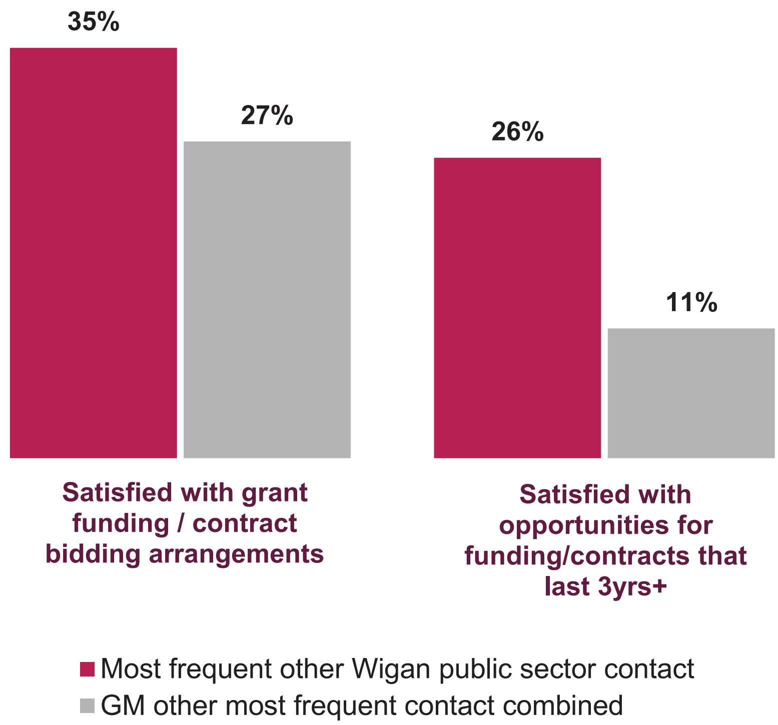


Source: Wigan / Greater Manchester State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: Wigan: 37 (grant funding arrangements), 29 (contract bidding arrangements), 29 (opportunities for funding), 27 (opportunities for contracts); Greater Manchester: 808 (grant funding arrangements), 631 (contract bidding arrangements), 703 (opportunities for funding), 605 (opportunities for contracts)

Survey respondents were asked to consider how satisfied they were with the grant funding and contract bidding arrangements of their most frequent other public sector contact. As figure 8.7 shows, 35 per cent indicated they were satisfied, higher than across Greater Manchester as a whole (27 per cent).

They were also asked about their satisfaction with opportunities for funding and contracts longer than three years. Around one quarter of respondents were satisfied, higher than the Greater Manchester combined figure (11 per cent).

Figure 8.7: Experiences of bidding for funding and contracts with other public sector bodies



Source: Wigan / Greater Manchester State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: Wigan: 37 (funding/bidding arrangements), 35 (opportunities for funding/contracts); Greater Manchester: 705 (funding/bidding arrangements), 687 (opportunities for funding/contracts)

8.4. Qualitative responses on relationships between the VCSE sector and local public sector bodies

The following extract is from findings across the whole of Greater Manchester.

Devolution

Much focus group discussion focussed on the prospects for devolution in Greater Manchester and its potential impact on VCSE organisations in each area. Overall, participants expressed uncertainty about the implications of devolution for their work and many were sceptical and cautious that it would be a positive development.

> *"Devolution is not sorted. What devolution means for us? Does it mean a collaboration, a partnership or a merger? Does it mean a merger with a local organisation or a national organisation? And it's a massive piece of work to get into. So I feel as an organisation a little bit like a rabbit caught in front of the headlight, with devolution being the headlight."*

Larger organisations tended to have greater knowledge and understanding than smaller ones, particularly if they had attended meetings and events on the subject, but even they tended to feel that more information was needed before they could fully understand the implications of devolution at an organisation and VCSE sector level.

Outside of the City of Manchester, where the majority of larger organisations and Greater Manchester organisations tend to be based, there was a collective sense amongst focus group participants that devolution would not be a positive development - either in terms of the amount of funding available or the ability to influence policy decisions - and that organisations within the City of Manchester had most to gain. Similarly, it was felt larger VCSE organisations would be most likely to benefit from devolution as they would have the resources and connections necessary to engage with and influence policy developments.

