

Report of Director of Communities and Environment

Report to Executive Board

Date: 25 November 2019

Subject: The Leeds Pledge to Strengthen Civil Society

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Has consultation been carried out?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary

1. Main issues

- Leeds City Council is invited to endorse the Leeds Pledge to Strengthen Civil Society. The Pledge is the result of cross sector co-production, initiated and led by Leeds Third Sector Partnership, which is chaired by the Executive Member for Communities and has membership from Third Sector, LCC, NHS and Leeds and Beckett Universities.
Appendix 1 with the covering report: **The Leeds Pledge to Strengthen Civil Society**
- In order to deliver on all of our ambitions for the city, particularly with examples like the recent commitment to become carbon neutral, we are dependent on a strong civil society, where every individual and every organisation plays their part.
- Civil Society is all of those individuals and organisations, outside of the public sector, who undertake activities with the primary purpose of delivering social, community and environmental benefit. This includes the corporate social responsibility and social value and environmental commitments of companies; the philanthropic financial investment and donations of individuals; the contribution of the third and faith sectors and the volunteering and compassionate social action of citizens in their communities.
- Leeds has a track record of collaboration, partnership and co-production which has been championed by the Council and the Third Sector Partnership has an ongoing interest in the mobilisation of all sectors and resources for city and community benefit. In summer, 2018 when Third Sector Partnership focused particular attention on the role of civil society it was clear that Leeds has an active civil society foundation, with a culture, policy and practice that create the conditions to make this possible. There are examples demonstrating that Leeds has real strengths in this area and most significantly, huge potential for further development.
Appendix 2 with the covering report: **Civil Society in Acton in Leeds**

- Third Sector Partnership concluded that Leeds could maximise impact and build on the existing civil society foundations by:
 - seizing the opportunity and explicitly and proactively clarifying and presenting our approach around valuing and strengthening the role of civil society
 - fostering a more proactive approach that promotes, encourages and in some cases requires a more active engagement of all partners, sectors and citizens in the delivery of our city ambitions
- Third Sector Partnership agreed to develop the Leeds Pledge to Strengthen Civil Society, which they formally approved in May 2019.
- The Pledge sets out a clear and confident Leeds approach to Civil Society, to galvanise commitment, maximise investment and strengthen impact.
- Third Sector Partnership have invited Leeds City Council, in their place leadership role for the City, to endorse the Pledge and mobilise a more determined focus on strengthening civil society within the Council and beyond.

2. Best Council Plan Implications (click [here](#) for the latest version of the Best Council Plan)

- The endorsement of the Pledge seeks to maximise opportunities to engage wider civil society in playing a more active role in the city and enhance and support delivery of all of the priorities in the Best Council Plan by galvanising the financial and in kind resources and commitment of other partners.

3. Resource Implications

- The objective of the Pledge is to maximise the application of financial and in-kind resources towards the delivery of the city priorities by focusing attention on galvanising commitment and action from other partners in the city and encouraging greater active participation of citizens and communities in city life.

4. Conclusions

- Leeds has a strong foundation of civil society engagement, collaboration and action and recognises the positive impact that this mobilisation of all partners and citizens can deliver in terms of community leadership, investment in services, commitment to act for collective and city benefit and the strengthening of democratic engagement.
- It is clear that there is the potential to achieve greater impact and mobilise more resources and capacity to deliver actions for social, environmental and community benefit, which can lead to economic benefits. We can do this if we proactively focus on strengthening our approach to engaging civil society in Leeds, with a focus on the activities set out in the Pledge.

