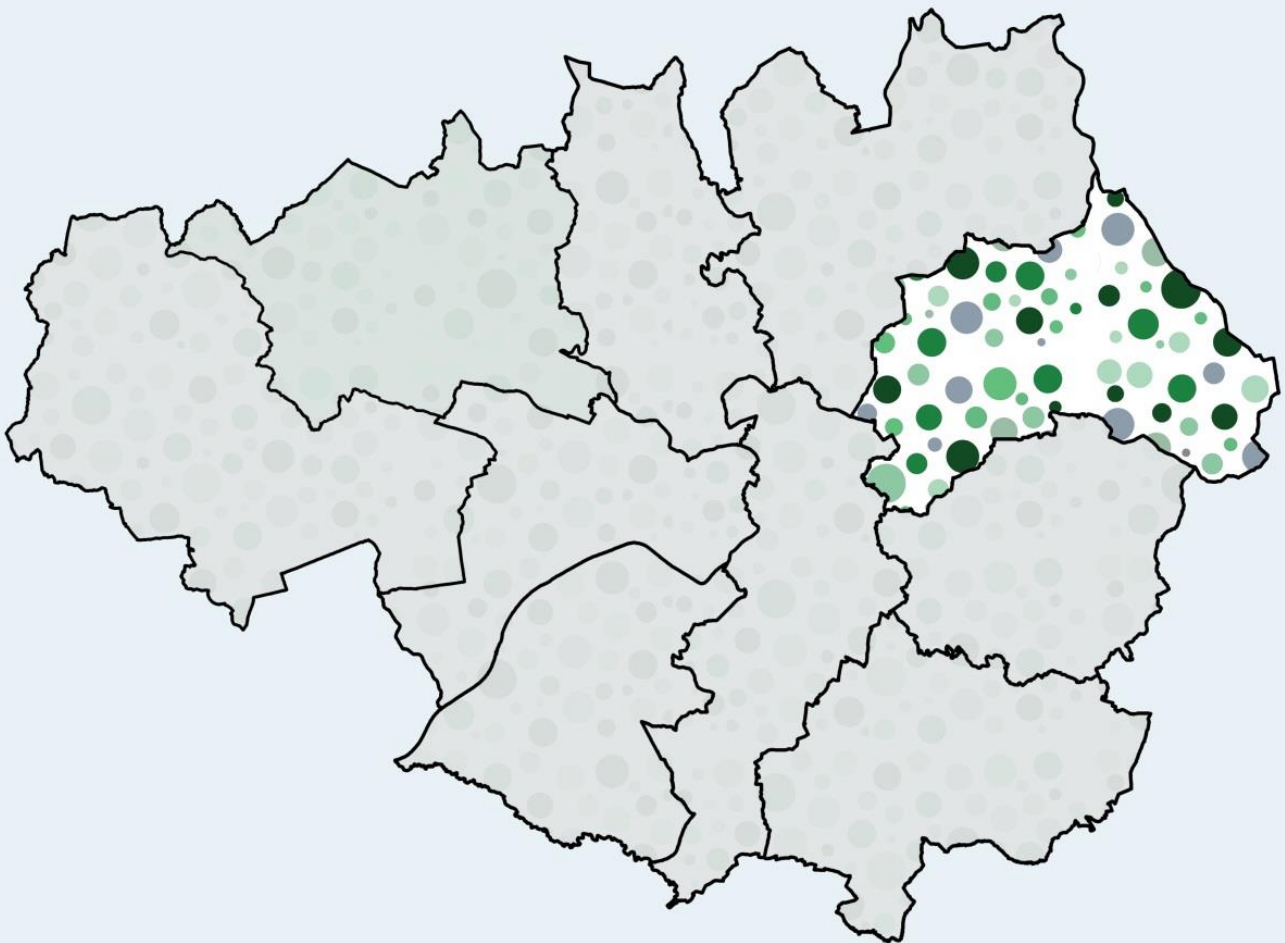


Oldham State of the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector 2017

*A report on social and
economic impact*



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

**Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research
Sheffield Hallam University**

Chris Damm
Ioannis Prinos
Elizabeth Sanderson

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In completing the report we are particularly grateful to members of the Research Steering Group³ and the Action Together in Oldham and Tameside team for their support in developing and administering the survey and for their input into earlier drafts of the report. We are also extremely grateful to the many employees and volunteers from across the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector who took the time to complete a questionnaire or participate in a focus group.

Contact information

For CRESR:

Name: Elizabeth Sanderson
Research Fellow
Address: Unit 10 Science Park
City Campus
Howard Street
Sheffield
S1 1WB
Tel: 0114 2254814
Email: e.sanderson@shu.ac.uk

For Action Together:

Name: Liz Windsor-Welsh
Chief Executive
Address: 95-97 Penny Meadow
Ashton-under-Lyne
OL6 6EP
Tel: 0161 339 2345
Email: lizww@actiontogether.org.uk

¹ 10GM is a joint venture by the Greater Manchester Voluntary Sector Infrastructure Organisations (Action Together in Oldham and Tameside, Bolton CVS, CVS Rochdale, Macc, Salford CVS, VCAT, Wigan & Leigh CVS)

² The other areas are: Bolton, Manchester, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside and Wigan.

³ The following organisations were represented on the Research Steering Group: CRESR, Salford CVS (lead partner), Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary Organisation (GMCVO), Bolton CVS, Macc, Action Together in Oldham and Tameside and CVS Rochdale.

Definitions

This report is about the 'state of the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector in Oldham'. 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 Oldham, 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.

Foreword

Action Together strives to build dynamic and strong communities in Oldham. We are in a time of immense political, system and structural change with increasing inequalities and levels of poverty. From this it is clear that the need for our work and that of the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector is as critical as ever. That's why we commissioned this independent research with Sheffield Hallam to gather insight into how VCSE activity in Oldham is changing and what that means for the support we need to provide and the external factors that will affect the sector's sustainability.

At Action Together we believe local people have the power to improve lives and communities particularly through collective action. It's evident from this research that Oldham has active and vibrant communities and a strong base for community action with 1,231 VCSE groups. These provide 1.8 million interventions of support to local people every year and a growing culture of volunteering with 37,000 people giving their time to benefit others.

As a team, we are frequently inspired by the real-life stories that underpin the statistics in this report and the difference each and every 'intervention' makes. What is sometimes easier to miss is to see the direct correlation between the work that the VCSE sector does and the key strategic priorities for Oldham: 43 per cent work to improve health and wellbeing (including mental health) and 41 per cent provide practical community development help to build and strengthen communities and reduce isolation.

Of significant concern and a call to action for Action Together is the fact that sustainability for many groups and organisations continues to be a major challenge. More groups and organisations are using their reserves to ensure that services run, that people are supported and that change happens in communities.

It's good to see that in a Co-operative Borough like Oldham, the responses we received highlight that partnership working is strong. Action Together makes connections and brokers new relationships right across the breadth of public services. In recent years this has included developing new initiatives such as the Action Oldham Fund that provides grant funding but also fosters new relationships with local businesses. So, it's particularly pleasing to see an 11 per cent increase (since 2013) in community groups reporting that local business has a positive impact on their organisations success.

Finally, we'd like to say a big thank you to everyone that completed the survey and all those involved in supporting us and the VCSE sector in Oldham. We hope you enjoy reading this report and do get in touch to see what more we can do by working together.

Best wishes



Liz Windsor Welsh

Action Together, Chief Executive



Ben Gilchrist

Action Together, Deputy Chief Executive

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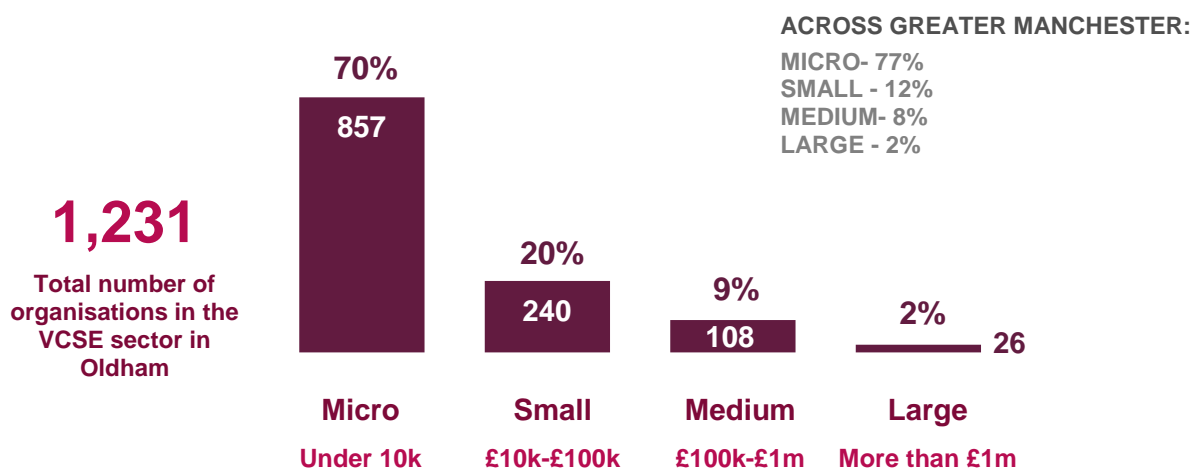
Executive Summary

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 Oldham. The key objective of the research was to provide a comprehensive overview of the sector in Oldham at the start of 2017.

In this summary we answer eleven key questions about the sector and its role across Oldham.

Q1. How many organisations are there?

There are an estimated **1,231 organisations** working in the VCSE sector in Oldham and the vast majority of organisations are micro or small (89 per cent with income less than £100,000):



Q2. Who benefits from their work?

The client groups served by the largest proportions of organisations can be broadly characterised as being demographic. Over two-fifths of organisations surveyed identified 'everyone' as their main clients, users or beneficiaries.



MAIN CLIENT GROUPS IN 2012/13:

EVERYONE - 37%
CHILDREN - 31%
YOUNG PEOPLE - 30%
WOMEN - 27%
MEN - 23%

MAIN CLIENT GROUPS ACROSS GREATER MANCHESTER:

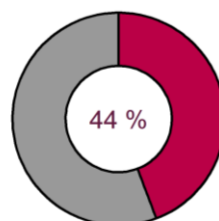
EVERYONE - 33%
CHILDREN & YOUNG ADULTS- 23%
OLDER PEOPLE - 17%
WOMEN - 15%
MEN - 12%

It is estimated that the VCSE sector in Oldham made:

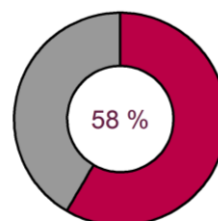
1.8 million interventions with clients, users or beneficiaries in the past year

The VCSE sector works at a range of different geographical levels both across and beyond Oldham. The local authority area, and specific communities and neighbourhoods within it, are the main focus for a majority of organisations:

Particular Oldham
neighbourhoods and
communities



Across the whole
Oldham Local
Authority area



Q3. What does the VCSE sector in Oldham do?

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



MAIN AREAS IN 2012/13:

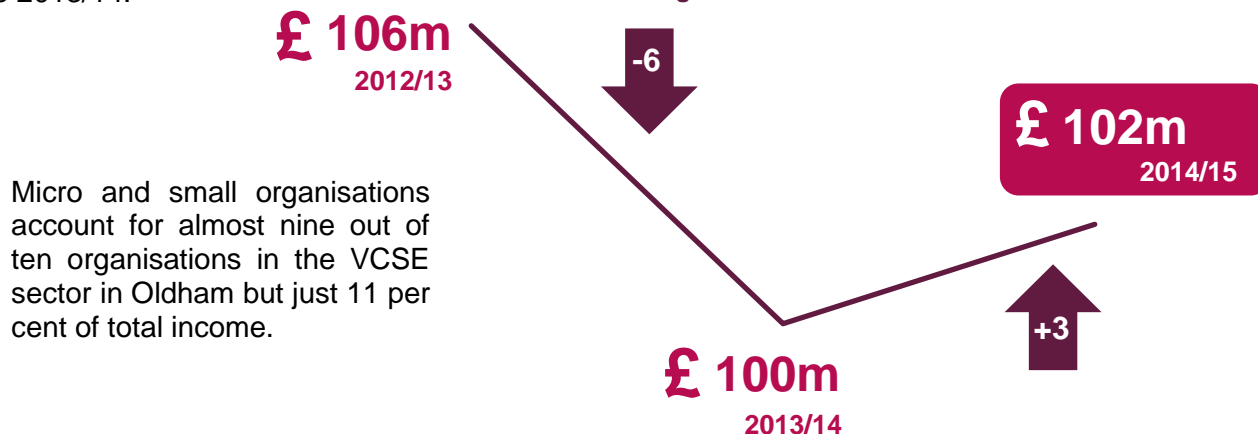
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - 42% SPORT & LEISURE - 29%
HEALTH & WELLBEING - 30% EDUCATION, TRAINING & RESEARCH - 28%

MAIN AREAS ACROSS GREATER MANCHESTER:

HEALTH & WELLBEING - 46% EDUCATION, TRAINING & RESEARCH - 26%
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - 39% SPORT & LEISURE - 25%

Q4. What is the income of the VCSE sector in Oldham?

Total income in 2014/15 is estimated to be **£102m**, an increase of three per cent compared to 2013/14.



Across Greater Manchester **micro and small organisations** experienced **year on year reductions** in total income between 2012/13 and 2014/15.

By contrast medium and **large organisations** saw a reduction in total income between 2012/13 and 2013/14 but then **an increase** between 2013/14 and 2014/15. But income is still below 2012/13 levels.

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

85% have at least one source of non-public sector funds

79% IN 2012/13

84% ACROSS GREATER MANCHESTER

INCLUDING:

Fundraising (received by 46 per cent of respondents)

Membership fees and subscriptions (33 per cent)

Charging for goods and services (32 per cent)

MAIN SOURCES OF FUNDING IN 2012/13:

FUNDRAISING - 41%

GRANTS FROM CHARITABLE TRUSTS

& FOUNDATIONS - 24%

MEMBERSHIPS FEES & SUBSCRIPTIONS- 24%

67% have at least one source of public sector funds

55% IN 2012/13

68% ACROSS GREATER MANCHESTER

INCLUDING:

Oldham Council (received by 46 per cent of respondents)

Grant funding administered by Action Together on behalf of a public sector body (26 per cent)

MAIN SOURCES OF FUNDING IN 2012/13:

OLDHAM COUNCIL - 39%

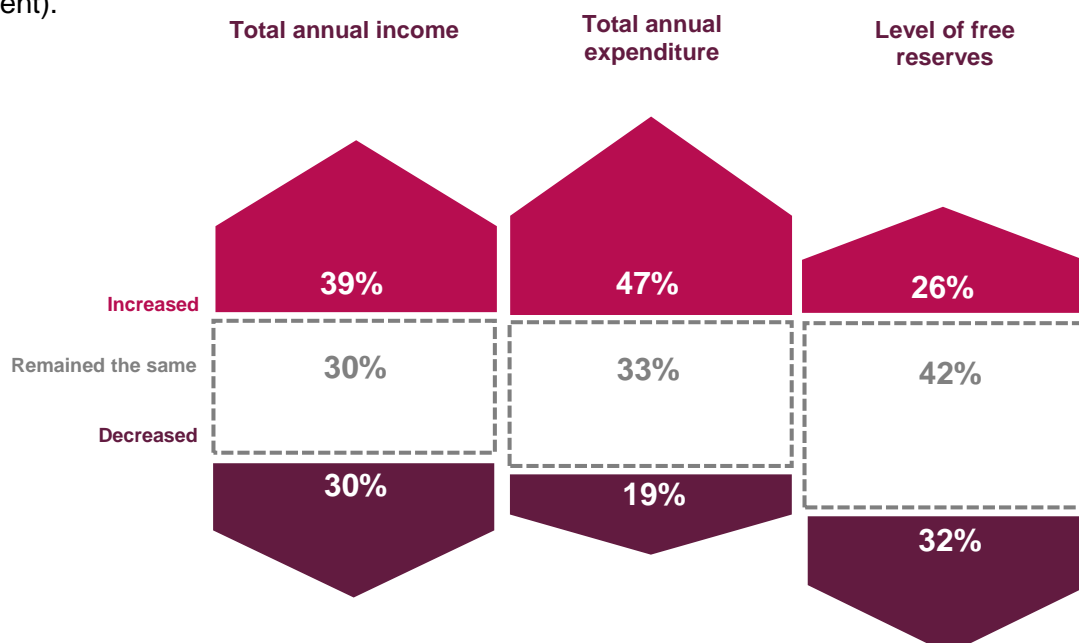
OTHER PUBLICS SECTOR BODIES - 6%

Q6. How sustainable is the VCSE sector in Oldham?

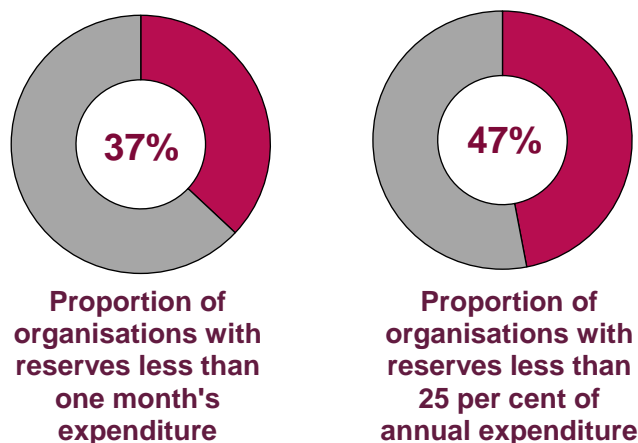
The survey highlights some areas for concern:

- **47 per cent** of respondents reported increasing their expenditure but only **39 per cent** had experienced an increase in income
- **30 per cent** of respondents reported a decrease in income but only **19 per cent** reduced their expenditure
- **32 per cent** reported a reduction in their financial reserves compared to **26 per cent** reporting an increase.

25 per cent of respondents provided an expenditure figure for 2014/15 that was greater than their income. **This means that there were a sizeable number of organisations that spent more money than they received in the past 12 months.** This is slightly lower however than the 2012/13 figure of 29 per cent and similar to across Greater Manchester overall (23 per cent).

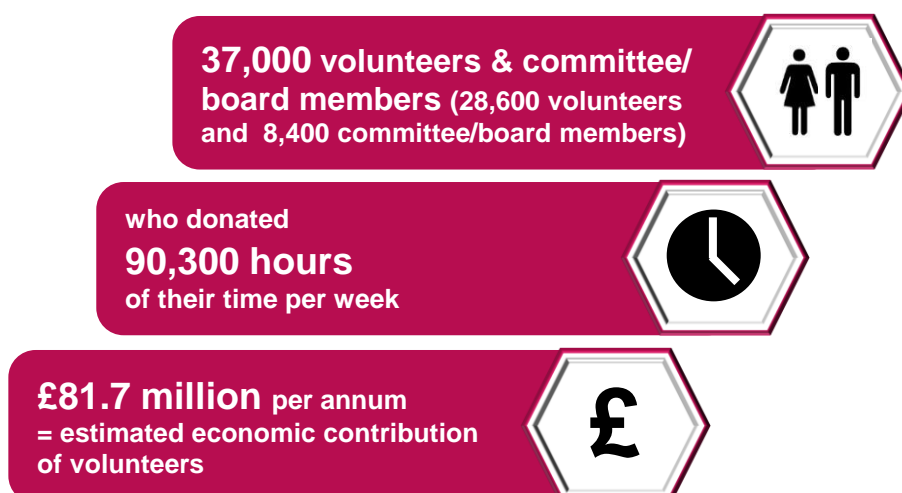


The precarious financial situation of some organisations is further emphasised by the state of their reserves:



Q7. Who works and volunteers in the VCSE sector?