> *"I have a lot of concerns about devolution…who owns the partnership? Who are they giving* [the money] *to? Is anyone from* [borough] *involved? I don't think so. So I'm quite nervous about the dominance of Manchester; who decides all this? We used to have a good relationship with* [borough] *council regarding contracts, but who do we go to now? Because the money will not be coming out from them."*

Broader relationships with the public sector

The focus groups also discussed VCSE organisations' broader experiences of working with the public sector. Overall, these discussions were critical of local public sector bodies and the way they worked with VCSE organisations, highlighting a growing sense that VCSEs and the state are becoming increasingly 'disconnected'.

> *"With the funding being cut, there is a huge emphasis on having to come up with this really huge innovative scheme to get the next grant, when actually what you are doing is really valuable and it's on the nail of the head of what is required in your community. Having to constantly start new things rather than sustaining really good things which already exist, it's pure foolishness."*

Common themes across Greater Manchester areas included:

- Lack of funding and support for VCSEs
- Too much bureaucracy
- Limited experience, knowledge and understanding amongst public sector staff of the VCSE sector
- Poor communication and consultation
- Poorly designed policies
- Unreasonably demanding and overly arduous procurement practices.

However, participants were keen to highlight pockets of good practice within the public sector in its dealings with VCSEs and emphasised that relationships and practices tended to vary over time.

> *"I think it works when the public sector involves the voluntary sector from the beginning. When you feel that your opinion and input are valued from the start and your involvement from start to finish is considered important."*

Key to developing and maintaining effective partnerships with the public sector were the personal relationships VCSEs have with key staff and the trust that is built at an individual level over time.

> *"It's very much relationships with individuals; the personal relationships that you have developed over the years."*

Smaller organisations and social enterprises tended to be more negative than large charities about their relationships with public sector bodies: these VCSE organisations found it particularly challenging to participate in public sector procurement processes with the demanding and bureaucratic processes that were in place.

"It's just got really difficult. Because they went from grants to contracts which is in favour of larger organisations and the council doesn't want to give them in smaller voluntary organisations and it's getting harder and harder to do to application bits."

9

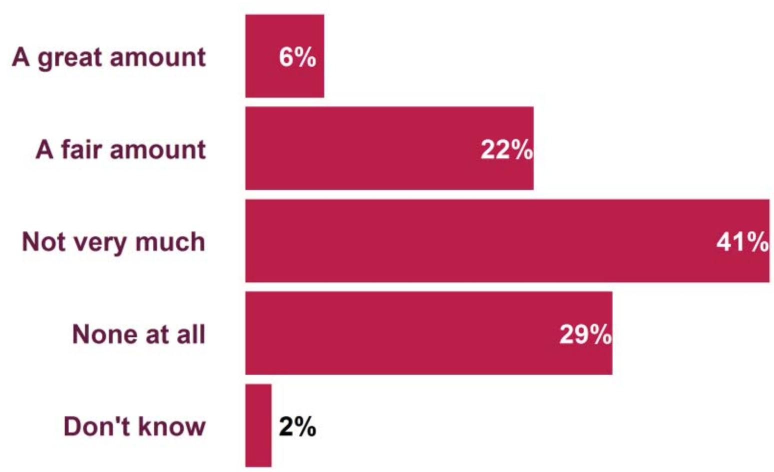
Partnership Working: the Private Sector

The previous chapter explored respondents' experiences of partnership working with public sector bodies. This chapter moves on to explore their experiences of working with private sector organisations. Survey respondents were asked about their direct dealings and experiences of working with private businesses in Wigan.

9.1. Working with private businesses

Survey respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they had direct dealings with private businesses in Wigan. Sixty nine per cent reported that they had some direct dealings, with 29 per cent having a 'great' or 'fair' amount of contact (figure 9.1). This is lower than the average for Greater Manchester as a whole (21 per cent 'great' or 'fair' amount of contact).