Recommendations

- 1) Executive Board is invited to endorse the Leeds Pledge to Strengthen Civil Society **Appendix 1** with the covering report : **Leeds Pledge to Strengthen Civil Society**
- 2) The Executive Member for Communities, as chair of the Third Sector Partnership, is requested to invite the NHS, University and Third Sector colleagues to take the Pledge into their sectors and institutions and seek support and commitment to partnership working on this agenda.
- 3) To note that the Director of Communities and Environment and the Chief Officer Communities are the senior officers responsible for the council's oversight of the Pledge and its promotion and roll out.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 Leeds City Council is invited by Third Sector Partnership to endorse the Leeds Pledge to Strengthen Civil Society. **Appendix 1: The Leeds Pledge to Strengthen Civil Society**

2. Background information

- 2.1 Third Sector Partnership approved the Leeds Pledge to Strengthen Civil Society in May 2019 following a period of collaboration and consultation.

2.2 What we mean by Civil Society:

- **Civil Society** refers to all individuals and organisations, when they are undertaking activities with the primary purpose of delivering social benefit independent of state control. It is not a 'sector' but independent activity aimed at delivering social benefit.
- **Civil Society Organisations:** charities, public service mutuals, or businesses with a primary social purpose.
- **The Social Sector:** the 'core' of civil society, the 'voluntary, community, and social enterprise organisations'.
- **Civil Society Activities** may be undertaken by people and organisations in any sector

- 2.3 **About the Leeds Pledge to Strengthen Civil Society:** The Pledge is presented as a one-page statement of our ambition and intent.

- 2.4 The introduction to the Pledge recognises the importance of a 'strong civil society as a foundation stone for our ambitions for Leeds.

- 2.4 The Pledge describes what a strong civil society looks like:

- Everyone playing their part.
- People and communities thriving and active for the benefit of themselves and others.
- All organisations [public, private, third sector] taking action for the benefit of Leeds and the community, and facilitating collaboration, partnership and leadership.

- 2.5 The Pledge sets out activities that are necessary to maintain and strengthen civil society:

- The people of Leeds driving the ambitions and making a difference to our approaches around health, wellbeing, a thriving economy and other key city agendas.
- People encouraged and enabled to do more for themselves and others.
- Thriving involvement by everyone in democracy and decision-making.
- Spaces and opportunities for people to come together to build their communities and good community relationships.
- All sectors valuing and drawing on communities and partners strengths.
- All sectors working together to create the conditions for a thriving third sector that can deliver for Leeds.
- The conditions to support strong, resilient, thriving communities that value diversity.
- Corporate and individual giving - encouraged, recognised and incentivised.
- Businesses committed to Corporate Social Responsibility, Community Investment and Employer Supported Volunteering.
- All sectors and citizens encouraged and enabled to play their part in delivering a carbon neutral Leeds, bringing environmental, health and social benefits for everyone.
- A strong and inclusive city partnership infrastructure

2.6 Leeds has activity in all of these areas, but the Pledge provides an opportunity to secure wider commitment and to strengthen the civil society offer, its coherence and its impact and minimise the risk that good practice and current achievements are lost. For example,

- **The issue for some activities is sustaining and building on existing good practice and commitments.** We have an enviable reputation in Leeds for our strong third sector and our third sector policy and operating framework and particularly the commitment to investment in, co-production with and strong relationships between the sector, the Council and other partners. This has enabled the sector to deliver key services, activities, and value for money for Leeds through a period of austerity and service challenges. Maintaining and further developing the potential of the sector requires ongoing attention and a recalibration of approach depending on the operating context at the time.
- **Some of the activities require more attention and development.** There are many active and civic focused private sector companies in Leeds, from small local businesses supporting neighbourhood based events and groups to major companies with significant Corporate Social Responsibility, city leadership and community commitments. The economic strength, size and diversity of the private sector in Leeds means that there are many more opportunities to strengthen engagement and broker philanthropy and a focus on the contribution they can make in Leeds
- **Some of our city ambitions can only be delivered if all sectors and citizens play their part.** Leeds has recently declared a Climate Emergency. There are many initiatives underway to minimise negative environmental impacts, but the enormity of the challenge and the speed at which we need to deliver makes it essential that every business, institution and citizen plays their part. A coherent and determined approach to engage with all partners through all opportunities in a collective endeavour for individual and the collective good will help achieve our carbon neutral ambitions.