The sector is supported by:



The VCSE sector is also a significant employer. There are an estimated:

2,200 FTE⁴ paid staff
employed in the VCSE sector in Oldham

£ 70.7 million per annum
contributed to the economy by paid employees of Oldham VCSE sector organisations

⁴ FTE = Full-time equivalent

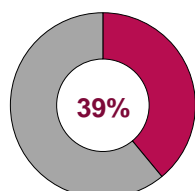
Q8. How good are relationships with public sector bodies?

Survey respondents had dealings with a range of local public sector bodies:

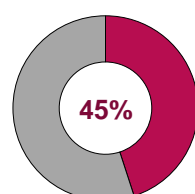
88% had some dealings with **Oldham Council** (70% in 2012/13)

69% had some dealings with **Greater Manchester Police** (53% in 2012/13)

45% had some dealings with **Jobcentre Plus** (not asked in 2012/13)



...39 per cent of VCSE organisations felt satisfied with their ability to influence Oldham Council, **up from** 24 per cent in 2012/13; higher than the 32 per cent satisfied with their ability to influence their most frequent other public sector contact

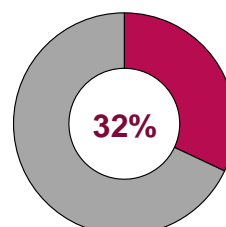


...45 per cent of VCSE organisations felt Oldham Council is a positive influence on their success, **an increase** in the proportion since 2012/13 (27 per cent); similar to the percentage who felt their most frequent other public sector contact was a positive influence on their success (48 per cent)

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

61% had some dealings with **local private businesses** (64% in 2012/13)

... **32 per cent** of respondents felt that the private business community in Oldham was a positive influence on their organisation's success - this is an increase of 11 percentage points since 2012/13



Agree private businesses a positive influence

2% are members of a **private sector-led consortium**

Q10. How well does the VCSE sector work together?

73% had a 'great' or 'fair amount' of contact with **other VCSE organisations** in Oldham (25 per cent with VCSE organisations in Greater Manchester)

44%

...satisfied with opportunities to network with other VCSEs

44%

...satisfied with opportunities to work together to deliver services

52% IN 2012/13

50%

...satisfied with opportunities to work together to influence decisions

57% IN 2012/13

20% are members of a **formal VCSE consortium**

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

Respondents were asked about the strategies they are actively pursuing or planning to pursue. Over half of respondents were already doing or planning to do the following:

- 65%** work more closely with another voluntary/not-for-profit organisation
- 62%** increase earned income
- 60%** change the way they run services or activities

Respondents were also asked to consider the factors they anticipated assisting or constraining their organisation over the next 12 months:

Anticipate assisting the organisation in next 12 months

TOP FACTORS:

Engagement with other VCSE organisations (57 per cent assisting or greatly assisting)

Engagement with public sector bodies (54 per cent)

Ability to retain volunteers/volunteer turnover (50 per cent)

Anticipate constraining the organisation in next 12 months

TOP FACTORS:

The local economy (40 per cent constraining or seriously constraining)

Ability to secure grant funding from public sector bodies (32 per cent)

Introduction

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 Oldham. The research was commissioned by Action Together as part of 10GM⁵ with GMCVO and undertaken by the Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research (CRESR) at Sheffield Hallam University.

The key objective of the research was to provide a comprehensive overview of the sector in Oldham at the start of 2017.

The research involved a web-based survey of organisations supporting the people and communities of Oldham and focus groups with VCSE organisations. The research took place between September 2016 and January 2017.

Appendix 1 provides further detail on the research methodology.

⁵ 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.

Context for the Research

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.⁶ 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. In particular, the Government's commitment to a continuing programme of welfare reform 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 Oldham, is predicted to be £135m per year or equivalent to £950 per working age adult per year.⁷⁸ 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 Oldham. As part of the Coalition Government's plan to reduce the deficit, it reduced funding for local government in England. Local authorities across Greater Manchester have experienced, and are continuing to experience, a decline in Government funding.

⁶ UK Civil Society Almanac (2016) NCVO.

⁷ Beatty and Fothergill (2016) *The Uneven Impact of Welfare Reform: The financial losses to places and people*.

⁸ 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.

The proportion of working-age people claiming out-of-work benefits in Oldham is 13.1 per cent. This is in line with the Greater Manchester average, but higher than the national average of 9.8 per cent. Oldham has the lowest wages in Greater Manchester and the gap is widening with the North West and nationally. Life expectancy has risen by 1.4 years for men and 0.6 years for women since 2008, but men can expect to live three years less, and women two years less, than the England average.⁹

Against this background this research provides in depth data about the 'state of the VCSE sector' in Oldham at the start of 2017. The research provides a comprehensive overview of the sector in Oldham for partners to draw upon and help further strengthen and support the considerable contribution of the sector.

⁹The Oldham Plan 2015-2018

What the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise Sector in Oldham does

This chapter develops a picture of the core features of the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector in Oldham. 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 Oldham?

Estimating the number of organisations represents a major challenge. This is because a large proportion of organisations are small, local and **not formally constituted** 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 Oldham we drew on information from the following sources:

- The Register of Charities in England and Wales, which indicated **274** registered charities with postcodes in Oldham.
- 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 **386** registered organisations, to take account of non-charitable social enterprises.
- Research by NCVO and the University of Southampton¹⁰ which found that on average there are 3.66 BTR organisations per 1,000 population. If this figure is applied to Oldham¹¹, it can be estimated that there are **845** BTR organisations in the borough¹².

¹⁰ 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

¹¹ Based on Office for National Statistics 2015 population estimates

¹² 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 ten.

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

1,231 organisations in total operating in the VCSE sector in Oldham.

This figure is in line with Action Together's estimation of the number of VCSE organisations in the sector in Oldham which draws on their database of groups which is comprised mostly of BTR groups.

This is higher than the estimate produced for the 2013 report (1,112). Whilst this may reflect a genuine increase in the number of voluntary organisations between the two surveys this could also in part be due to unavoidable differences in the estimation methodology.

For the 2013 report, the sampling frame for the NSCSE was used to provide the estimates for the number of formally registered organisations. Unfortunately this survey was subsequently cancelled and has not been repeated due to public sector spending cuts. As such, only the ratio of charities to non-charities was taken from this data source and combined with the number of charities from the charity register.

3.2. What size are organisations in Oldham?

The size of organisations is traditionally measured using their annual income¹³. When the distribution of organisations across Oldham was explored by size category based on income for 2014/15, it showed that **the majority of organisations were either micro or small**. But the survey was under-representative of BTR organisations (only 33 per cent of survey respondents were identified as BTR), so this did not present an accurate picture of the actual distribution. The figures were therefore adjusted based on the assumption that the estimated 476 organisations not included in the survey sample were BTR and micro in size¹⁴.

Exploring the distribution by size category based on income for 2014/15 across Greater Manchester also showed some inconsistency with the distribution found in 2013. Therefore, in order to provide the most robust estimate of the distribution of organisations in the VCSE sector by size, data from both waves of the survey have been used to calculate the proportion of organisations estimated to be in each size category.

The outcome of this process is shown in figure 3.1, which demonstrates that an estimated: 70 per cent of the VCSE sector (857 organisations) are micro in size, 20 per cent are small (240 organisations), nine per cent are medium (108 organisations), and two per cent are large (26 organisations).

Introducing the BTR figure produces a much higher estimate for the number and proportion of micro organisations and emphasises the finding that a large proportion of organisations in the VCSE sector in Oldham are very small (89 per cent micro or small). This is similar to the national picture: NCVO¹⁵ estimate that 83 per cent of the VCSE sector is made up of micro or small organisations, 14 per cent are medium, and three per cent are large. Results are also largely consistent with the pattern

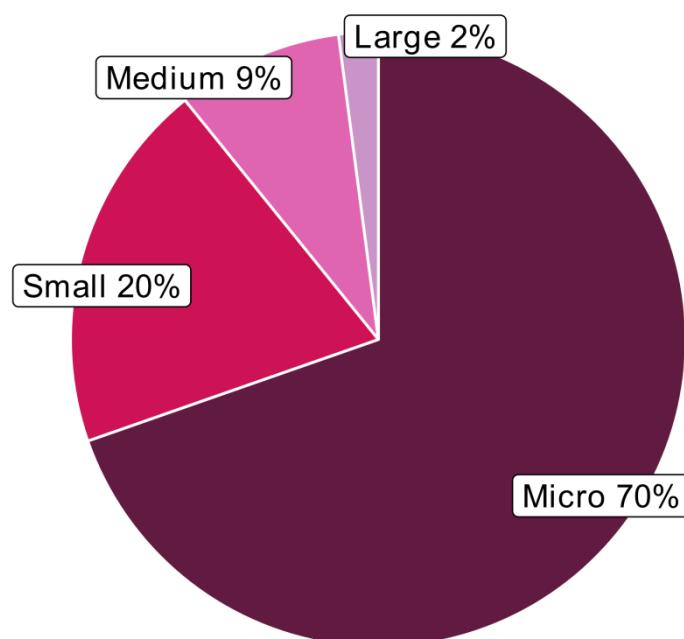
¹³ In exploring organisation size we used the categories developed by NCVO for use in their Almanac series (see e.g. Clark, J *et al.*, 2010)

¹⁴ The basis for these assumptions is discussed in more detail in the methodological annex

¹⁵ UK Civil Society Almanac (2016) NCVO.

across Greater Manchester as whole, where 90 per cent of organisations are micro or small, eight per cent are medium and two per cent are large.

Figure 3.1: Proportion of Oldham VCSE organisations by size (estimated)



Source: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 78

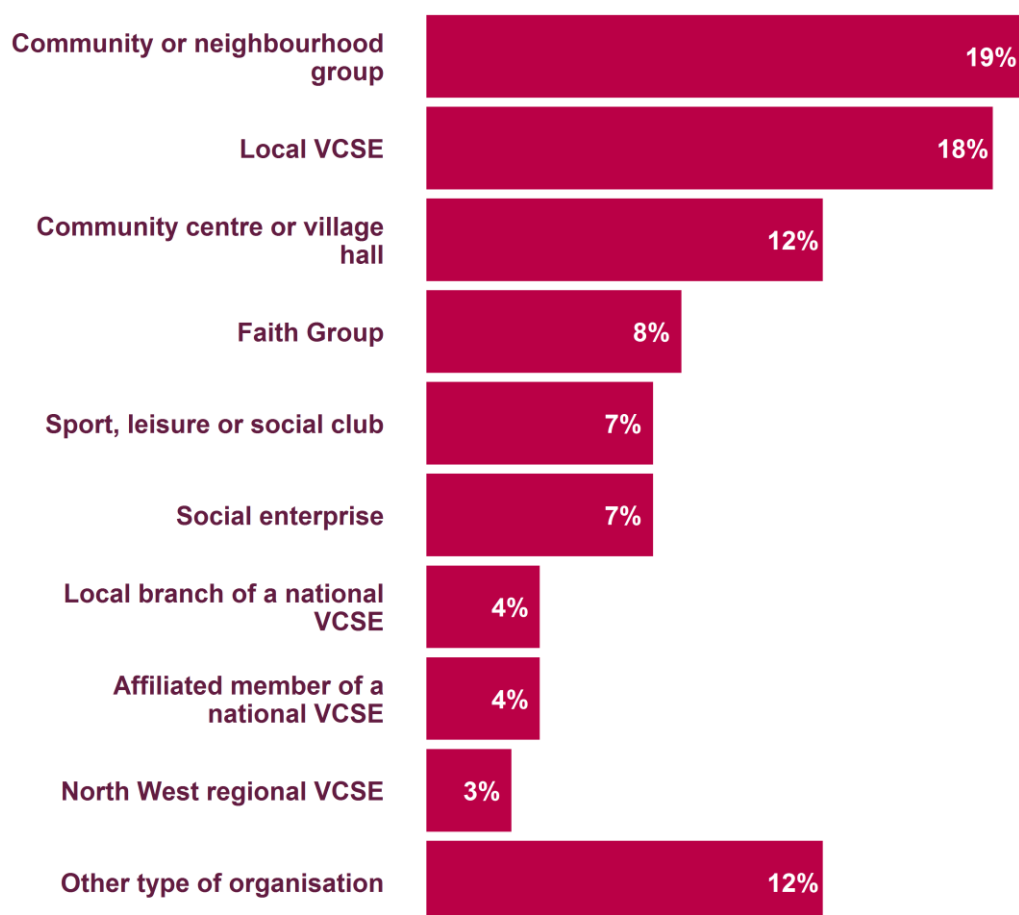
3.3. What types of organisations operate in the VCSE sector in Oldham?

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 organisations in the VCSE sector are likely to have a local focus. Figure 3.2 shows that **19 per cent identified their organisation as being a community or neighbourhood group and 18 per cent indicated they were a local voluntary organisation**. National organisations were less common: just eight per cent of organisations were either a national voluntary organisation (one per cent), a branch of a national voluntary organisation (four per cent) or an affiliated member of a national voluntary organisation (four per cent).

This compares with 2012/13 when almost one third (31 per cent) of respondents indicated their organisation was a local voluntary organisation and 16 per cent a community or neighbourhood group. National organisations were also less common in 2012/13.

The analysis across Greater Manchester for 2016/17 found a similar picture with local voluntary organisations (22 per cent) and community or neighbourhood groups (15 per cent) accounting for 38 per cent of respondents. Only 13 per cent of respondents were either a national voluntary organisation (two per cent), a branch of a national voluntary organisation (six per cent) or an affiliated member of a national voluntary organisation (four per cent).

Figure 3.2: Type of organisations¹⁶



Source: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 113

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 Oldham.

The responses received build a picture of a VCSE sector that has a fairly well established core. However, the VCSE sector in Oldham has also seen the formation of many new organisations since 2001. Figure 3.3 shows that 60 per cent of organisations responding to the survey had been formed since 2001, including 48 per cent in the past 10 years (i.e. since 2006). Furthermore, an additional nine per cent were formed between 1991 and 2000; this means **over two-thirds (69 per cent) of organisations were formed in the last 25 years**. At the other end of the spectrum 17 per cent of organisations had been formed before 1971, including four per cent formed in 1910 or before.

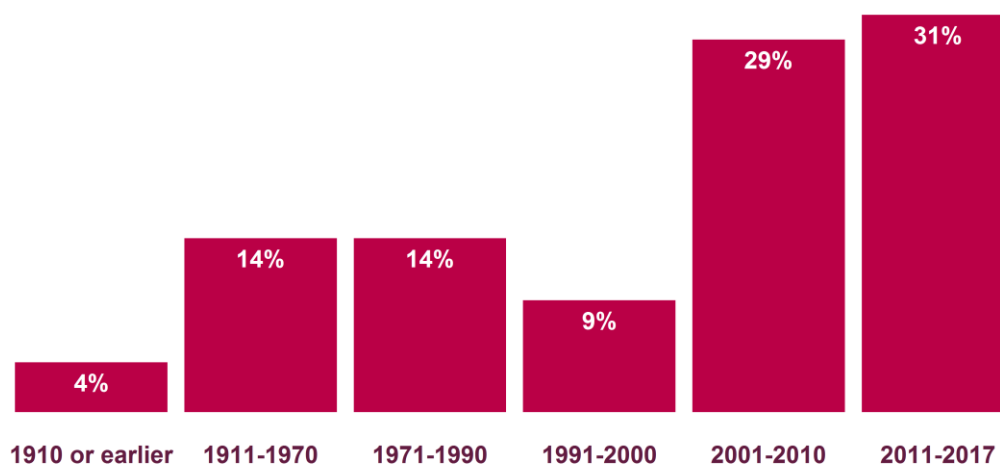
In the 2012/13 survey, 63 per cent of organisations were formed since 1991, including 39 per cent, which had been formed in the past 10 years. Five per cent of

¹⁶ A range of responses were received under 'other type of organisation'. These included: local newspaper, producing theatre, arts charity and industrial provident society with charitable status.

organisations in 2012/13 had been formed in 1910 or before, compared with four per cent in the 2016/17 survey.

The pattern for organisations responding to all of the Greater Manchester surveys was broadly similar: 43 per cent of respondents had been formed in the past 10 years; six per cent had been formed before 1911.

Figure 3.3: Year in which organisations were formed



Source: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 103

It is important to conclude this section by drawing an important qualification. Although the results suggest that it is likely that the VCSE sector in Oldham has experienced growth in the number of organisations established in the last 20 years or so this may not be as dramatic as the figures suggest. By definition, the survey is of organisations still operating in Oldham in 2016/17, but does not include those which have closed down or ceased operations. However, of the organisations which have survived through to 2016/17, the results suggest that a high proportion were established in the last 20 years. But some of the organisations established before may have subsequently closed down. Because we do not know the rate of closure over time we cannot be certain that the aggregate number of organisations being established or surviving is increasing.

3.5. What does the VCSE sector in Oldham do?

To elicit a picture of what the VCSE sector in Oldham does, the survey asked respondents to identify up to three main areas in which their organisation operates. Figure 3.4 presents the top ten main areas selected and confirms the message that the VCSE sector in Oldham works in a diverse range of thematic service areas. However, the proportion of responding organisations working in each area varies. This is most likely dependent on need and funding opportunities.