Figure 9.1: Extent of direct dealings with private businesses

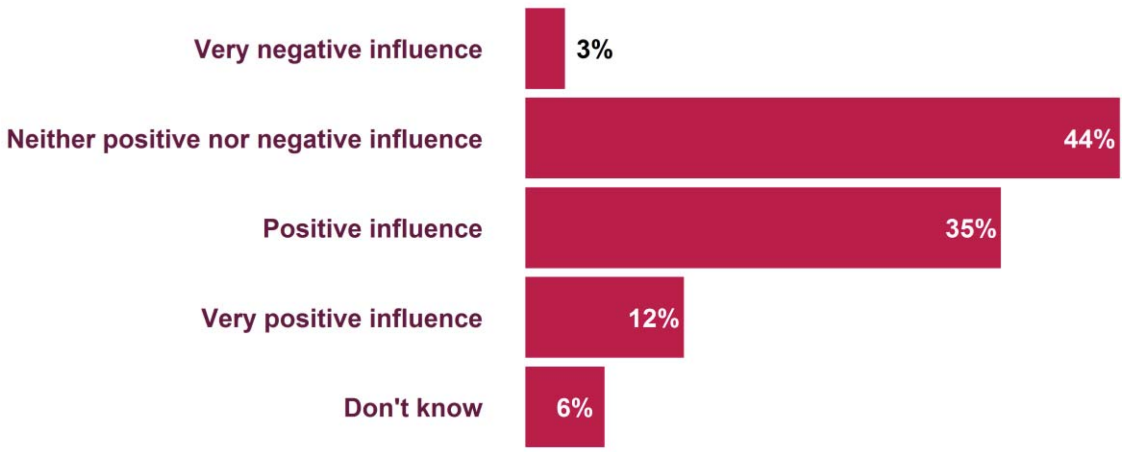


Source: Wigan State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 49

Three respondents (six per cent) indicated that they were members of a formal private sector-led consortium (two per cent of organisations overall across Greater Manchester did so), while four respondents (eight per cent) of respondents said their organisation is in formal partnership with any private sector organisations, identical to the proportion across Greater Manchester as a whole.

Respondents were asked to comment on the influence private businesses have on their organisation's success. Taking all things into account, almost half (47 per cent) of survey respondents felt that the private business community in Wigan was a positive influence on their organisation's success. This is greater than the proportion for Greater Manchester as a whole (31 per cent).

Figure 9.2: Private business community's influence on VCSE sector organisations' success



Source: Wigan State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 34

9.2. Qualitative responses on working with private sector businesses

The following extract is from findings across the whole of Greater Manchester.

Focus group participants discussed their views about and experiences of working with private businesses. Overall, VCSE organisations viewed this positively, particularly when it meant forging links with local businesses with strong roots in their area. Aside from donations (which were always welcome) participants identified a range of ways in which they could benefit and learn from partnerships with the private sector:

- approaches to resource management
- organisational development, including strategic and business planning
- recruitment strategies.

"By being a part of the chamber of commerce their events and activities…just the fact of learning how to run an organisation without having the emotional connect, learning to be sustainable, improving in customer service, how to make a strong business plan, strategic growth, recruiting and so on…it has been very important for us."

Participants also identified a number of barriers to partnership working with the private sector. These included a 'cultural divide' between the two sectors and the perception that they have fundamentally different value bases: that the VCSE sector is motivated by the vision of created a positive impact on people and communities; but the private sector is primarily motivated by profit.

"It's a massive culture change though. They don't see costs or anything like we do, they don't like abstract concepts, so it's basically a learning experience for us. A very useful learning experience."

A further barrier to closer working between the two sectors was perceived to be personal relationships and trust that could be developed through effective collaboration.

> *"It’s a huge shift in the culture though, because you have to understand their language and your staff must adapt quickly to that, but if you build some trust with them, we can be very productive."*

Participants emphasised how it was easier to develop such relationships when it was clear certain individuals within private businesses were motivated by a *"sincere desire to do good in the community*". In addition, some smaller organisations doubted whether they had the necessary skills and confidence to build effective links and ongoing communication with the private sector.