Figure 3.4 shows:

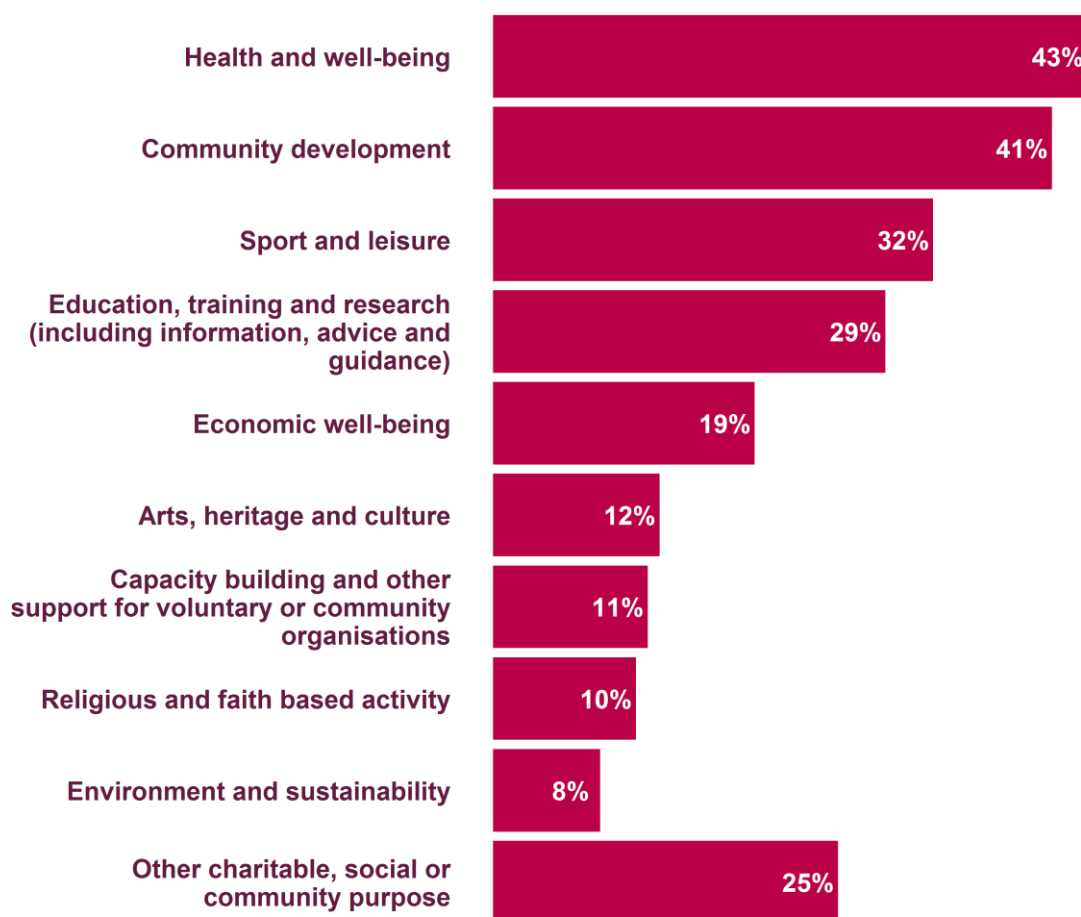
- **43 per cent of organisations worked in the area of health and well-being; up from 30 per cent in 2012/13**
- 41 per cent worked in community development; similar to the 2012/13 survey (42 per cent)

- almost one third of organisations worked in each of the following themes:
 - sport and leisure (32 per cent; similar to the 2012/13 proportion of 29 per cent)
 - education, training and research (29 per cent compared to 28 per cent in 2012/13).

Across Greater Manchester as a whole the same four areas 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)
- and sport and leisure (25 per cent).

Figure 3.4: Top 10 main areas in which organisations work¹⁷



Source: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 115

¹⁷ A range of responses were received under 'other charitable, social or community purpose'. These included: allotment with community day, provision of affordable furniture, youth engagement and play and free time activity.

In the latest survey respondents who indicated they worked in the area of health and well-being were asked to specify the specific areas in which they operate. The majority (83 per cent) stated they worked in health and well-being in general. **Over two-fifths (44 per cent) indicated they worked in mental health and the same proportion said they worked in healthy living (food & lifestyle, sexual health).** Responses were similar for Greater Manchester overall.

In a similar vein, respondents who identified education, training and research as a main area of work were asked to specify the areas they worked within this theme. Of the 29 respondents who answered this question 18 (62 per cent) stated they worked in either education; information, advice and guidance; or lifelong learning. Responses were again similar at the Greater Manchester level.

Seven per cent of organisations (eight respondents) indicated that equalities and civil rights was a main area of their work. Of these, over three-fifths worked in the areas of age, disability or gender which were also the most common response across Greater Manchester.

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

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

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

The questionnaire asked respondents to provide the total number of individual clients, users or beneficiaries that their organisation had supported in the last year, both overall and within Oldham. 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.

Summing across the 100 organisations that responded gives a total of 793,000 interventions overall (i.e. with individuals both within Oldham and beyond). Doing the same for the 105 organisations who provided a figure for interventions only in Oldham gives a total of 498,000 interventions. The responses received can be extrapolated for the estimated 1,231 organisations thought to be operating in the VCSE sector in Oldham to provide an estimate of the total number of interventions by Oldham organisations. Working through the calculation it is estimated that Oldham organisations had:

1.8 million interventions with clients, users or beneficiaries in the past year overall

1.6 million interventions with clients, users or beneficiaries in the past year in Oldham

The 2012/13 study estimated that Oldham organisations made 1.4 million interventions with clients, users or beneficiaries overall (i.e. with individuals both within Oldham and beyond).

The questionnaire also asked respondents to identify up to three groups that made up the main clients, users or beneficiaries of their organisation (Figure 4.1). As might be expected this shows that the VCSE sector in Oldham served a diverse and wide ranging population. **In many cases, client groups were served by relatively small numbers of organisations: 10 per cent of organisations or fewer served 18 of the client groups listed.**

Figure 4.1 shows the client groups served by the largest proportions of organisations can be broadly characterised as being demographic: - children and young adults (22 per cent), older people (14 per cent), and women (11 per cent).

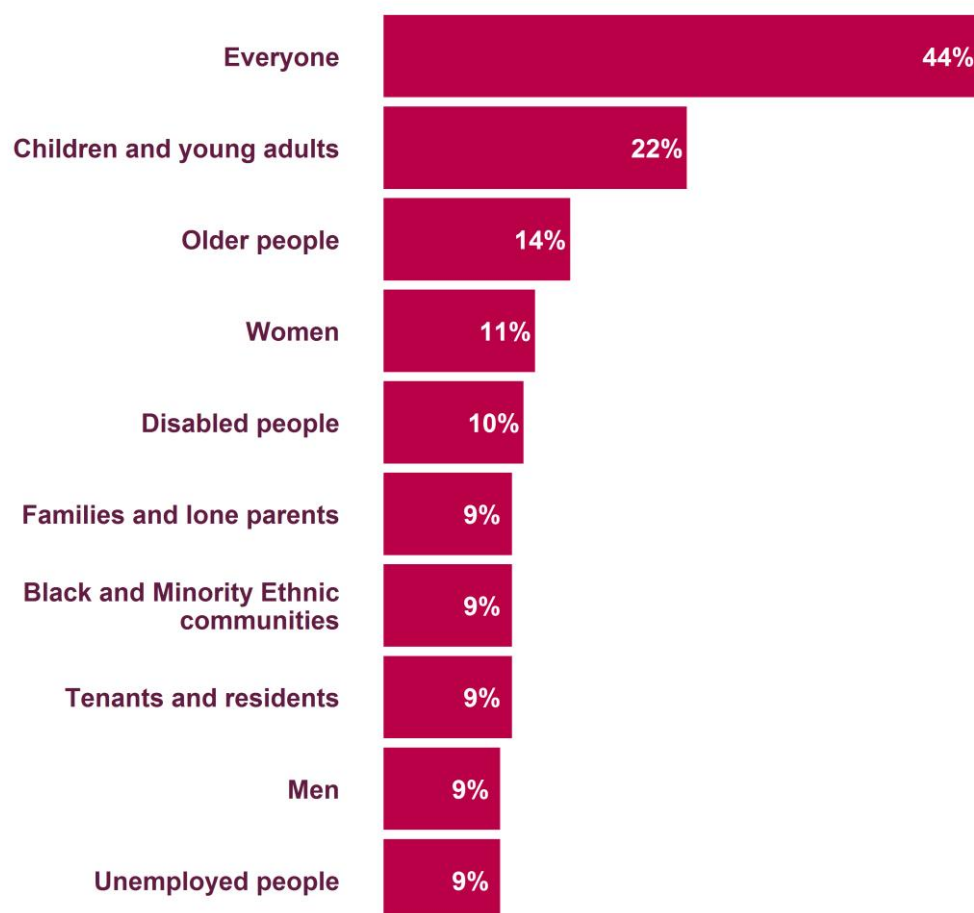
General and demographic client groups were also the most common groups identified in both the 2012/13 survey. In 2012/13, the most common client groups were children (31 per cent), young people (30 per cent), women (27 per cent) and men (23 per cent).

Over two-fifths (44 per cent) of organisations in 2016/17 identified 'everyone' as their main clients, users or beneficiaries. Disabled people were also the main client, user or beneficiary group for 10 per cent of organisations (16 per cent in 2012/13).

Analysis of responses to the Greater Manchester survey found a broadly similar pattern with general and demographic client groups also being the most common beneficiary groups identified:

- 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 Oldham organisations

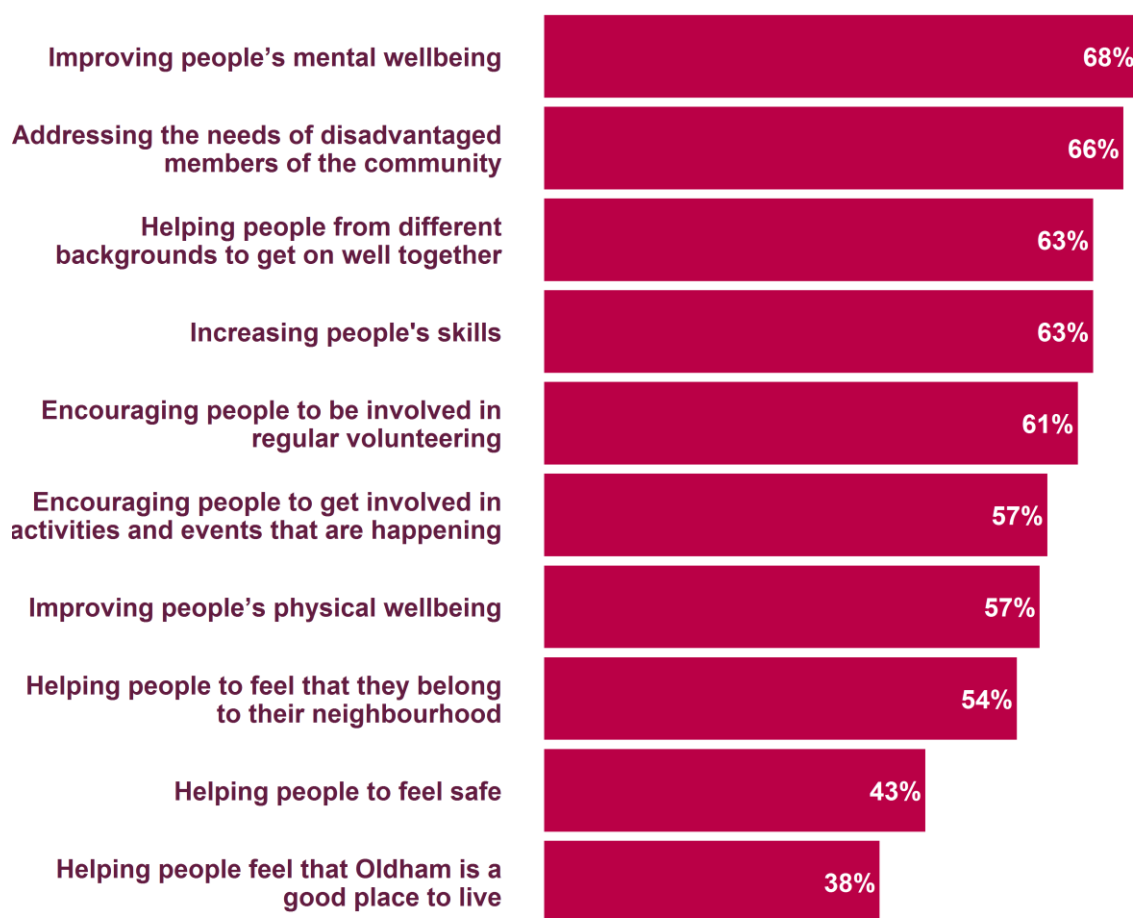


Source: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 116

Respondents to the 2016/17 survey were asked to identify the ways in which their organisation makes a difference for its service users/client group(s). **This question demonstrates the key role that the VCSE sector has in fostering strong and cohesive communities within Oldham and highlights the importance of the VCSE sector as an essential part of the social fabric of the borough.**

As figure 4.2 shows, **over two-thirds (68 per cent) of organisations felt they were improving people's mental wellbeing.** This was also the most common response across Greater Manchester (also 68 per cent). **Two-thirds (66 per cent) stated they were addressing the needs of disadvantaged members of the community** (63 per cent across Greater Manchester). Just over three-fifths also either said they were: helping people from different backgrounds to get on well together (63 per cent; 54 per cent across Greater Manchester); increasing people's skills (63 per cent; 60 per cent across Greater Manchester); or encouraging people to be involved in regular volunteering (61 per cent; 58 per cent across Greater Manchester overall).

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



Source: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 115

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 overseas¹⁸. 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 three-fifths (58 per cent) identified the whole of the Oldham local authority area as a main focus of their work; slightly higher than the proportion of organisations in the 2012/13 survey (51 per cent)
- a further 44 per cent identified particular Oldham neighbourhoods or communities as a main focus; a similar proportion of organisations (48 per cent) identified this focus in the 2012/13 survey.

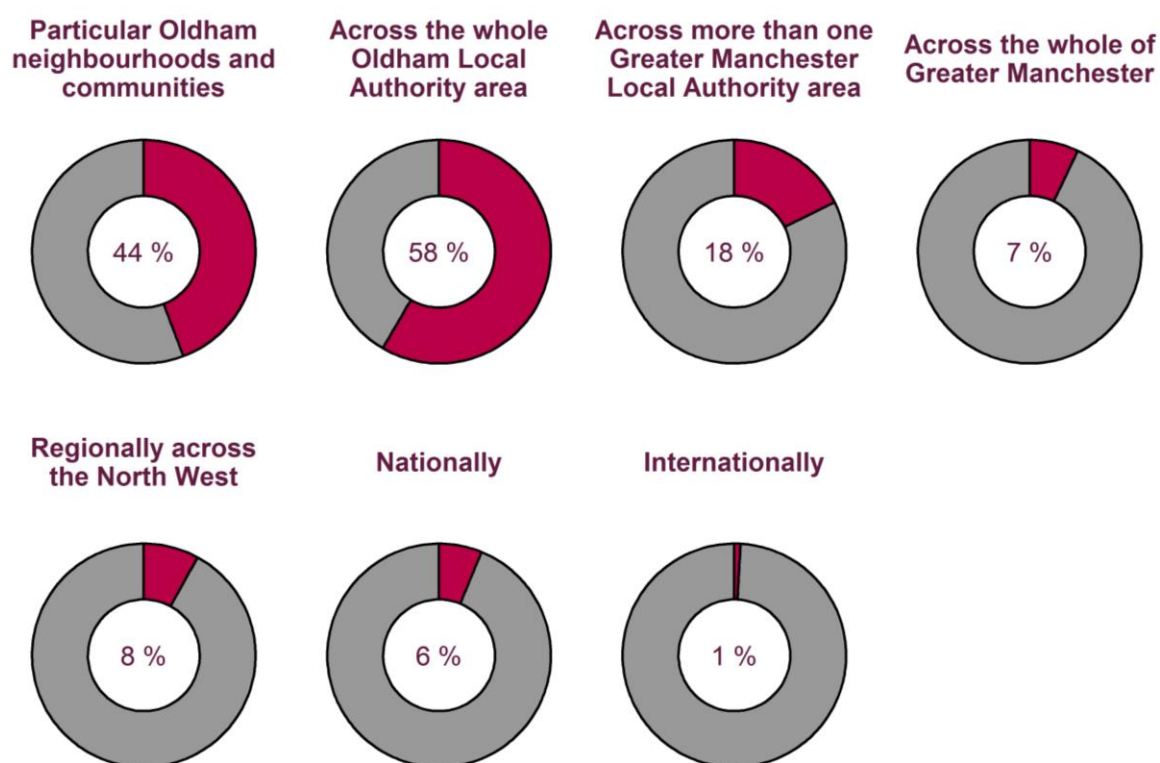
A modest proportion of organisations cited that a main geographic area at which they work was either national (six per cent) or international (one per cent). In many cases

¹⁸ This question was asked slightly differently in the latest survey compared to 2012/13. Two additional options ('Across more than one Greater Manchester Local Authority area' and 'Across the whole of Greater Manchester') were included.

those organisations that work internationally will reflect their main clients, users and beneficiaries.

The picture for Greater Manchester organisations shows that 44 per cent also identified particular neighbourhoods and communities as a main geographic focus, the same proportion as in Oldham. The percentage of organisations who said they worked nationally and internationally was slightly higher across Greater Manchester as a whole.

Figure 4.3: Main geographic focus



Source: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 113

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 two-fifths (40 per cent) their highest main geographic focus was across the whole of the Oldham local authority area. This represents an increase since 2012/13 (29 per cent) and is greater than the proportion across Greater Manchester as a whole who identified their local authority area as their highest main focus.

Figure 4.4: Highest geographic focus



Source: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 113

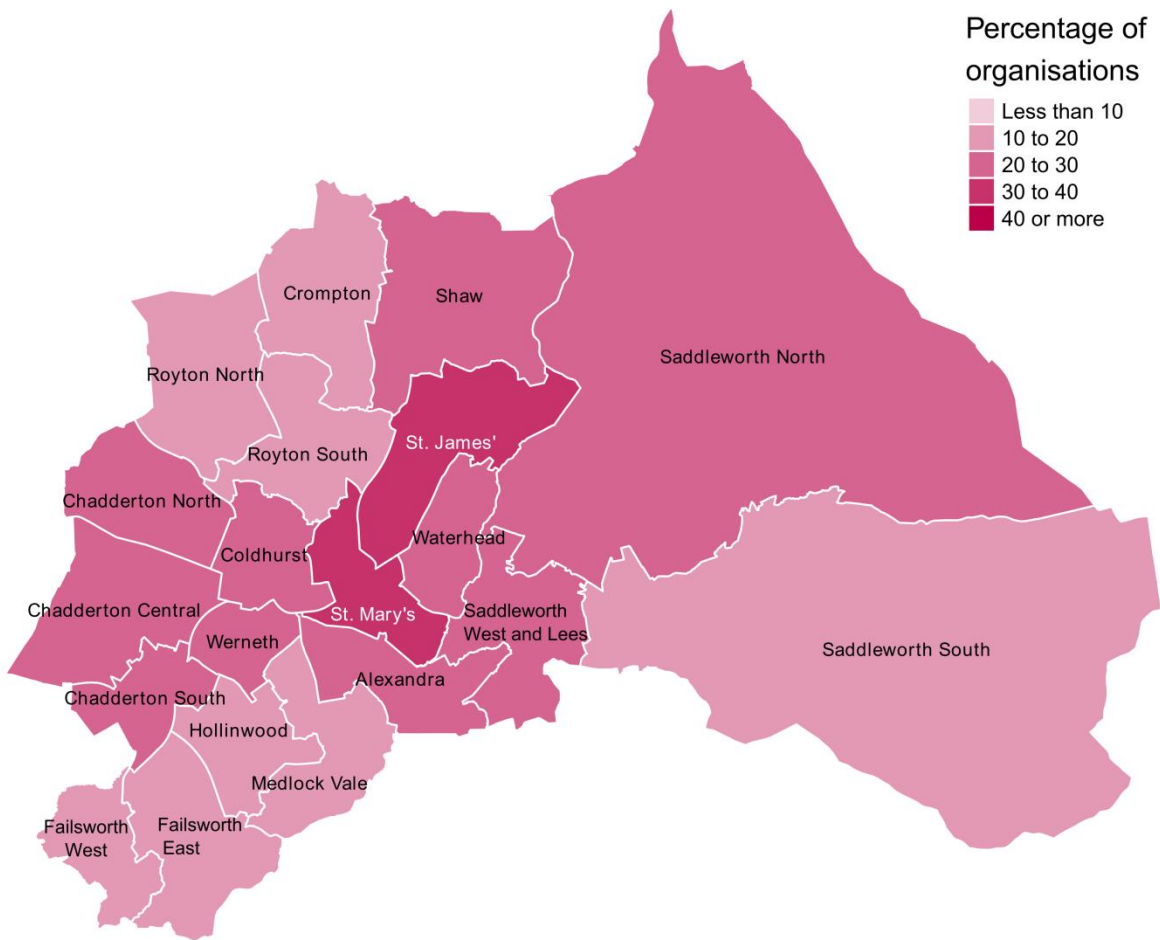
Respondents who reported that the whole Oldham local authority area or particular Oldham neighbourhoods or communities were the main geographic focus of their organisation were also asked to identify in which wards their work focused on. Map 4.1 shows the percentage of all organisations that identified each of Oldham's wards as a main focus of their work.

One third identified St Jame's or St Mary's as a main focus of their work. In addition, just over one quarter of Oldham organisations identified Alexandra, Waterhead or Shaw as their main focus.

The two wards which were a main focus for the lowest proportion of Oldham organisations were:

- Royton South (12 per cent)
- Failsworth East (12 per cent).

Map 4.1: Percentage of organisations that identify Oldham's wards as a main focus of their work



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

Finances and Income

This chapter provides an overview of the finances and income of the VCSE sector in Oldham. It includes estimates of the overall income received by the sector between 2012/13 and 2014/15, analysis of the different sources of income received (public sector and non-public sector) and their relative contribution, and an assessment of the financial sustainability of the VCSE sector.

Where possible this chapter compares results from the latest survey and the 2012/13 study. Revisions to the questionnaire and methodology between these studies, however, mean that comparisons are not always possible or appropriate and that caution should be applied when comparing across the two waves (see Appendix 1 for more detail).

5.1. Income

Based on the average (mean) income of respondents to the survey across Greater Manchester, and drawing on the assumptions used to estimate the total number of organisations in Oldham, the following is estimated¹⁹ -

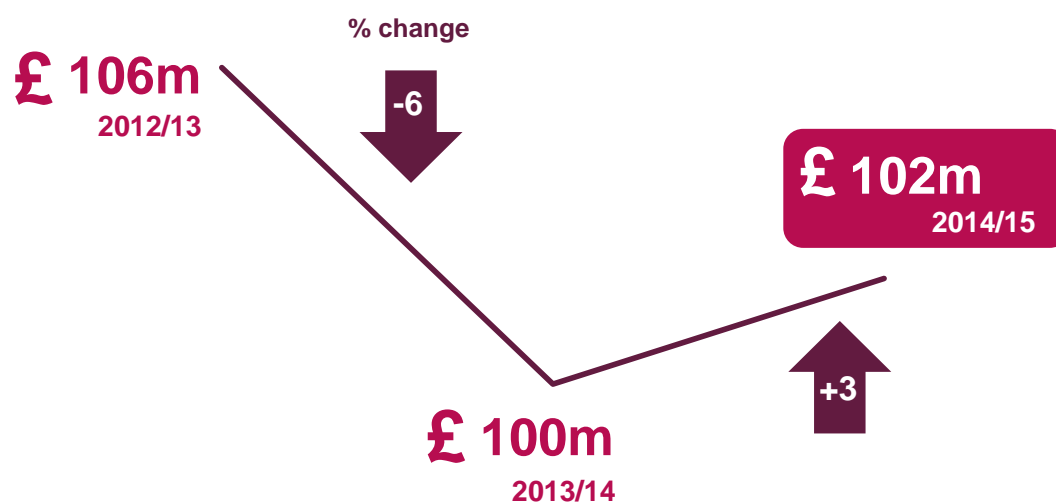
£102 million *the total income of the VCSE sector in Oldham in 2014/15*

This total income estimate is higher than the figure of £55.7 million estimated for the sector in 2011/12 from the 2012/13 survey. As discussed in Chapter 3 exploring the distribution by size category based on income for 2014/15 across Greater Manchester showed some inconsistency with the distribution found in 2013. This was quite pronounced in Oldham and helps explain the difference in the estimates above. The latest income figure provides a more robust estimate than the earlier study as it draws upon data from both waves of the survey, and therefore a more comprehensive contact list of organisations, to calculate the proportion of organisations estimated to be in each size category.

The estimate for annual income in 2014/15 represents an increase of three per cent compared to the £100 million estimated for 2013/14 (figure 5.1). This followed a reduction between 2012/13 and 2013/14 of an estimated six per cent in the total income of the sector.

¹⁹ 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.

Figure 5.1: Estimated annual income of the VCSE sector in Oldham (2012/13-2014/15)



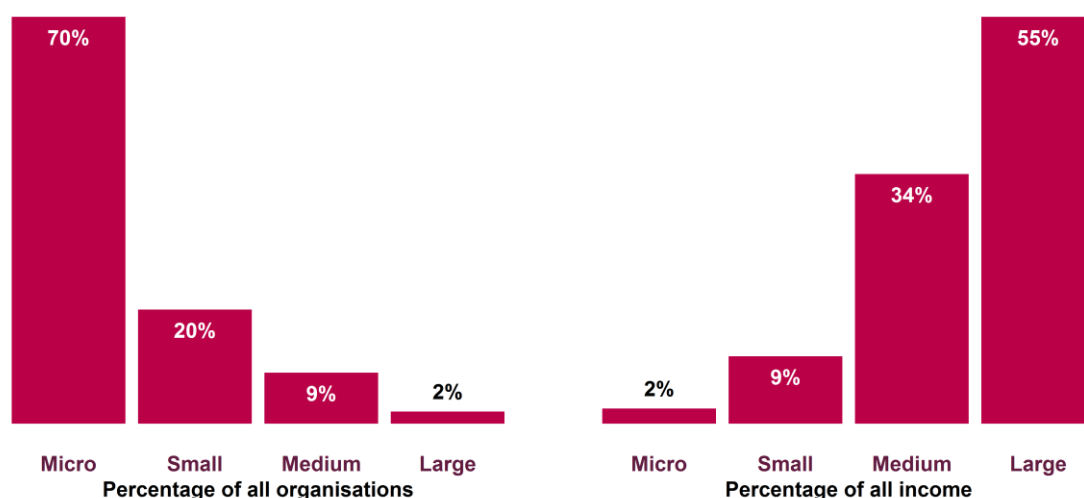
Source: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 78 All figures are in 2014/15 prices

This change in income should be viewed in the wider national context discussed in Chapter two. The picture is somewhat more positive than in the previous 2012/13 study. Between 2012/13 and 2013/14 the income and spending of the VCSE sector in the UK increased, representing the first notable net growth since the peaks of 2007/08 and 2009/10 respectively. While the data above shows a decrease in Oldham 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 is still need for caution.

When the VCSE sector's income is explored in more detail it shows notable variations according to organisation size²⁰. 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. This is outlined in more detail in figure 5.2.

²⁰ In exploring organisation size we used the categories developed by NCVO for use in their Almanac series (see e.g. Clark *et al.*, 2010)

Figure 5.2: Proportion of organisations and proportion of income by organisation size (2014/15)



Source: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 78

This shows that **micro and small organisations account for almost nine out of ten organisations in the VCSE sector but just 11 per cent of total income**. By contrast medium and large organisations account for just 11 per cent of the VCSE sector's organisations but receive almost 90 per cent of its income. Income is concentrated particularly in the largest organisations, with over half of all income (55 per cent) into the VCSE sector received by only 26 organisations.

Analysis of income data from survey respondents across Greater Manchester²¹ identified further variations according to organisation size when we explored how income levels had changed between 2012/13 and 2014/15. These are summarised in table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Estimated change in annual income by organisation size (all Greater Manchester organisations: 2012/13-2014/15)

	Micro (under £10k)		Small (£10k-£100k)		Medium (£100k-£1m)		Large (more than £1m)	
	Income	% change	Income	% change	Income	% change	Income	% change
2012/13	£32.3m		£84.9m		£413.9m		£829.2m	
2013/14	£31.0m	-4	£82.4m	-3	£382.8m	-8	£785.1m	-5
2014/15	£30.0m	-3	£77.0m	-7	£391.5m	2	£822.6m	5

Source: Greater Manchester State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 720 All figures are in 2014/15 prices

This shows that across Greater Manchester the micro and small organisation categories experienced year on year reductions in total income between 2012/13 and 2014/15. For micro organisations this is a continuation of a trend identified in the 2012/13 survey where these organisations experienced a reduction of more than 10

²¹ It was not possible to undertake sufficiently robust analysis of these trends at a local authority level

per cent between 2010/11 and 2011/12. In contrast the 2012/13 survey identified a small increase in income between 2010/11 and 2011/12 for small organisations.

By contrast medium and large organisations saw a reduction in total income between 2012/13 and 2013/14 but then an increase between 2013/14 and 2014/15. For medium organisations this could indicate the start of a reversal in a trend identified in both the 2010 and 2012/13 surveys where year-on-year reductions in income were identified. This income volatility is a significant challenge in the operating context for medium and large organisations.

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, **67 per cent of respondents reported having at least one source of public sector funds**. This is higher than the 55 per cent in the 2012/13 survey and similar to the figure for Greater Manchester as a whole (68 per cent).

Funding from Oldham Council was the most frequently identified source of public sector funding (46 per cent). This was also the most frequently identified source in 2012/13. The second most common source of public sector funding was grant funding administered by Action Together (26 per cent). Only eight per cent or fewer organisations stated they received public sector funding from any of the other public sector bodies listed. This pattern was reflected across Greater Manchester where local authorities consistently emerged as the most frequent source of public sector funds.

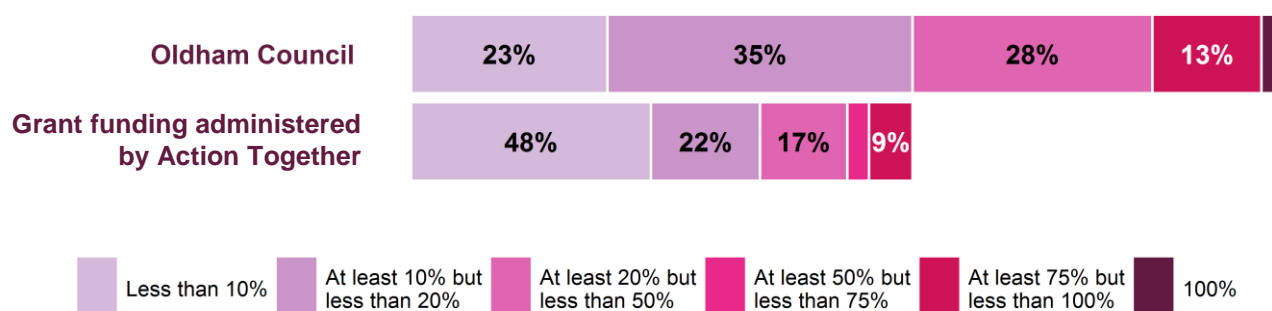
Respondents were also asked to estimate the proportion of their group or organisation's total income that each source of public sector income represented. Figure 5.3 shows the two most common sources of public sector funding received and the estimated proportion of total income this represents.

Figure 5.3 shows that for those receiving funding from Oldham Council this represented less than 10 per cent of their total income for almost one quarter of organisations. In contrast, for 15 per cent this funding represented at least 75 per cent of income overall.

For almost half (48 per cent) of those receiving grant funding administered by Action Together this funding represented less than 10 per cent of their total income. At the other end of the spectrum for nine per cent of organisations this represented at least 75 per cent of their total income.

The survey also asked respondents with public sector income whether they had received a formal funding agreement for each source. Of the two most frequently identified sources, 90 per cent of Oldham Council funding and 95 per cent of grant funding administered by Action Together on behalf of a public sector body was made with a formal agreement.

Figure 5.3: Public sector funds received by Oldham respondents (2014/15)

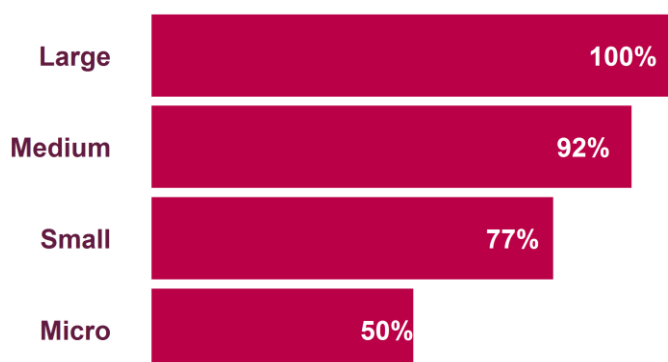


Source: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 23-40

The survey also revealed notable variations in public sector income received by organisations of different sizes. Similar to 2012/13, micro organisations were less likely than small, medium and large organisations to have at least one source of public sector income. This is outlined in more detail in figure 5.4.

This shows that only 50 per cent of micro organisations that responded to the survey received public sector funding compared to 77 per cent of small organisations, 92 per cent of medium organisations and 100 per cent of large organisations. The percentage of micro organisations receiving public sector income was, however, 13 percentage points higher than in 2012/13, while for small organisations the figure was 14 percentage points higher.

Figure 5.4: Proportion of Oldham organisations in receipt of public sector funds by organisation size (2014/15)



Source: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 74

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, **85 per cent of respondents received funds from at least one non-public sector source**. This is an increase of six percentage points compared to 2012/13. Across Greater Manchester 84 per cent of respondents received non-public sector income.

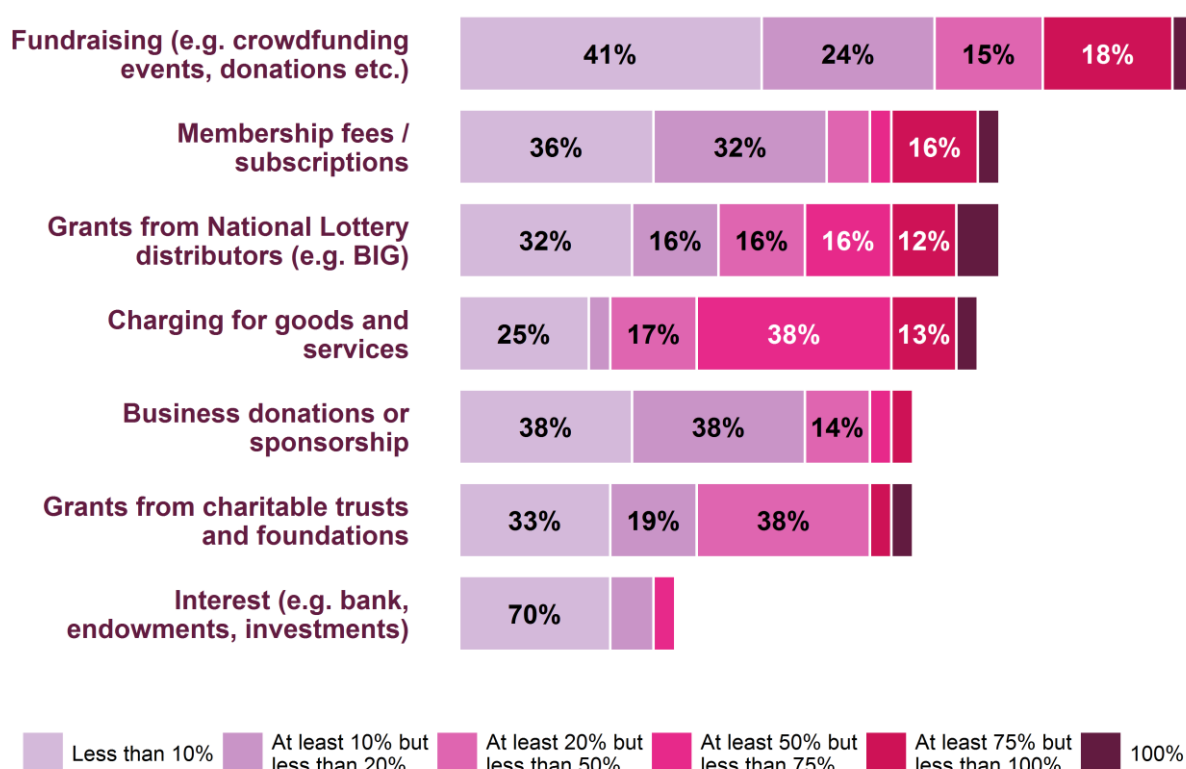
Fundraising was the most frequently identified source of other funds (46 per cent of respondents) followed by membership fees and subscriptions (33 per cent) and

charging for goods and services (32 per cent). Fundraising was also the most common type of other funding received in 2012/13 and across Greater Manchester as a whole.

Respondents were also asked to estimate the proportion of their group or organisation's total income received from each of the non-public sector funding sources. Figure 5.5 shows the most prominent sources of non-public sector funding received and the estimated proportion of total income this represents.

Figure 5.5 shows that for two-fifths (41 per cent) of those receiving income from fundraising, this funding represented less than 10 per cent of their total income. At the other end of the spectrum for 21 per cent of organisations this represented at least 75 per cent of their total income.

Figure 5.5: Other funds received by Oldham respondents (2014/15)

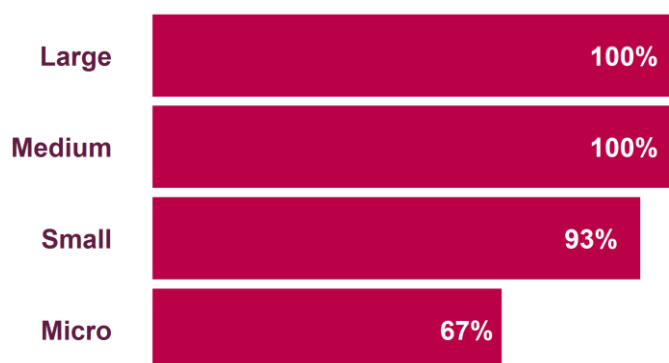


Source: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 10-34

In line with results from the 2012/13 survey, micro organisations were less likely than small, medium and large organisations to have income from non-public sector sources. This is demonstrated by figure 5.6. The same proportions of micro organisations (67 per cent) were in receipt of non-public sector funds both in 2012/13 and the latest survey.

Across Greater Manchester the pattern was similar. Three-quarters (75 per cent) of micro organisations were in receipt of non-public sector funds which was lower than for small organisations (92 per cent), medium organisations (95 per cent) and large organisations (100 per cent).