10

Partnership Working: Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise Organisations

The previous two chapters have explored respondents' experiences of working with organisations from the public and private sectors. This chapter discusses survey respondents' views on their work with other VCSE sector organisations.

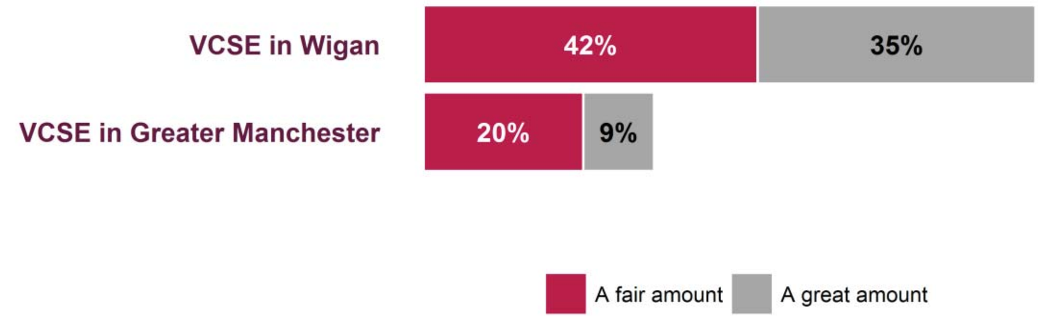
10.1. Working with other VCSE organisations

Survey respondents were asked about the extent to which they had direct dealings with other VCSE sector organisations in both Wigan and Greater Manchester.

The vast majority (93 per cent) had some direct dealings with other VCSE sector organisations in Wigan, and as figure 10.1 illustrates, 77 per cent had a 'great' or 'fair amount' of contact. Results are largely similar across Greater Manchester, where 90 per cent had some direct dealings with other VCSE sector organisations in their local area and 67 per cent had a 'great' or 'fair amount' of contact.

The proportion of respondents reporting they had direct dealings with other VCSE sector organisations in Greater Manchester was slightly lower (89 per cent), while the proportion who had a 'great' or 'fair amount' of contact was noticeably lower (29 per cent). Across Greater Manchester, 70 per cent of respondents reported direct dealings and 37 per cent said they had a 'great' or 'fair amount' of contact.

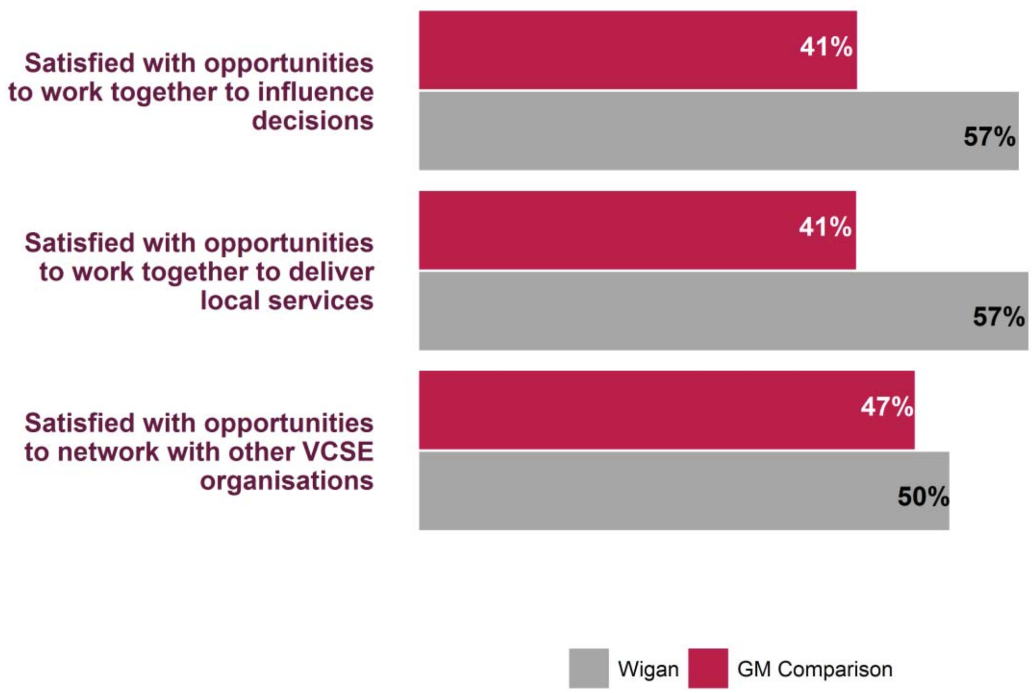
Figure 10.1: Extent of direct dealings with VCSE organisations