Figure 5.6: Proportion of organisations in receipt of other funds by organisation size (2014/15)

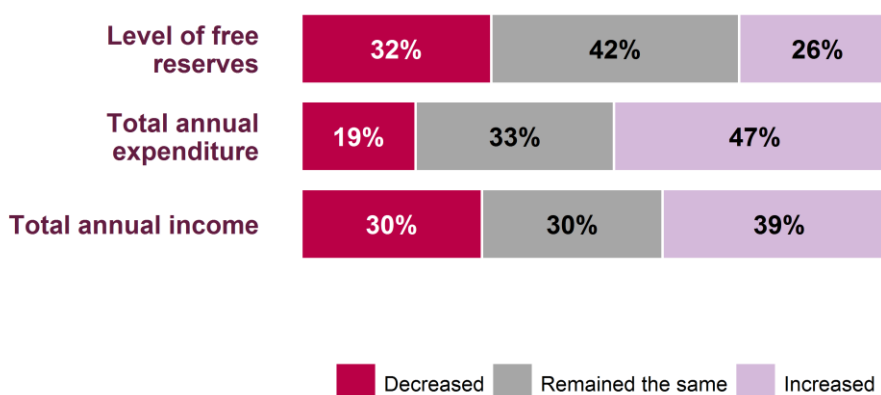


Source: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 72

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 5.7.

Figure 5.7: Change in financial circumstances in the last 12 months



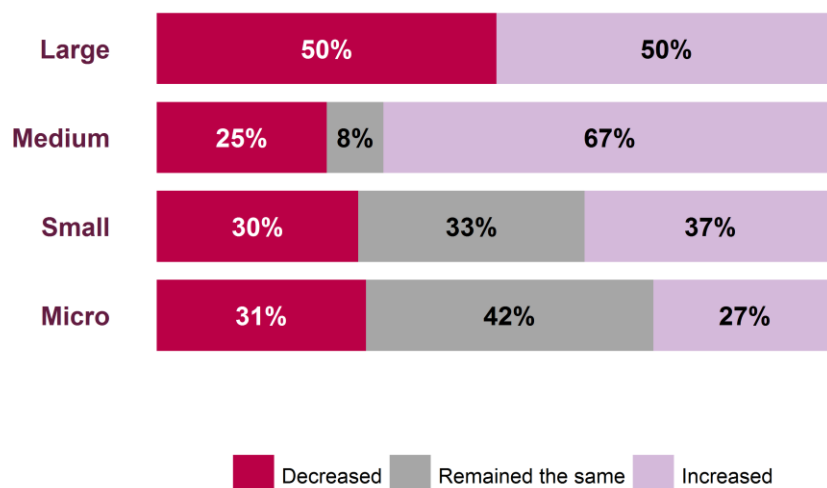
Source: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 79 (income), 78 (expenditure), 72 (free reserves)
Note: 'cannot say' response has been excluded from the analysis

This raises some concerns: 47 per cent of respondents reported increasing their expenditure but only 39 per cent had experienced an increase in income and only 26 per cent report an increase in reserves. In addition, 30 per cent of respondents reported a decrease in income, but only 19 per cent reduced their expenditure.

25 per cent of respondents provided an expenditure figure for 2014/15 that was greater than their income. **This means that there were a notable number of organisations that spent more money than they received in the past 12 months.** This figure is slightly lower than in the 2013 study where 29 per cent of organisations who provided an expenditure figure that was greater than their income; however, it still appears that the sustainability of a sizeable number of organisations could be under threat.

Explored by organisation size, collectively, the data indicates that the sustainability of micro and small sized organisations is of particular concern: 38 per cent of micro organisations reported increasing their expenditure in the past 12 months, but only 27 per cent increased their income; and 54 per cent of small organisations reported increasing their expenditure in the past 12 months, but only 37 per cent increased their income. This is outlined in more detail for all sizes of organisations in figures 5.8a and 5.8b below.

Figure 5.8a: Change in income in the last 12 months by organisation size

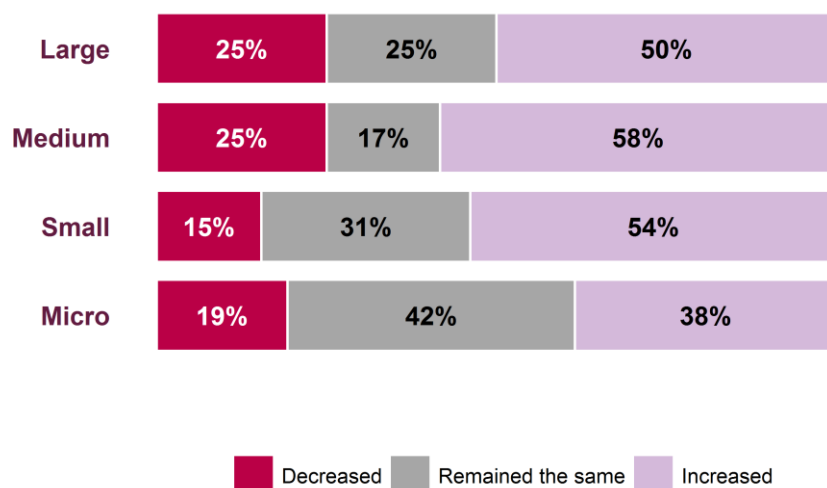


Source: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17

Base: 69

Note: 'cannot say' response has been excluded from the analysis

Figure 5.8b: Change in expenditure in the last 12 months by organisation size



Source: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17

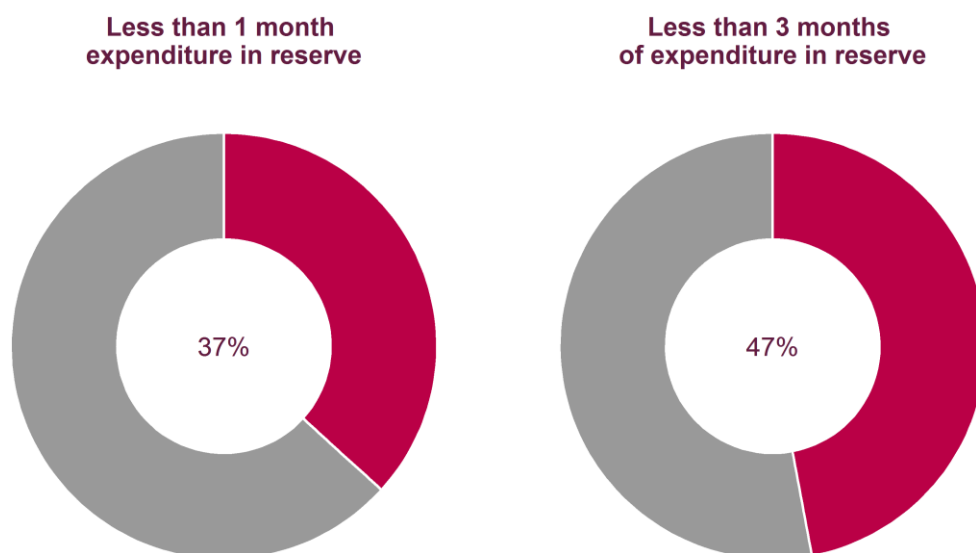
Base: 68

Note: 'cannot say' response has been excluded from the analysis

Further analysis of the financial reserve levels reported by respondent organisations provides an additional insight in to the financial health of the VCSE sector. Reserves are important as they provide organisations with funds to fall back on in the short term should other sources of funding reduce or be withdrawn. They also provide organisations with the flexibility to develop new and innovative activity that might not

have attracted external funding from the outset. Organisations with low reserves relative to expenditure are therefore more likely to be restricted in their ability to adapt if key external funding is lost. In order to explore this issue in more detail reserves (2014/15) were calculated as a proportion of expenditure (2014/15) for each respondent. The results are shown in figure 5.9.

Figure 5.9: Financial vulnerability of organisations in Oldham

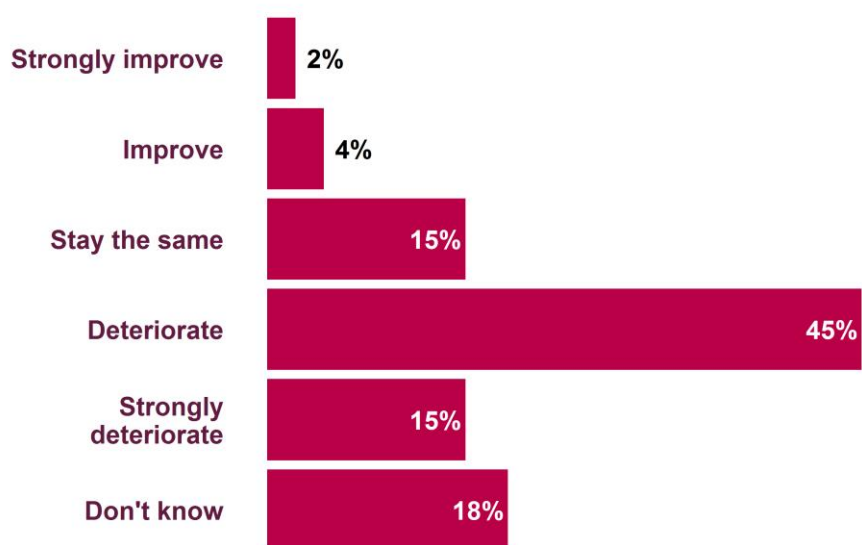


Source: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 68

This shows that **37 per cent had reserve levels of less than one month's expenditure** and a further 10 per cent had reserves that covered less than three month's expenditure. This suggests that almost half of all organisations in the VCSE sector could be vulnerable should their funds be severely reduced or withdrawn. These figures are more negative than the 2012/13 survey when 39 per cent of organisations reported reserves equalling less than three month's expenditure. Across Greater Manchester, a similar proportion (46 per cent) of organisations had reserves that covered less than three month's 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 5.10 shows the responses received to this question. This shows that three-fifths (60 per cent) of organisations in Oldham thought the environment will deteriorate compared to just six per cent who felt the environment is set to improve; 15 per cent saw the environment for funding/income staying the same. These results were similar to across Greater Manchester as a whole where 56 per cent thought the environment will deteriorate and just seven per cent saw the environment improving.

Figure 5.10: Change in the environment for funding/income in the next year



Source: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 93

Paid Employees

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

6.1. How many FTE (Full-time equivalent) paid staff are employed in the VCSE sector in Oldham?

Based on the average number of FTE paid staff employed by organisations responding to the survey across Greater Manchester, and drawing on the assumptions used to estimate the total number of organisations in Oldham, it is estimated that:

2,200 FTE paid staff *were employed in the VCSE sector in Oldham in 2016/17*

This represents **3,400 employees**.

This was eight per cent of the estimated total number of FTE paid staff working within the VCSE sector in Greater Manchester.

This is a higher figure than the 1,400 FTE paid staff estimated to work in the sector in the 2013 study.

Gross Value Added (GVA), the value of goods and services produced, is a key measure of the economic contribution of organisations or sectors. It can be estimated for paid employees working in Oldham organisations by multiplying the number of FTE paid staff by the estimated gross value added (GVA) per FTE employee²². From this calculation it is estimated:

£70.7m *contributed to the economy per annum by paid employees of Oldham VCSE sector organisations*

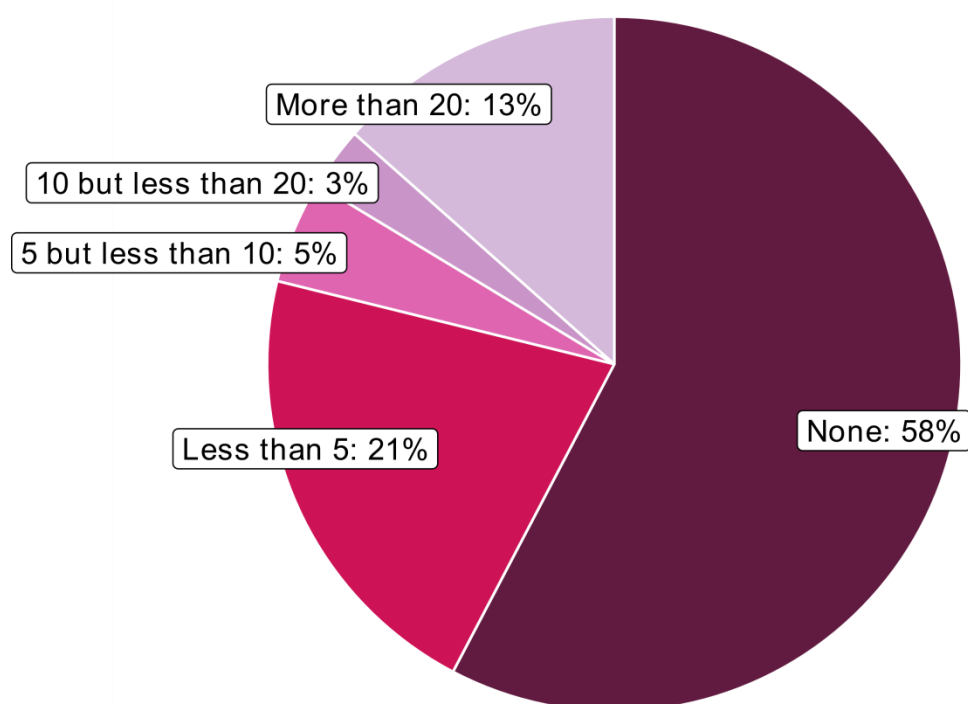
Almost half (48 per cent) of FTE paid staff were employed in large organisations with an income of at least one million pounds. In comparison, the 1,098 micro and small organisations employed just 18 per cent of FTE paid staff. The remaining 34 per cent were employed in medium sized organisations. As in 2012/13, large and medium sized organisations especially continue to be significant employers in Oldham.

²² This study used Greater Manchester GVA per employee averaged across the following two VCSE sectors: education and human health and social work activities.

Figure 6.1 presents a breakdown of responding organisations by the number of FTE paid staff they employed. Almost four-fifths (79 per cent) of organisations employed less than five FTE paid staff members. Included in this figure were 58 per cent of organisations that did not employ any paid staff. Further analysis reveals that the majority of these were micro organisations with income of less than £10,000. At the other end of the spectrum 13 per cent of organisations employed 20 or more FTE paid members of staff. This pattern is different to that identified in the 2012/13 survey when 70 per cent of organisations did not employ any paid staff and a further 19 per cent employed less than five FTE employees.

Compared with the Greater Manchester sample as a whole, a lower proportion of organisations within Oldham appeared to have FTE paid staff: 42 per cent in Oldham compared with 49 per cent in Greater Manchester.

Figure 6.1: Organisations by numbers of FTE paid staff



Source: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 104

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

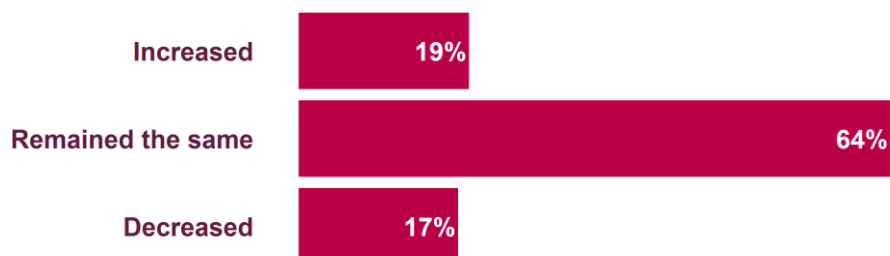
The survey asked respondents whether the number of staff in their organisation's workforce had 'increased', 'remained the same' or 'decreased' this year compared to the previous year. Figure 6.2 presents the results to this question, the key findings of which are:

Paid employees:

- 64 per cent of organisations employed a similar number of paid employees compared to a year ago
- 19 per cent of organisations reported an increase in paid staff which was similar to the percentage that reported a decrease (17 per cent)

- more organisations reported a decrease (22 per cent) than an increase (17 per cent) in 2012/13
- 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: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17

Base: 86

Note: 'cannot say' response has been excluded from the analysis

Volunteers

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

7.1. How many volunteers are part of the VCSE sector workforce in Oldham and what is their economic contribution?

Based on responses to the survey across Greater Manchester on questions exploring the numbers of volunteers and committee/board members and the hours which they contribute, and drawing on the assumptions used to estimate the total number of organisations in Oldham, it is estimated there are:

37,000 volunteers or committee/board members *in the VCSE sector's workforce in Oldham in 2016/17²³*

This includes:

28,600 volunteers *in the VCSE sector's workforce in Oldham in 2016/17*

8,400 committee/board members *in the VCSE sector's workforce in Oldham in 2016/17*

This figure for volunteers represents 12 per cent of Oldham's total population (230,800) and eight per cent of the estimated total for Greater Manchester organisations.

It is also estimated that:

90,300 hours *of their time provided by these volunteers and committee/board members per week*

This represents eight per cent of the estimated number of volunteer and committee/board member hours for all Greater Manchester organisations.

²³ It is possible in cases where a person is volunteering for more than one organisation they could have been counted more than once; additionally, there will be residents from outside of Oldham volunteering within Oldham; and conversely there will be Oldham residents volunteering for organisations outside of Oldham

The 2012/13 study estimated there were 25,500 volunteers in Oldham who provided 79,100 hours per week. The previous study 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.²⁴ From this calculation:

£81.7 million per annum *estimated as the economic contribution of volunteers and committee/board members in Oldham organisations*

The use of estimated GVA per FTE employee to measure the value of the output produced by volunteers assumes that paid employees would not be used in the absence of volunteers to produce the same level of goods and services. In such a situation the value of output is the value of the labour input (wages and benefits) plus the value of the capital input (for example office space and computers). If paid employees were to be used to produce the same level of goods and services then the value of capital input would be borne whether or not volunteers were used. Therefore the value of the output from volunteers would be just the value of the labour input. This value would be roughly equivalent to the value estimated from the input method of valuation which is outlined in the next paragraph.

In the second method, the value of the input of volunteers is used to value the contribution of volunteers²⁵. 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 organisations²⁶. 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 or national living wage, the local median wage, the local mean wage and the reservation wage. The preference in this study has been to provide a range using the national living 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. It is estimated that:

- assuming the national living wage for adults²⁷ it would cost **£33.8 million annually to employ staff to do the work provided by volunteers in Oldham organisations**
- assuming the median gross hourly wage for full time employees in Greater Manchester²⁸ it would cost **£60.4 million annually to employ staff to do the work provided by volunteers in Oldham organisations.**

²⁴ This study used Greater Manchester GVA per employee averaged across the following two VCSE sectors: education and human health and social work activities.

²⁵ This is the approach recommended by Volunteering England

²⁶ This assumes that there are no additional costs faced by organisations in using volunteers: for example extra management costs

²⁷ £7.20 for 25 years and older in 2016

Figure 7.1 presents a breakdown of responding organisations by the number of volunteers that they use. Five per cent of respondents indicated they had no volunteers. In the 2012/13 survey this figure was two per cent. The proportion of organisations who had 50 or more volunteers was larger in the latest survey (19 per cent compared to 13 per cent in 2012/13).

This pattern was largely representative of the picture for organisations across Greater Manchester as a whole.

Figure 7.1: Organisations by numbers of volunteers



Source: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 113

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:

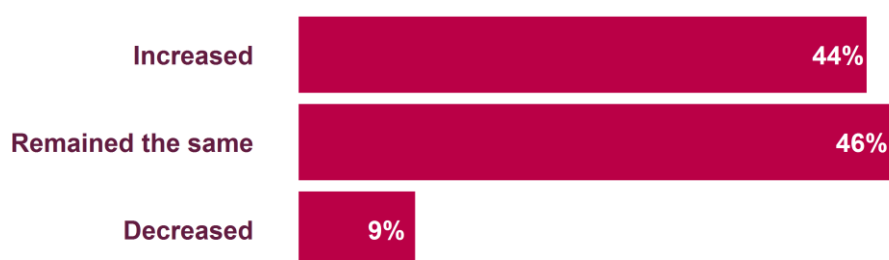
- 44 per cent of respondents reported increased numbers of volunteers now compared to a year ago
- in comparison, just nine per cent of organisations reported a decrease in volunteer numbers.

The 2012/13 survey also found a greater proportion of respondents indicating volunteer numbers had increased than decreased, suggesting the number of volunteers within the VCSE sector has grown consistently over recent years:

- 31 per cent of respondents reported increased volunteer numbers
- over half (55 per cent) reported that volunteer numbers remained the same
- while 14 per cent reported that numbers of volunteers decreased.

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: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17

Base: 108

Note: 'cannot say' response has been excluded from the analysis

7.3. Qualitative responses on volunteering

Focus group participants from registered charities and small VCSE organisations were asked to discuss changes associated with volunteering in recent years. In terms of numbers of volunteers, for one larger organisation, volunteers have been increasing in the last two to three years, but for smaller organisations, the numbers were reported to have dropped this year.

"In recent years we've had a sharp increase. We started a strategy in 2014 and it was influenced by bid-rising and added value, so the strategy was to encourage more volunteers. We've now got 10 times more volunteers than we did."

"So volunteering has dropped-off a bit. But I suppose we find it difficult to find volunteers that are qualified enough and interested enough to do the work, and what always happens is that we get a lot of students volunteering as part of a course, who as soon as they pass that qualification they move on."

Participants, particularly those from smaller organisations, identified difficulties in being able to resource and utilise the staff and systems necessary to support, train and retain these volunteers. They often lacked properly skilled volunteers because they have insufficient funds, resources and staff to oversee them, especially in the initial stages.

"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."

Finally, participants acknowledged the need to have appropriate policies and strategies in place to make volunteers feel valued and appreciated; to enable them to be creative and take ownership of the work that is done as true members of the organisation. This is the main reason why it was so resource intensive to introduce new volunteers to VCSE organisations and have them remain for the longer-term.

"One of the things we've done, is having a little bit of a structure; like that we might not be able to give the training, but we developed a programme that we work through and it is something. Because most of the volunteers who come are students, they can add to their CV, but this takes away from my main member of staff some of the preciousness of her work. So we try to get them to do a little bit

of work and get to the meat of their actual role, so they feel valued even if they don't have a wage."

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 Oldham 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 the borough of Oldham. An overview of their responses is provided in figure 8.1 along with the local authority figure for Greater Manchester combined.

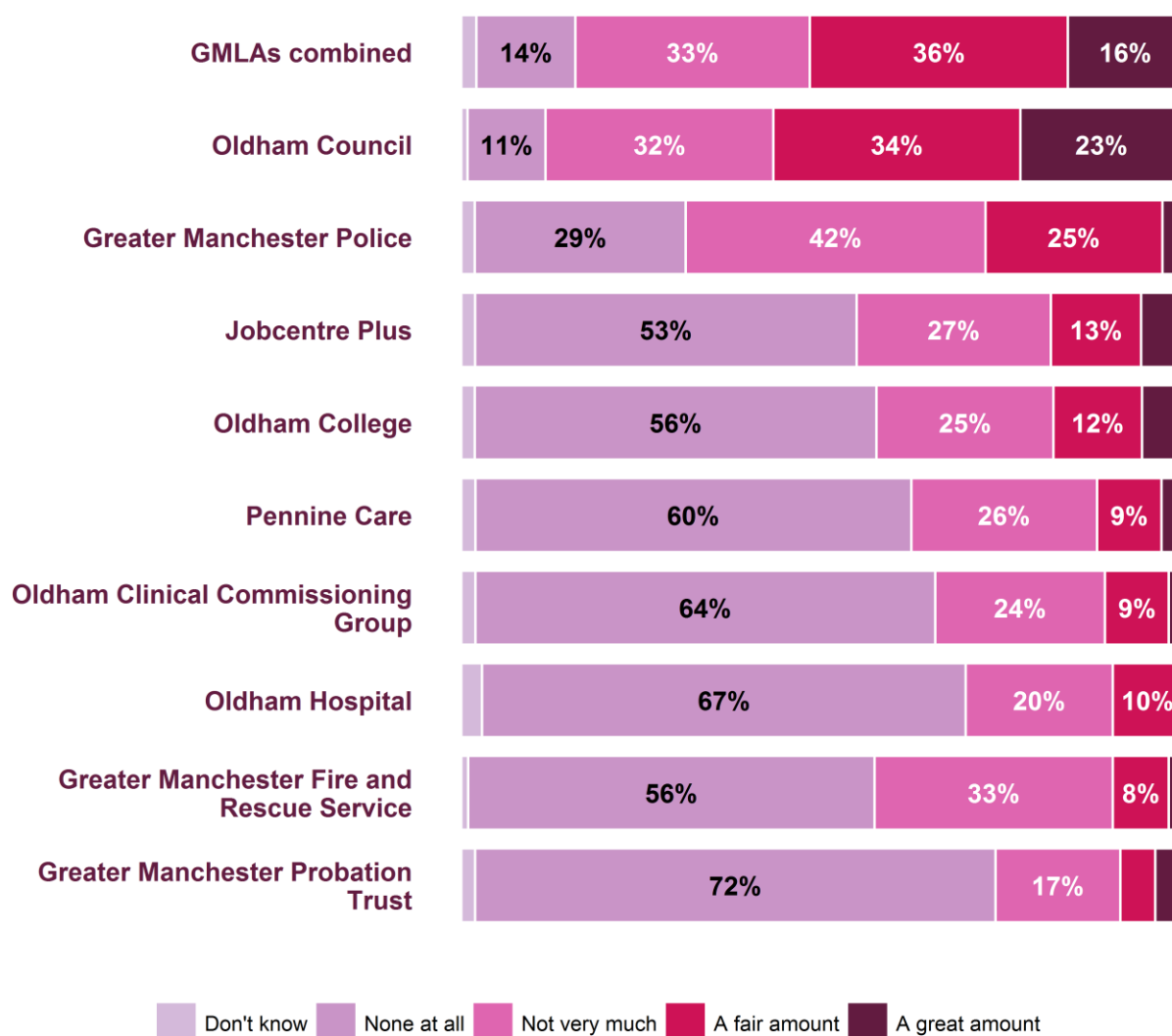
This shows that survey respondents had dealings with a range of local public sector bodies. The three most prominent were Oldham Council, Greater Manchester Police and Jobcentre Plus:

- **Oldham Council:** 88 per cent had some dealings with the Council; including 23 per cent who had a 'great amount' of dealings and 34 per cent who had a 'fair amount' of dealings
- **Greater Manchester Police:** 69 per cent had some dealings with Greater Manchester Police; including three per cent who had a 'great amount' of dealings and 25 per cent who had a 'fair amount' of dealings
- **Jobcentre Plus:** 45 per cent had some dealings with Job Centre Plus; including six per cent who had a 'great amount' of dealings and 13 per cent who had a 'fair amount' of dealings.

Oldham Council was also the organisation respondents had the most dealings with in the 2012/13 survey (70 per cent had some dealings) while 53 per cent of respondents in 2012/13 had dealings with Greater Manchester Police.

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 bodies²⁹

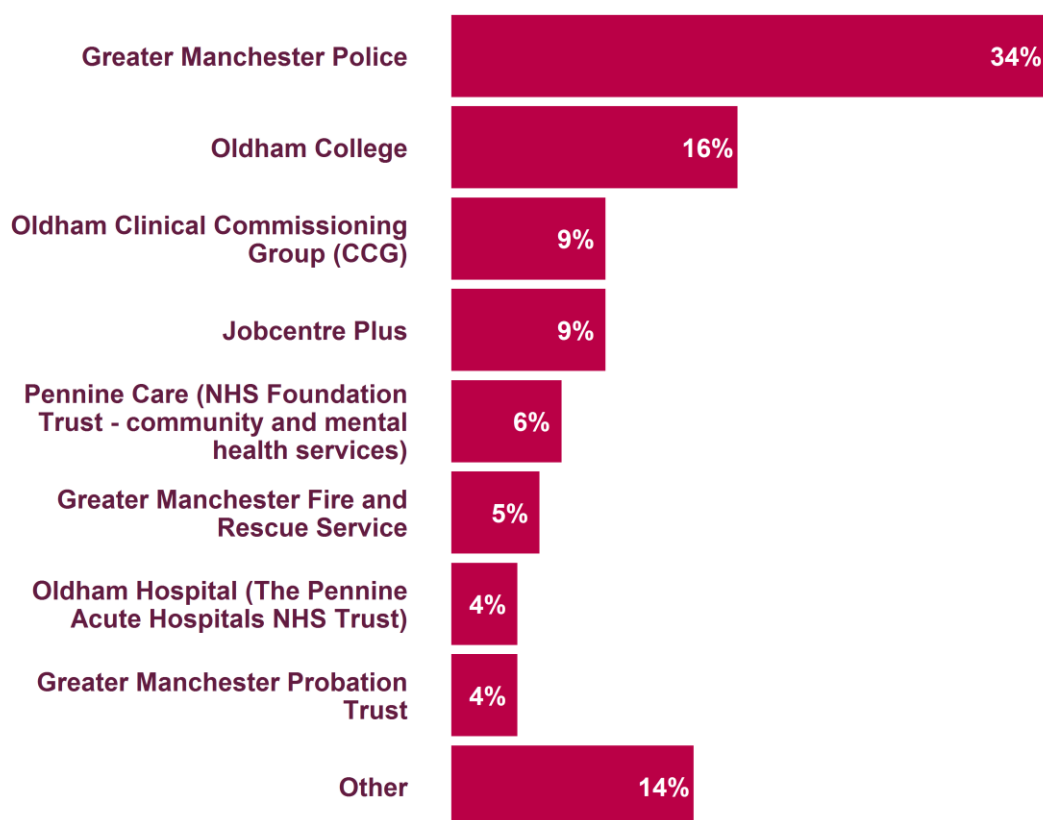


Source: Oldham / Greater Manchester State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
 Base: 101-111 (Oldham), 1,080 (Greater Manchester)

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 Greater Manchester Police the most commonly cited followed by Oldham College, Oldham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Jobcentre Plus.

²⁹ GMLAs combined = Greater Manchester local authorities' combined.

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

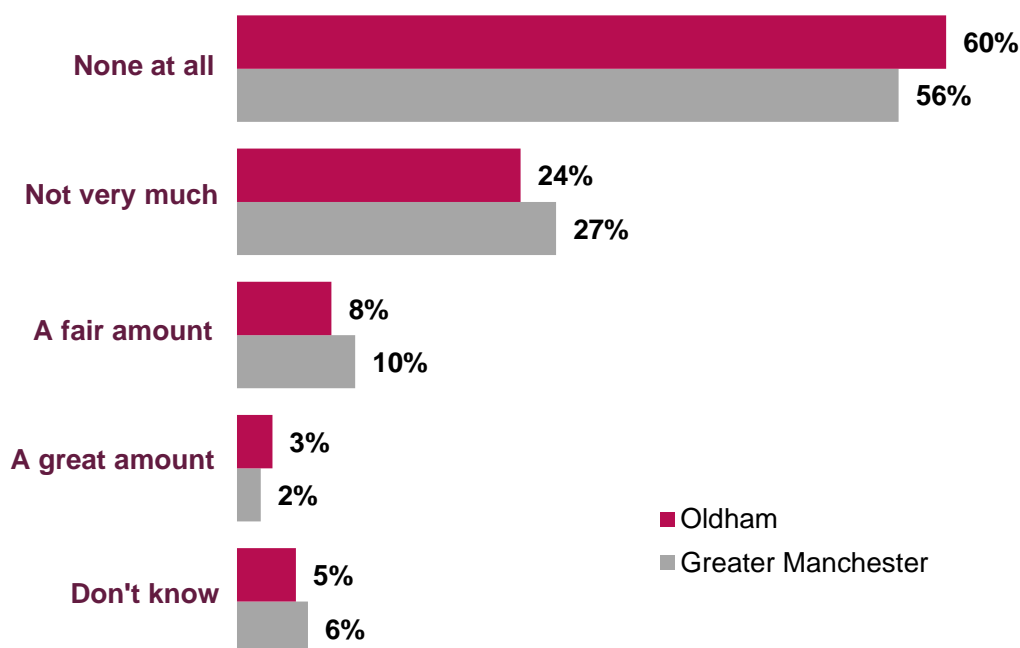


Source: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 80

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.

Just over one third (35 per cent) had some dealings with any of the emerging structures including just three per cent who had a 'great amount' of dealings and eight 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: Greater Manchester / Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 108 (Oldham); 977 (Greater Manchester)

8.2. Relationships with local public sector bodies

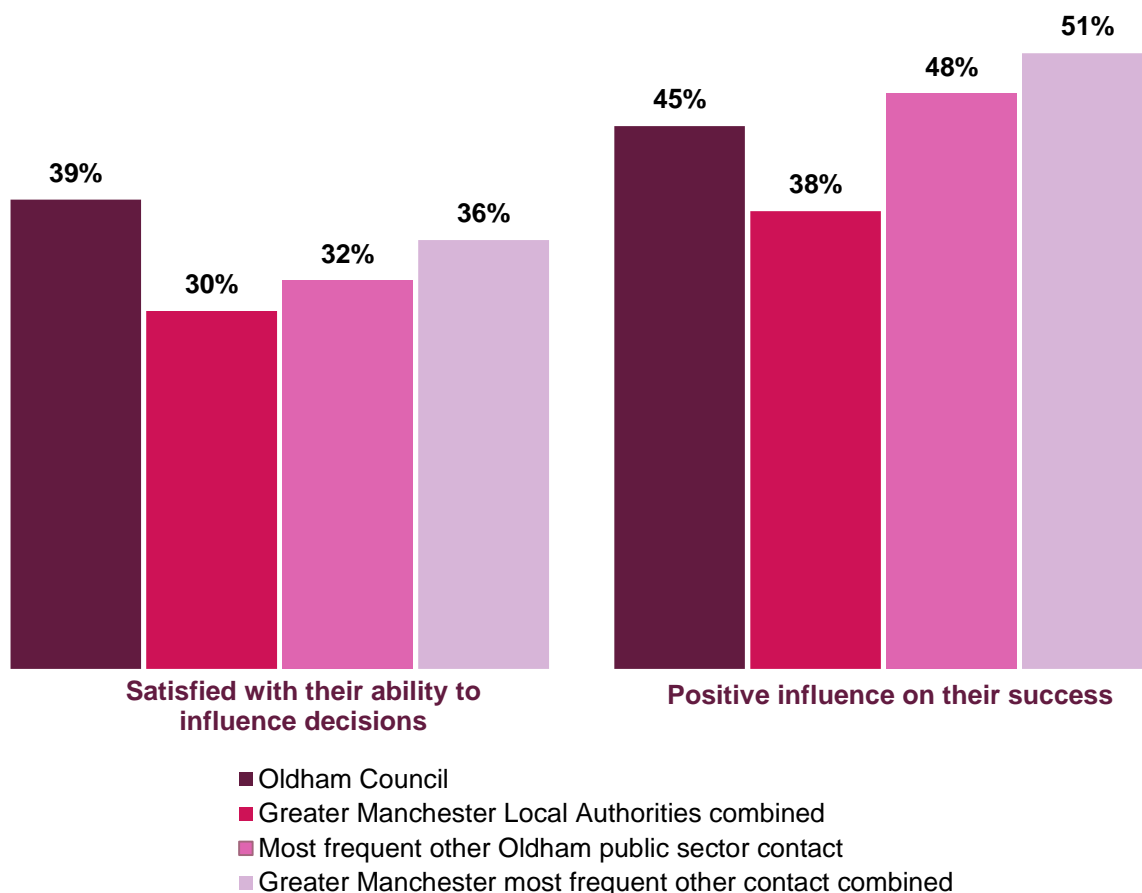
Survey respondents were also asked two further questions about the extent to which their organisations were satisfied with their ability to influence public sector decisions of relevance to their organisation and the extent to which they thought local statutory bodies influenced their success³⁰. The 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 39 per cent of respondents were satisfied with their ability to influence Oldham Council decisions of relevance to their organisation and 45 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 their ability to influence their local authority and 38 per cent agreed their local authority has a positive influence on their success). Results are more positive than in 2012/13 when 24 per cent of respondents were satisfied with their ability to influence Oldham Council decisions of relevance to their organisation and 27 per cent said that the council had a positive influence on their organisation's success.

In addition, 32 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 48 per cent said this contact had a positive influence on their success. These responses are slightly lower than the Greater Manchester combined figures (36 per cent and 51 per cent respectively).

³⁰ 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'.

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: Oldham / Greater Manchester State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
 Base: Oldham: 95/59 (ability to influence), 91/67 (positive influence); Greater Manchester: 897/570 (ability to influence), 889/605 (positive influence)

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 Oldham Council and of other public sector bodies. A comparison with the Greater Manchester average is also provided.

This shows that 41 per cent of respondents were successful in bidding for funding or contracts with Oldham Council compared to a 37 per cent success-rate with other public sector bodies. At the Greater Manchester level, similar 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).

In 2012/13 a very similar proportion indicated they had been successful in bidding for funding or contracts from Oldham Council (42 per cent) but the figure for other public sector bodies was lower (24 per cent).