Source: Wigan State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 43 (Wigan) / 45 (Greater Manchester)

Respondents were asked to reflect on the opportunities they had to work with other VCSE sector organisations in terms of influencing local decisions, delivering local services and networking. Figure 10.2 summarises the responses.

Figure 10.2: Satisfaction with opportunities to work with VCSE organisations



Source: Wigan State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 46 (influence decisions) / 47 (delivering services) / 46 (networking)

This shows that 57 per cent of respondents were satisfied with the availability of opportunities to influence local decisions and that 57 per cent were satisfied with the availability of opportunities to work together to deliver local services. A smaller proportion of organisations across Greater Manchester were both satisfied with opportunities to influence local decisions (41 per cent) and with opportunities to work together to deliver local services (41 per cent). Half (50 per cent) of respondents were also satisfied with opportunities to network with other VCSE organisations (47 per cent across Greater Manchester as a whole).

One fifth (21 per cent) of respondents said their organisation is a member of a formal VCSE sector consortium, similar to the 22 per cent of organisations across Greater Manchester.

Thirteen per cent of respondents also indicated their organisation is in another type of formal partnership with other VCSE organisations to deliver specific services (13 per cent across Greater Manchester).

10.2. Qualitative reflections on working with other VCSE organisations

The following extract is from findings across the whole of Greater Manchester.

The focus groups discussed participants' views about and experiences of working in partnership with other VCSE organisations in their area and more widely. Participants were overwhelmingly positive about both their experiences of this type of partnership working and its importance moving forward.

"We work very well with other organisations and the feeling that I get is if I need something, I can ask you; if you need something, feel free to ask me. But beyond that, I want to give something back to the voluntary sector. We can share resources; so when you talk about your DBS, well, we do DBS; so I can do it for you."

Strong personal relationships with key staff in other VCSE organisations, embodied by high levels of trust, were consistently identified as a key factor in enabling effective partnership working.

"If you trust the individual, you trust the organisation; so if you believe that there is something than you can do better by working together, you usually go for it."

"Maybe you've helped them with something in the past and then they reciprocate and that's how these relationships are built. They are the best types of relationships to have with other organisations I think."

Where partnership working had been less effective this was often due to 'mismatches' between organisations. For example, when certain VCSE organisation's capabilities had been misunderstood, where personal relationships had broken down or not properly formed, or where there was a poor 'fit' between organisations values and practices.

"Sometimes it's a fantastic strength if you are similar organisations; if you have the same identity and aspirations. If it turns out you are not, it can get really bad, really quickly. And I guess we all want to protect what we've got, so this you know, suspicion, can be a barrier."

Smaller organisations and social enterprises were particularly positive about the merits of partnership working and many reported pursuing it as a strategy to enable them to 'compete' for funding and contracts. However, there was also caution expressed by some smaller organisations about partnering too closely with some large market-savvy charities who did not appear to share their ethos or values.

"Probably more with similar size and like-minded organisations. Yeah, if you are really like-minded and you do have the same values in terms of the outcomes you want to achieve, certainly. But, I wouldn't work with just anyone in the voluntary sector. And you don't want to be pitted against each other."

The Future

11

This chapter details the responses received to questions about the future in the survey of organisations.

11.1. Factors assisting or constraining delivery

Respondents were asked to consider the factors they anticipated assisting or constraining their organisation over the next 12 months. Figure 11.1 illustrates that almost three-fifths of respondents or more thought the following factors would assist their organisation over the next year

- **ability to retain staff/staff turnover:** 64 per cent anticipated this factor assisting their organisation; including 32 per cent who saw this as 'greatly assisting' and 32 per cent 'assisting'
- **ability to secure other sources of income:** 59 per cent anticipated this factor assisting their organisation; including 22 per cent who saw this as 'greatly assisting' and 38 per cent 'assisting'
- **engagement with public sector bodies:** 57 per cent anticipated this factor assisting their organisation; including 23 per cent who saw this as 'greatly assisting' and 33 per cent 'assisting'.

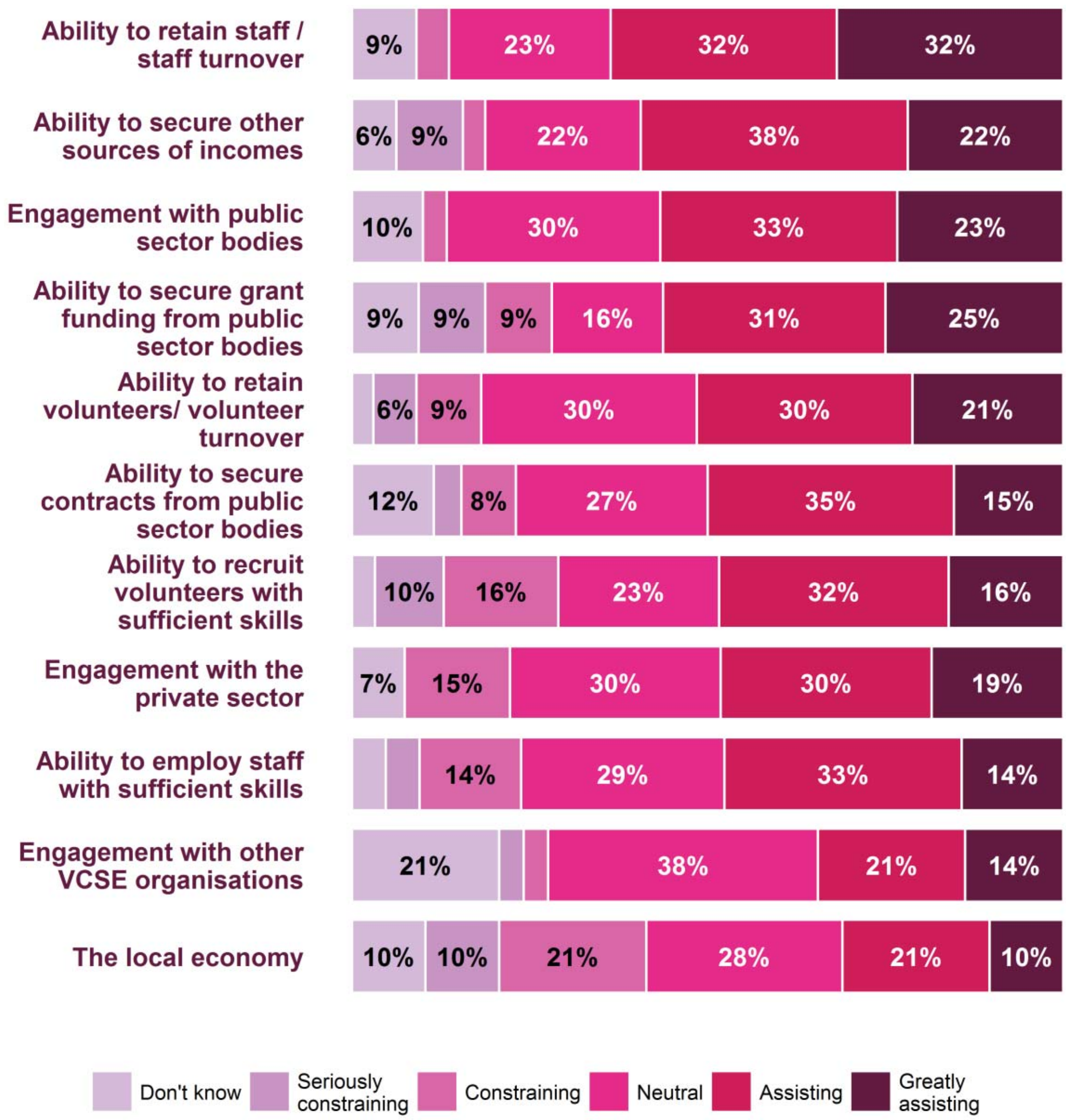
The picture was different across Greater Manchester where engagement with other VCSE organisations was the most common factor selected, with 50 per cent of organisations envisaging this factor assisting their organisation over the next 12 months.