Figure 8.5: Success bidding for funding and contracts

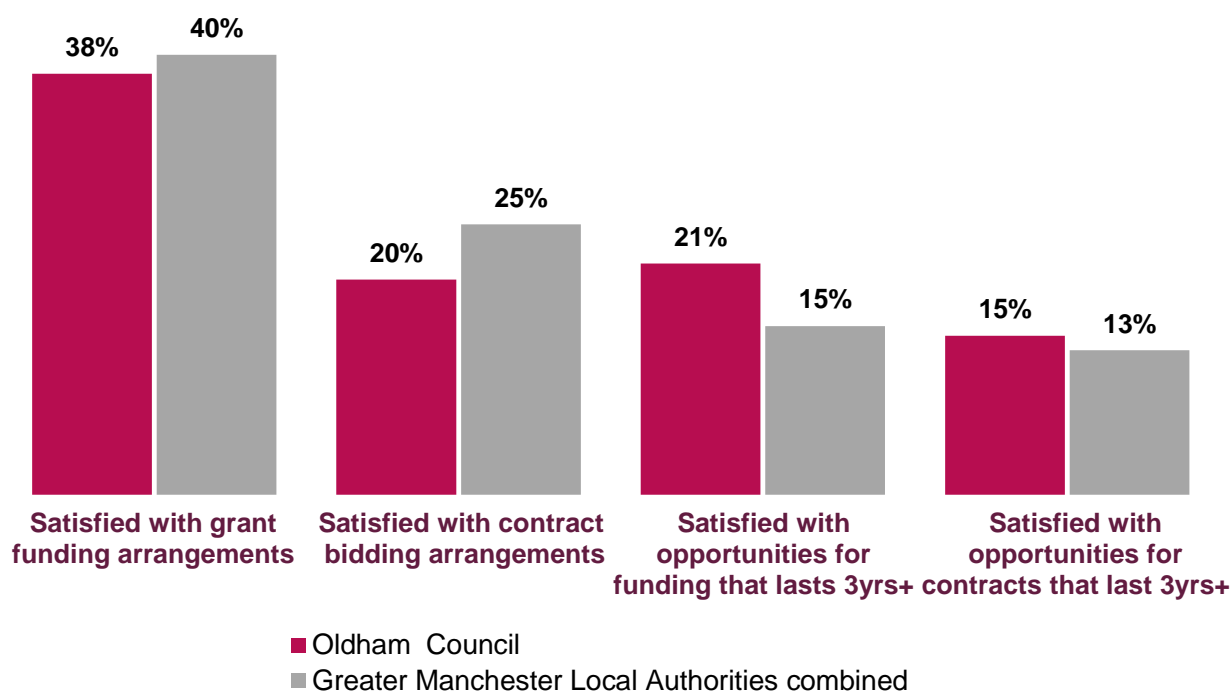


Source: Oldham / Greater Manchester State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: Oldham: 106/104; Greater Manchester: 1,060/1,036

Respondents were asked specifically about Oldham 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 two-fifths (38 per cent) were satisfied with grant funding arrangements. Satisfaction with contract bidding arrangements was lower at just 20 per cent. Satisfaction with opportunities for funding lasting three years or longer was also lower at 21 per cent and lower still for opportunities for contracts lasting three years or longer (15 per cent). The pattern was similar among the Greater Manchester combined figures. In 2012/13, respondents were not asked separately about grant funding and contracts. Just over one third (35 per cent) of respondents were satisfied with Oldham Council's funding/bidding arrangements in 2012/13 and 14 per cent were satisfied with their opportunities for funding/contracts which lasted three years or longer.

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



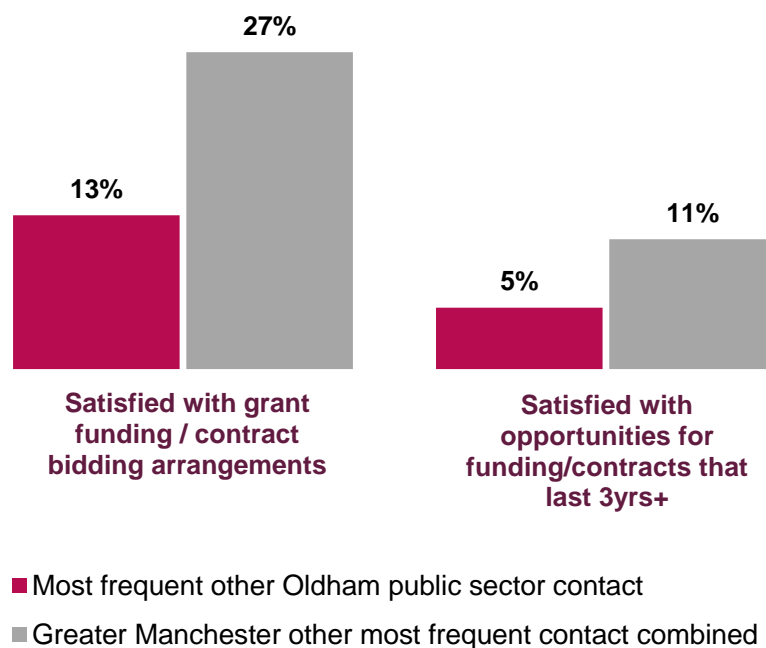
Source: Oldham / Greater Manchester State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17

Base: Oldham: 78 (grant funding arrangements), 61 (contract bidding arrangements), 71 (opportunities for funding), 62 (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, just 13 per cent indicated they were satisfied, lower 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. Just five per cent were satisfied, again lower 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: Oldham / Greater Manchester State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
 Base: Oldham: 76 (funding/bidding arrangements), 113 (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 focus groups discussed participants' views about and experiences of working with public sector bodies in Oldham and more widely. Two key issues dominated these discussions: the prospects of devolution for VCSE organisations and issues associated with developing effective relationships with the local public sector.

Focus group participants were very sceptical about devolution and its implications for the VCSE sector. They struggled to understand what exactly it will mean in practice and were uncertain that they would be able to influence devolution decision-making processes. Participants recognised that decentralising resources and funds from London to Greater Manchester was a good first step. However, they were not sure how: Oldham was involved; who will decide how the money will be trickled to the VCSE organisations in the area; through what processes; and for what purpose. Some perceived that devolution could add an unnecessary layer of complexity to already strained relationships with the public sector. It was also suggested that to be able to 'safely' navigate this field for the benefit of their organisations and communities would be a real challenge.

"I have a lot of concerns about devolution. It's very good that it's coming from London to Greater Manchester, but when it goes there, who owns the partnership? Who are they giving it to? Is anyone from Oldham 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 Oldham Council regarding contracts, but who do we go to now? Because the money will not be coming out from them. I don't think it's going in the correct direction. Positives are, that the money comes

from London into the north and decentralisation and I like that, but now I want to know who distributes it and who gets it. "

On the wider issue of working with the public sector, participants reported that this wasn't always a smooth process. Participants from smaller organisations in particular didn't feel that they are respected, appreciated, or consulted as much as they should be. It was argued that strong relationships with individuals based on trust were a key factor for effective partnership working.

"They must talk to us and build relationships."

"I think they need us and respect us, but maybe because we are a large organisation. They recognise this and they want to buy in their services."

"I don't think they respect so much the smaller organisations."

However, the public spending cuts and bureaucratic obstacles have made communication with local public sector bodies increasingly difficult in recent years. As a result, trust and good will between the two sectors has been eroded with negative implications for partnership working.

"Yes, in the end it really is cuts; cuts everywhere. If you are a small organisation you pay the bill; that's why we must share resources with each other. It does benefit the clients. This payment by results thing...I really think it's going to kill smaller organisations."

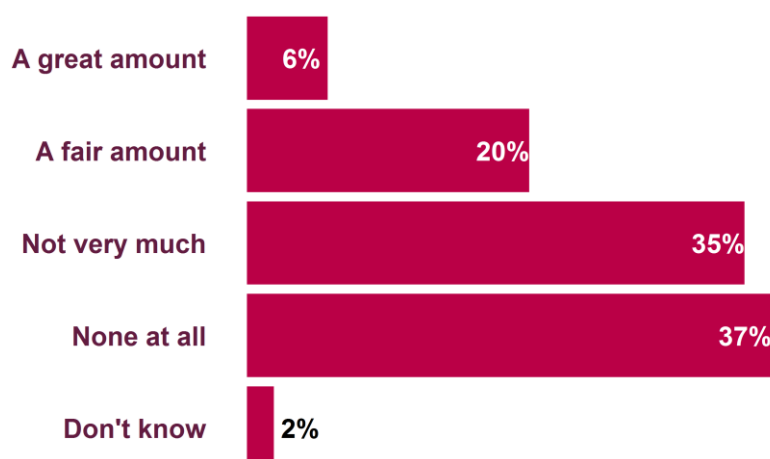
Partnership Working: the Private Sector

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. Almost one third (30 per cent) of survey respondents received income through business donations. This is an increase since the 2012/13 survey when just 17 per cent received this type of income, but this area still appears to be new territory for many VCSE organisations. Survey respondents were asked about their direct dealings and experiences of working with private businesses in Oldham.

9.1. Working with private businesses

Survey respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they had direct dealings with private businesses in Oldham. 61 per cent reported that they had some direct dealings, with 26 per cent having a 'great' or 'fair' amount of contact (figure 9.1). This is similar to the average for Greater Manchester as a whole (21 per cent 'great' or 'fair' amount of contact). In the 2012/13 survey 64 per cent of respondents reported some direct dealings, but a lower figure of 14 per cent having a 'great' or 'fair' amount of contact.

Figure 9.1: Extent of direct dealings with private businesses

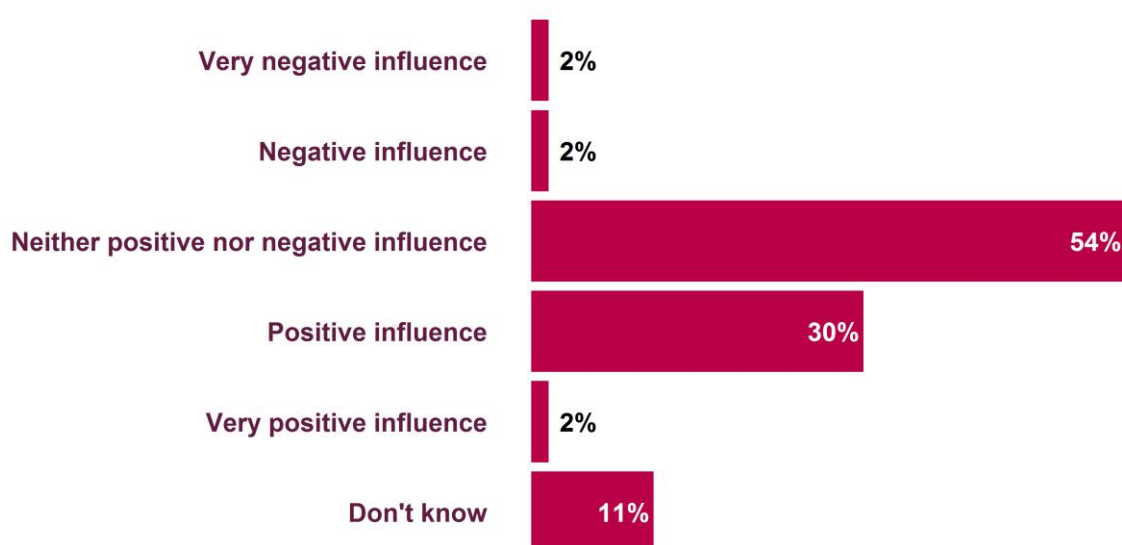


Source: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 105

Just two per cent of organisations indicated that they are members of a formal private sector-led consortium (the same as the Greater Manchester average), while five per cent of respondents said their organisation is in formal partnership with private sector organisation(s), slightly higher than the seven per cent of organisations across Greater Manchester.

Respondents were asked to comment on the influence private businesses have on their organisation's success. Figure 9.2 shows that taking all things into account, one third (32 per cent) of survey respondents felt that the private business community in Oldham was a positive influence on their organisation's success. This is similar to the proportion for Greater Manchester as a whole (31 per cent) and an increase since the 2012/13 survey (21 per cent).

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



Source: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 63

9.2. Qualitative responses on working with private sector businesses

Focus group participants discussed their views about and experiences of working with private businesses. Overall, participants were positive: they believed that there are things that VCSE organisations can offer to businesses of the private sector which can benefit them. At the same time VCSEs could benefit by gaining extra resources, financial and in-kind, which they can immediately use in their activities and services. However, participants also highlighted some of the challenges of working with the private sector. This was even when the latter have the best of intentions not least due to their fundamentally different culture and outlook on society and social problems in particular.

"For me, I think we have a lot to offer as an organisation to the business sector. So we try to look for resources that we can really put to good use. But we need to improve on how to work with the business people to get them to better understand what we do and what they should expect."

Importantly, and similar to working with other VCSEs and the public sector, a key factor when working with the private sector was to be able to build a good relationship of trust and honesty with the appropriate people in businesses who appreciate the VCSE sector and are persuaded of the importance of its work.

"When you have a relationship with someone in a business, it just goes from there."

"Yes. It can vary, but when you see that you communicate well, it works well with a person, you have results, etc., then usually everything falls into place."

"But there needs to be honesty and trust from both sides."

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.

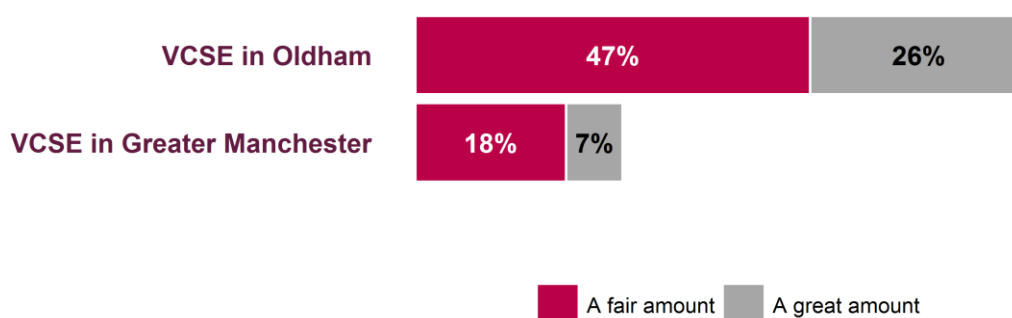
10.1. Working with other VCSE organisations

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

The vast majority (94 per cent) had some direct dealings with other VCSE sector organisations in Oldham and 73 per cent had a 'great' or 'fair amount' of contact (figure 10.1). Results are 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 reporting some direct dealings with other VCSE organisations in Oldham in 2012/13 was similar (91 per cent) although the proportion who said they had a 'great' or 'fair amount' of contact was lower (62 per cent).

The proportion of respondents reporting they had direct dealings with other VCSE sector organisations in Greater Manchester was lower (57 per cent), along with the proportion who had a 'great' or 'fair amount' of contact (25 per cent). The proportion reporting direct dealings across Greater Manchester as a whole was higher (70 per cent direct dealings and 37 per cent with a 'great' or 'fair amount' of contact). Survey respondents were only asked about their dealings with other VCSE organisations across Greater Manchester in 2016/17.

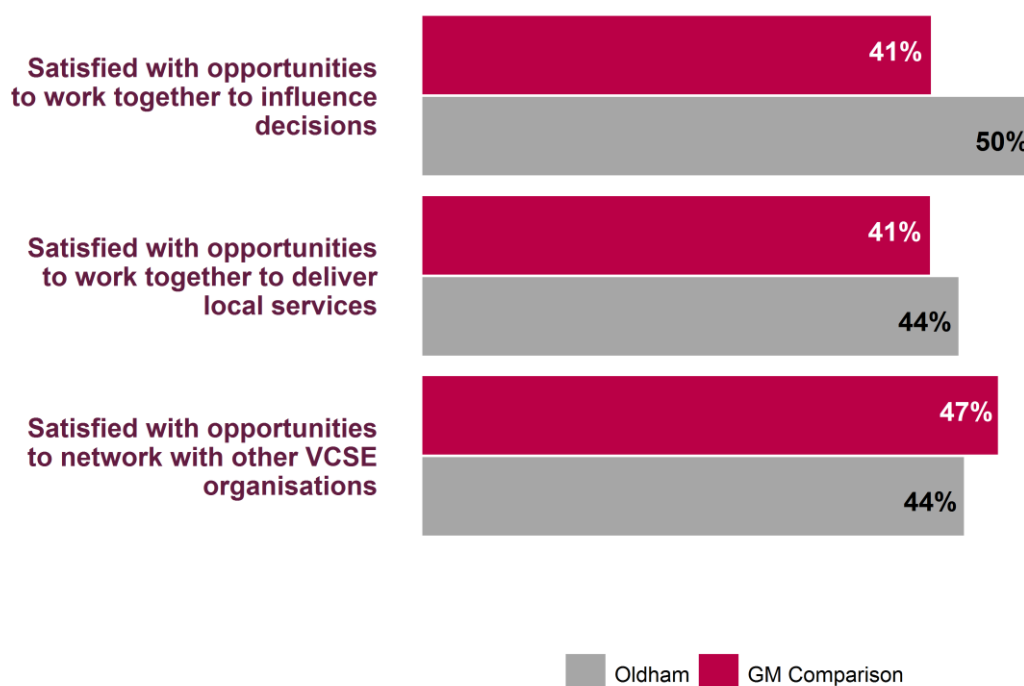
Figure 10.1: Extent of direct dealings with VCSE organisations



Source: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
 Base: 104 (Oldham) / 89 (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: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
 Base: 101 (influence decisions) / 101 (delivering services) / 100 (networking)

This shows that 50 per cent of respondents were satisfied with the availability of opportunities to influence local decisions (57 per cent in 2012/13) and that 44 per cent were satisfied with the availability of opportunities to work together to deliver local services (52 per cent in 2012/13). 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). Over two-fifths (44 per cent) of respondents were also satisfied with opportunities to network with other VCSE organisations (47 per cent across Greater Manchester as a whole). This was a new question added to the latest survey.

One fifth (20 per cent) of respondents said their organisation is a member of a formal VCSE sector consortium which is slightly lower than the 22 per cent of organisations across Greater Manchester.

One in ten (11 per cent) 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 focus groups discussed participants' views about and experiences of working in partnership with other VCSE organisations in Oldham and more widely. Participants were overwhelmingly positive about the importance of working closely with other VCSE organisations and believed that collaboration with like-minded organisations was the best way for the sector to move 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."

Similar to working with the public sector, the importance of building personal relationships based on trust with individuals in other organisations was identified as a key factor for successful partnerships. It was argued that partnerships work best when the organisations involved had shared aims and identities and faced similar challenges. In these cases participants strongly believed that VCSE organisations should try to 'pool their talents together' as this would be of both short and long-term benefit.

"Yes, the key thing is sharing. And when you have a key skill or contact in an area, I'll reach out to you. It's important for us to show the success that we have and to know what we do and what we can do as organisations in the future."

Better partnership working within the VCSE sector was also seen as vital for dealing with the (potentially) negative consequences of devolution and other policy factors (cuts etc). By sharing information, resources, contacts, expertise and ideas VCSE organisations would be better able to demonstrate how they could contribute to the public policy agendas and put the sector in a stronger position in the decision-making process.

The Future

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 at least half of respondents thought the following factors would assist their organisation over the next year:

- **engagement with other VCSE organisations:** 57 per cent anticipated this factor assisting their organisation; including 10 per cent who saw this as 'greatly assisting' and 46 per cent 'assisting'
- **engagement with public sector bodies:** 54 per cent anticipated this factor assisting their organisation; including nine per cent who saw this as 'greatly assisting' and 46 per cent 'assisting'
- **ability to retain volunteers/volunteer turnover:** 50 per cent anticipated this factor assisting their organisation; including 18 per cent who saw this as 'greatly assisting' and 32 per cent 'assisting'.