In contrast over one quarter or more saw the following factors as constraining their organisation over the next 12 months:

- **the local economy:** 31 per cent anticipated this factor constraining their organisation; including 10 per cent who saw this as 'seriously constraining' and 21 per cent 'constraining'
- **ability to recruit volunteers with sufficient skills:** 26 per cent anticipated this factor constraining their organisation; including 10 per cent who saw this as 'seriously constraining' and 16 per cent 'constraining'.

The local economy was also the most common factor selected across Greater Manchester as a whole, with 38 per cent anticipating this factor constraining their organisation over the following year.

Figure 11.1: Factors anticipated as assisting or constraining organisations over the next 12 months



Source: Wigan State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 21-33

Following on from quantitative questions regarding the factors organisations anticipated assisting or constraining their organisation over the next year, respondents were also asked to provide further qualitative (i.e. written) information about these factors.

A mixture of comments were received:

> *"As we continue to grow we envisage more individual funders and business wanting to support our work. We are active in fundraising and engaging with local people and this is greatly assisting our work."*

> *"Our community group depends on volunteers to run its activities and events. Attracting people to give up some of their own time is always difficult, especially as more and more local groups are also looking to increase their volunteer base. How to attract younger volunteers is also a key issue."*

"We don't have the skills or people to search for and access grant funding etc."

"Applying for funding from traditional grant funders is proving to be very difficult as there appear to be more organisations chasing the same pot of money."

"Collaboration with other local VCSE and private sector organisations is assisting as we look to plug the void from public funds available. Constraint is the transition process, plus recruiting and keeping good staff with the right skills".

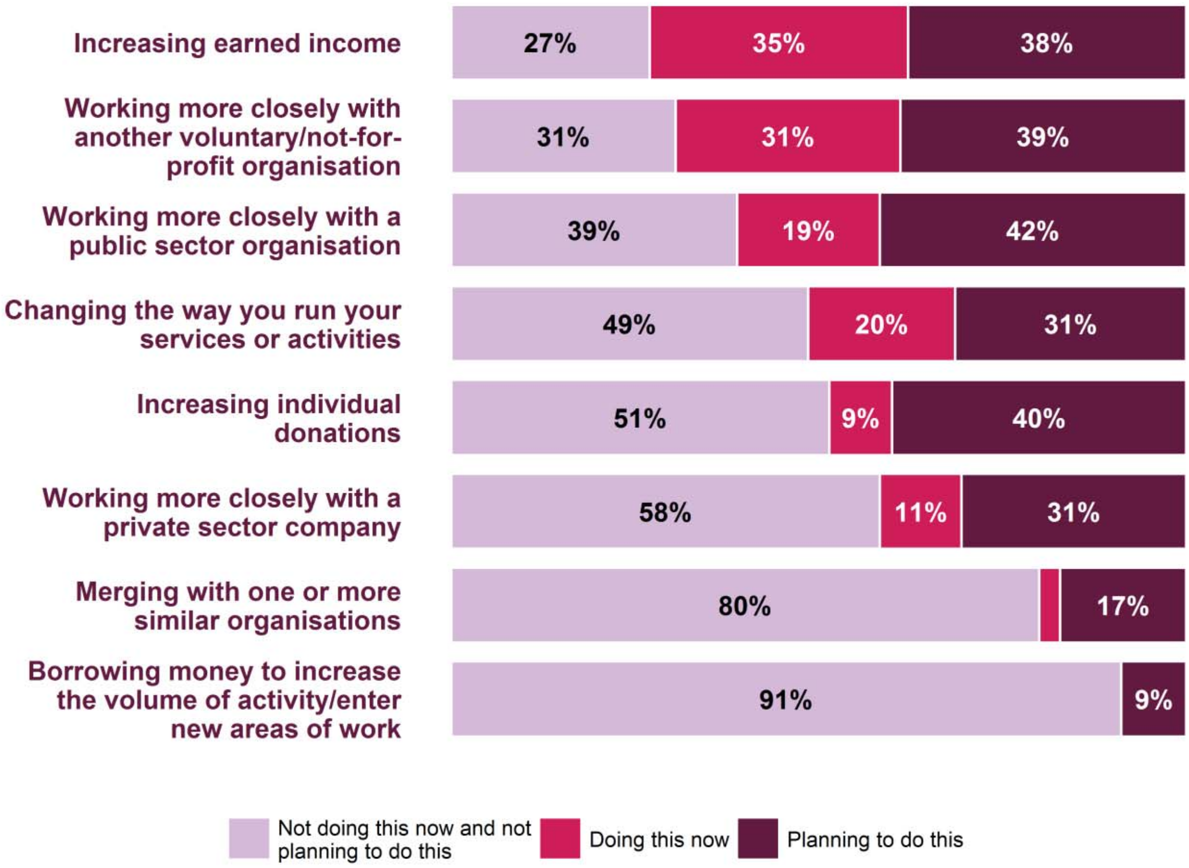
11.2. Current and future strategies

Survey respondents were asked what strategies they are actively pursuing or planning to pursue. Figure 11.2 summarises the responses received and shows that over 60 per cent of respondents were already doing or planning to do the following

- **increasing earned income:** 73 per cent were already pursuing or planning to pursue this strategy; including 35 per cent who are doing this now and 38 per cent who are planning to do this in the future
- **working more closely with another voluntary/not-for-profit organisation:** 69 per cent were already pursuing or planning to pursue this strategy; including 31 per cent who are doing this now and 39 per cent who are planning to do this
- **working more closely with a public sector organisation:** 61 per cent were already pursuing or planning to pursue this strategy; including 19 per cent who are doing this now and 42 per cent who are planning to do this.

Working more closely with another voluntary/not-for-profit organisation was the most common strategy being pursued by organisations across Greater Manchester as a whole.

Figure 11.2: Strategies being planned or pursued



Source: Wigan State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 34-37

Appendix 1

A1

Methodology

Survey of organisations

A web-based survey was distributed by Wigan & Leigh CVS and GMCVO to which at least partial responses were received from **55 organisations** between September 2016 and January 2017.

The survey was undertaken as part of a wider study in seven other Greater Manchester boroughs: Bolton, the City of Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport and Tameside.

The questionnaire was based on the one originally developed for the 'State of the Voluntary Sector Survey' undertaken in Salford in 2010. The questionnaire was revised for the 'Greater Manchester State of the Voluntary Sector' research undertaken in 2012/13 and again for this wave of the survey following input from the Research Steering Group. The Greater Manchester Chief Officers Group also provided additional oversight regarding the survey design and implementation.

The questionnaire provided data on various aspects of the VCSE sector including:

- **the scale and scope of its activity**, including the roles organisations undertake, the people they support, and the areas they benefit
- **the economic impact of its work**, including income and expenditure, sources of funding, the role of paid staff and volunteers, and financial sustainability
- **relationships with the public sector**, including Wigan Council, public sector health bodies, and a range of other local statutory bodies
- **relationships with other local organisations**, including VCSE organisations and private businesses.

When reading the report it is important to acknowledge the results reported are based on the survey responses received. Therefore it is possible that if a different sample of organisations had taken part in the survey different results may have emerged. It is estimated that the results reported are within +/- 13.1 percentage points of the true value.

Legal status of responding organisations

Respondents to the questionnaire were asked to identify the legal status of their organisation. For this question it was possible for organisations to select registered charity in addition to identifying their legal form. Figure A1 below shows the results received to this question.

Figure A1: The legal status of responding organisations

Source: Wigan State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 55