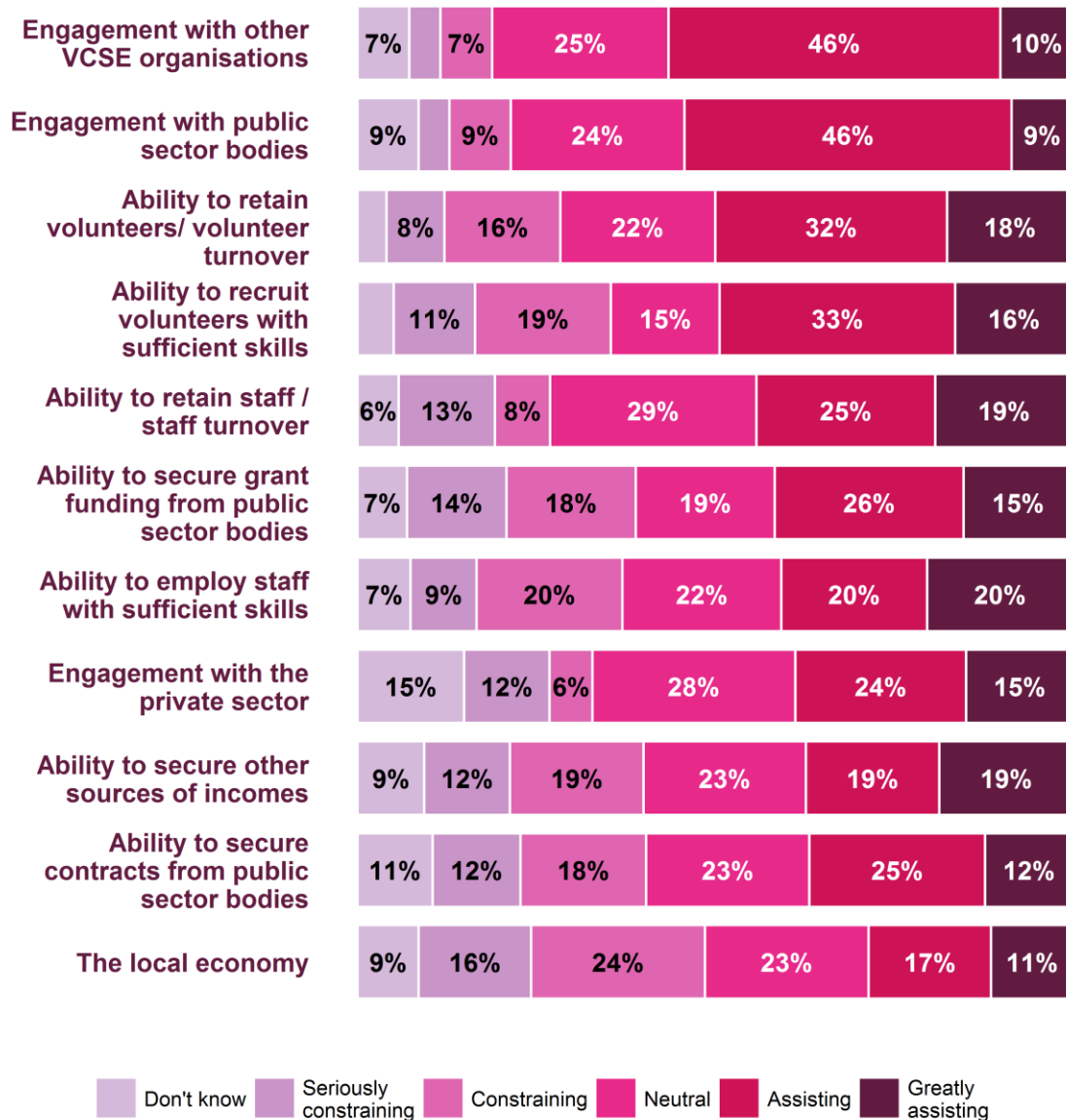
Engagement with other VCSE organisations was also the most common factor selected across Greater Manchester, with 50 per cent of organisations envisaging this factor assisting their organisation over the next 12 months.

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

- **the local economy:** 40 per cent anticipated this factor constraining their organisation; including 16 per cent who saw this as 'seriously constraining' and 24 per cent 'constraining'
- **ability to secure grant funding from public sector bodies:** 32 per cent anticipated this factor constraining their organisation; including 14 per cent who saw this as 'seriously constraining' and 18 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: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 52-79

Following on from quantitative questions regarding the factors that 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.

There was a mixture of comments received. Most of the comments focused on constraining factors focused on issues with accessing funding:

"Looking at what comes out for commissioning there appears to be little opportunity related to health and social care as public funds are squeezed. demand for support from our services but no offer of funds to cover costs."

"It is likely that raising funds from local people will be a bit harder due to austerity. There is also likely to be more competition for public sector grants, which may also be reduced due to the pressure to save money."

"Economic uncertainty post Brexit alongside continuing impact of welfare reform and local authority spending cuts are constraining factors."

Comments focused on assisting factors covered both existing arrangements and future strategies:

"We are in a relatively buoyant position at the moment and have benefited from expertise within our group being able to obtain continued support from public authorities. We have no illusions re the challenges ahead, but have every confidence that we will succeed in our social and community enterprise."

"Networking forum and communicating with businesses."

"The more we can work with partners to align/agree/share goals, targets and outcomes, commitments, actions and efforts, resources, risks and experience/skills to achieve our common aim and objectives the better able we will be to achieve our corporate aspirations and similarly our ability to secure funding and contracts for place based integrated services, asset based community development and self-help projects and other local initiatives will enable us to achieve this."

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 three-fifths or more of respondents were already doing or planning to do the following:

- **working more closely with another voluntary/not-for-profit organisation:** 65 per cent were already pursuing or planning to pursue this strategy; including 34 per cent who are doing this now and 31 per cent who are planning to do this in the future
- **increasing earned income:** 62 per cent were already pursuing or planning to pursue this strategy; including 28 per cent who are doing this now and 34 per cent who are planning to do this
- **changing the way you run your services or activities:** 60 per cent were already pursuing or planning to pursue this strategy; including 21 per cent who are doing this now and 39 per cent who are planning to do this.

These were also the top three strategies being pursued by organisations across Greater Manchester as a whole.

Figure 11.2: Strategies being planned or pursued



Source: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 82-88

Conclusions

1. The VCSE sector in Oldham continues to occupy an important strategic position between policy development, service provision and everyday life.

There are an estimated 1,231 organisations working in the VCSE sector in Oldham who are involved in many areas of activity.

As in the 2013 study, the local area is a main focus for the majority of organisations; 40 per cent identified the whole of the Oldham local authority area as their highest main geographic focus and a further 28 per cent identified particular neighbourhoods or communities in Oldham as their highest main geographic focus.

The thematic areas with the greatest proportion of organisations working in them are: health and wellbeing; community development; sport and leisure; and education, training and research (which includes information, advice and guidance); the same four areas were selected most frequently in 2012/13.

The VCSE sector plays a key role in fostering strong and cohesive communities within Oldham and is an essential part of the social fabric of the borough. Over two-thirds (68 per cent) of organisations felt they are improving people's mental wellbeing and two-thirds (66 per cent) stated they are addressing the needs of disadvantaged members of the community.

2. The sector in Oldham remains an important economic player, contributing significantly to GVA³¹, but patterns in income, expenditure and the level of reserves suggest that, as in 2013, the sustainability of many organisations may be under threat.

Valuing the contribution of both paid employees and volunteers and committee/board members to Oldham organisations by the expected value of the output that they produced gives an estimated contribution overall of £152.4 million.

Total income of the VCSE sector in 2014/15 is estimated to be £102 million. This represents an increase of three per cent compared to 2013/14 when the total income of the VCSE sector was an estimated £100 million. The vast majority of organisations are micro or small although the majority of income is concentrated in large and medium-sized organisations.

The picture is more positive overall than in the previous 2013 study which identified year-on-year reductions in income. However, analysis of income data across Greater Manchester by organisation size revealed micro and small organisations experienced year on year reductions in total income between 2012/13 and 2014/15.

³¹ Gross Value Added (GVA), the value of goods and services produced, is a key measure of the economic contribution of organisations or sectors – see page 28 for more details.

By contrast, medium and large organisations saw a reduction in total income between 2012/13 and 2013/14, but then an increase between 2013/14 and 2014/15.

Almost half (47 per cent) of respondents reported increasing their expenditure, but only 39 per cent had experienced an increase in income and only 26 per cent report an increase in reserves.

In addition, 30 per cent of respondents reported a decrease in income but only 19 per cent reduced their expenditure.

25 per cent of respondents provided an expenditure figure for 2014/15 that was greater than their income. These results indicate a sizeable number of organisations spent more money than they received in the last 12 months and that a considerable number of organisations are using their reserves to supplement their income, potentially leaving them in a fragile financial position.

3. The VCSE sector in Oldham continues to provide significant social value.

It is estimated that the VCSE sector in Oldham made 1.8 million interventions with clients, users or beneficiaries in the previous year.

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).

4. The VCSE sector continues to be a significant employer.

In 2016/17, there were an estimated 2,200 FTE paid staff. In addition, the sector was supported by 28,600 volunteers and 8,400 committee/board members who combined donated 90,300 hours per week.

Valuing the contribution of paid employees to Oldham organisations by the expected value of the output that they produced gives an estimated annual contribution of £70.7 million. Doing the same for volunteers and committee/board members gives an estimated contribution of £81.7 million.

5. The number of volunteers within the sector in Oldham appears to have grown consistently over recent years, however there are challenges associated with volunteering across the borough.

Over two-fifths (44 per cent) of organisations responding to the survey reported increased numbers of volunteers compared to the previous year, while just nine per cent of organisations reported a decrease in volunteer numbers.

With regards to focus group participants, for one larger organisation, volunteers have been increasing in the last two to three years. However, for smaller organisations the numbers were reported to have dropped this year.

Participants, particularly those from smaller organisations, identified difficulties in being able to resource and utilise the staff and systems necessary to support, train and retain these volunteers. They often lacked properly skilled volunteers because they have insufficient funds, resources and staff to oversee them, especially in the initial stages.

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

Overall, 88 per cent of respondents in Oldham had some dealings with Oldham Council (70 per cent in 2012/13): 23 per cent had a great amount of dealings with the Council and 34 per cent had a fair amount of dealings.

Almost two-fifths (39 per cent) of respondents were satisfied with their ability to influence Oldham Council decisions of relevance to their organisation while 45 per cent said Oldham Council had a positive influence on their organisation's success. These results are more positive than in 2013.

Focus group participants reported that working with the public sector wasn't always a smooth process. Participants from smaller organisations in particular didn't feel that they are respected, appreciated, or consulted as much as they should be.

Focus group participants were also very sceptical about devolution and its implications for the VCSE sector: they struggled to understand what exactly it will mean in practice and were uncertain that they would be able to influence devolution decision-making processes.

7. Engagement with private businesses remains relatively low but perceptions of the private business sector appear to have improved.

61 per cent of organisations had some direct dealings with private businesses with 26 per cent having a 'great' or 'fair' amount of contact. This is similar to 2012/13 when 64 per cent reported some direct dealings. The proportion having a 'great' or 'fair' amount of contact is higher than the 14 per cent reported in 2012/13.

One third (32 per cent) felt that the private business community in Oldham was a positive influence on their organisation's success. This is an increase since 2012/13 when just 21 per cent agreed private businesses were a positive influence.

Overall, focus group participants were positive when discussing their relationship with the private sector: they believed that there are things that VCSE organisations can offer to businesses in the private sector which can benefit them. At the same time VCSE organisations could benefit by gaining extra resources, financial and in-kind, which they can immediately use in their activities and services.

However, participants also highlighted challenges working with the private sector, even when the latter have the best of intentions. This was due to their fundamentally different culture and outlook on society and social problems in particular.

8. The VCSE sector in Oldham continues to be well connected internally although most contact appears to be informal.

As in the 2013 study, the vast majority of organisations had some direct dealings with other VCSE sector organisations in their local area. This included 73 per cent who had a 'great' or 'fair amount' of contact.

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

Focus group participants were overwhelmingly positive about the importance of working closely with other VCSE organisations and believed that collaboration with like-minded organisations was the best way for the sector to move forward.

Better partnership working within the VCSE sector was also seen as vital for dealing with the (potentially) negative consequences of devolution and other policy factors such as cuts to funding.

9. The sector still 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 were pursuing a range of strategies to ensure their sustainability, in particular: generating earned income from other sources, partnership working and organisational change.

Appendix 1



Methodology

Survey of organisations

At least partial responses were received from 65 of the 704 organisations that were sent a survey questionnaire: this represents a response rate of nine per cent. Another web-based version of the survey was also distributed by Action Together, reaching organisations also included in the original sample and beyond. Action Together played a key role in boosting the response rate to the survey by utilising their relationships with the sector to encourage organisations to complete a questionnaire. In addition GMCVO distributed a version of the survey via their networks. A further 51 responses were collected via these methods, meaning a total of **116 responses were collected overall** during September 2016 - January 2017, giving a higher overall response rate.

The survey was undertaken as part of a wider study in six other Greater Manchester boroughs: Bolton, the City of Manchester, 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 Oldham Council, public sector health bodies, and a range of other local statutory bodies
- **relationships with other local organisations**, including VCSE organisations and private businesses.

Where possible the report compares results from the latest survey and the 2012/13 study. Revisions to the questionnaire mean that comparisons are not always possible or appropriate. It is also worth noting that in 2012/13 a large postal survey was the main method of data collection which was supplemented with a web based survey. This is different to the latest study when a web based survey was the primary method of data collection.

When reading the report it is important to acknowledge two key points. First, 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 +/- 8.7 percentage points of the true value.

Secondly, on a number of occasions the analysis in this report has used extrapolations from the survey responses to provide estimates of totals for all organisations that work in the VCSE sector including:

- the number of clients, users and beneficiaries of the sector
- the total income of the sector
- and the number of FTE paid staff and the number of volunteers and committee/board members that are part of the sector's workforce; including the hours per week that volunteers contribute.

In each case the same three stage method has been used for calculating the sector wide totals:

- **stage one:** calculate the Greater Manchester averages for each of the four size bands of organisations: 'micro', 'small', 'medium' and 'large': column (a) in table A1
- **stage two:** multiply the average for each size band (column (a) in table A1) by the estimated number of organisations within that size band (column (b) in table A1) to give the total for each size band of organisations (column (c) in table A1)
- **stage three:** sum the estimates from stage two (column (c) in table A1) to give a sector wide total estimate (cell (d) in table A1).

This was necessary to take account of noticeable differences in the response rates by organisation size. A failure to do this would lead to upwardly biased estimates: a small number of mainly 'large' organisations create a high mean value that is not representative of the majority of organisations. This is an important point given that we estimate that a large proportion of the sector is made up of 'micro' organisations which tend to have far lower values and not taking into account difference by size of organisations would produce estimates that are much higher.

Table A1: Extrapolations: a worked example (total annual income)

	Average income by size (a)	Estimated number of organisations (b)	Total income (thousands) (c)
Micro (under £10k)	£2,438	857	£2,089,634
Small (£10k to £100k)	£38,844	240	£9,337,162
Medium (£100k to £1m)	£320,581	108	£34,498,453
Large (over £1m)	£2,201,023	26	£56,201,198
Total			(b) £102,126,446

Please note it has been assumed here that the estimated averages for Greater Manchester organisations are representative for organisations within Oldham. So for example it has been assumed that the estimated average income of approximately £320,600 for medium sized organisations across Greater Manchester is representative of the income for medium sized organisations within Oldham.

Using the Greater Manchester averages improves the reliability of the estimates.

Focus groups

A focus group was conducted to provide a further depth of understanding to some of the themes covered in the State of the Sector Survey. The group was held midway through the survey administration and undertaken by Action Together who recruited local organisations to participate in the group.

A topic guide was devised to help guide discussion and ensure a standardised approach across all local authority areas conducting focus groups. The topic guide was created in partnership between CRESR and the Research Steering Group with CRESR providing advice and guidance on best practice in undertaking this type of research.

The focus group lasted approximately 1 hour - 1 hour 30 minutes and was digitally recorded with consent obtained from all participants. The recording was then provided to CRESR who analysed the discussion. Analysis of the discussion is included in the relevant chapters of this report.

The topics discussed in the focus group concentrated on four key themes: volunteering, working with the public sector, working with other VCSE organisations and working with the private business sector.

The focus group took place with small VCSE groups/registered charities.

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 that 30 per cent were a group with a constitution, but not registered charities and 22 per cent of organisations were a company limited by guarantee and that separate to identifying their legal status two fifths of respondents, 44 per cent, identified that their organisation was a registered charity.

These results are largely similar to those in the 2012/13 survey when:

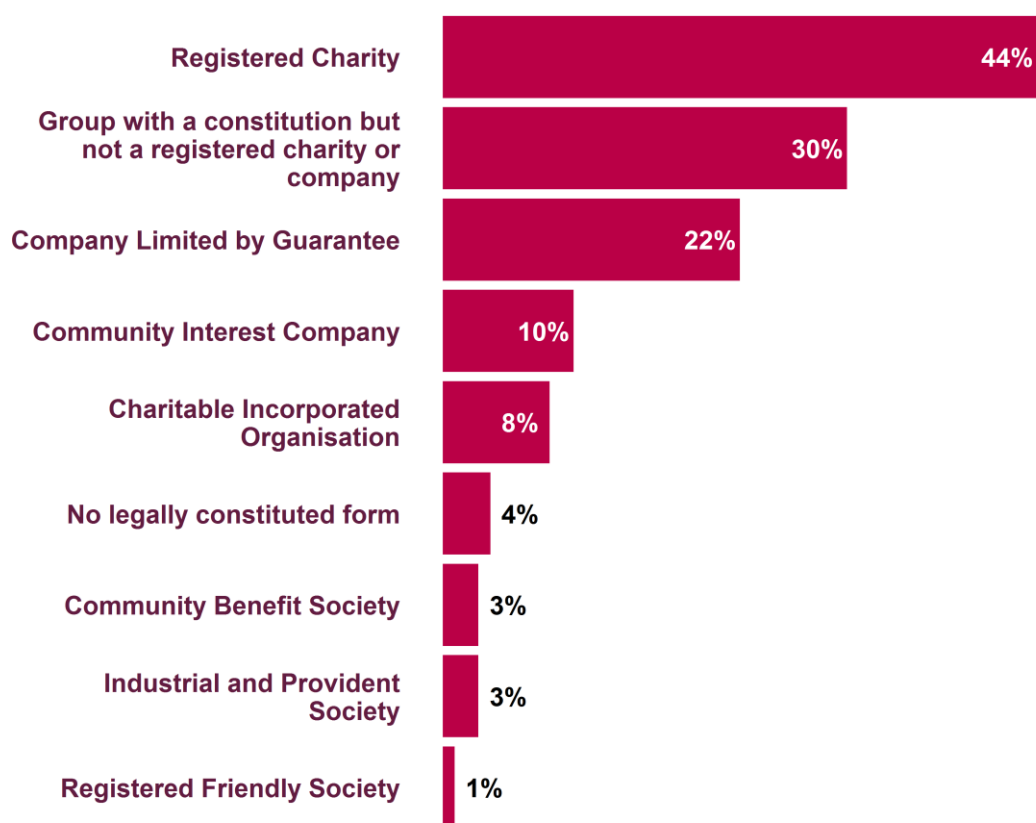
- 37 per cent of organisations were a group with a constitution, but not registered charities
- 23 per cent were companies limited by guarantee
- four per cent of organisations had no legally constituted form
- 48 per cent of respondents identified that their organisation was a registered charity.

In the latest survey however, ten per cent of respondents indicated their organisation was a Community Interest Company; double the proportion in 2012/13 (five per cent).

Across Greater Manchester:

- 30 per cent of organisations were a group with a constitution, but not a registered charity
- 28 per cent were a company limited by guarantee
- four per cent of organisations had no legally constituted form
- 49 per cent of organisations were registered charities.

Figure A1: The legal status of responding organisations



Source: Oldham State of the VCSE sector survey 2016/17
Base: 113