2.7 The Pledge includes a 'strapline', which is intended to convey a simple clear message: '*We will achieve the best for everyone when everyone plays their part*'. The strapline was agreed as an important communications tool. Colleagues have commented upon the potential to develop the strapline as a basis for promotion of the approach and perhaps a reward and recognition scheme for public, private and third sector organisations committing to '**play our part for Leeds**', or '**doing our bit for Leeds**'

3. Main issues

The origins of the Pledge

- 3.1 Leeds has a tradition of community, public, private and third sector collaboration, partnership and co-production and a focus on engaging and harnessing the power of civil society, which goes back many years. The Council has championed this approach.
- 3.2 Leeds Third Sector Partnership has an ongoing interest in the role of civil society and the mobilisation of all sectors and resources for city and community benefit, with its leading role in the initiation of the Social Value Charter and the drive to promote and facilitate volunteering, for example.
- 3.3 The Leeds Third Sector Partnership is chaired by the Executive Member for Communities and has a membership of senior Council officers, colleagues from NHS Leeds CCG, University of Leeds and Leeds Beckett University and representatives of the third sector. This part of the city partnership infrastructure focuses on ensuring that we have the conditions for a thriving third sector that can deliver for Leeds.

3.4 In summer, 2018 Third Sector Partnership coordinated a Leeds response to the Government consultation around the development of a Civil Society strategy.

Leeds already has a good story to tell

3.5 Partners commented enthusiastically that Leeds has a good story to tell. There is an established culture, policy and practice across the city that has been championed by the Council that can be recognised as a strong civil society. There are civil society organisations, collaborations and citizen action delivering amazing social benefits for people across Leeds **Appendix 2: Civil Society in Action in Leeds**

3.6 Partners also commented that whilst there is a strong civil society ethos; achievements to date in Leeds have been made with an implicit understanding of the importance of civil society, rather than an explicit and commonly shared understanding of the importance of and commitment to a strong Civil Society.

3.7 Third Sector Partnership felt that Leeds could maximise impact and build on this strong platform by:

- Explicitly and proactively clarifying and presenting our approach around valuing and strengthening the role of civil society.
- Fostering a more proactive approach that promotes, encourages and in some cases requires a more active engagement of all partners, sectors and citizens in the delivery of our city ambitions.

Developing the Pledge to strengthen the approach in Leeds

3.6 Third Sector Partnership responded to this analysis by developing the Leeds Pledge to Strengthen Civil Society, recognising that there is much more that could be achieved with a clearly articulated ambition to 'strengthen civil society' and a determined focus on mobilising all partners and communities

3.7 Other developments relevant to the content of this paper are the Government Civil Society Strategy: Building a future that works for everyone was published in August 2018. [Link to Government Civil Society Strategy](#) . The Civil Society Strategy for the Labour Party: From Paternalism to Participation was published in June 2019. [Link to Labour Party Strategy](#)

3.8 The Leeds Pledge to Strengthen Civil Society positions Leeds well in terms of the Council's ambitions and our ability to respond to any emerging opportunities and investment, nationally.

Delivering a stronger civil society

3.9 Endorsement of the Pledge will facilitate a focus on and upturn in activity in maintaining and further developing a strong civil society in Leeds. It will drive awareness of our ambition; give clarity around the direction of travel and provide an opportunity to secure commitment from colleagues across the Council and beyond.

3.10 The Council has an important role to play in leading on the endorsement of the Pledge with an invitation to other partners across all sectors to 'play their part for Leeds'.

3.11 Endorsement will encourage colleagues within the council and beyond to utilise their relationships with partners and communities to encourage commitment to use their skills, resources and ideas for social, environmental, community and economic benefit.

3.12 The clarity of ambition in the Pledge provides an engine to drive an active commitment to a strong civil society that can become soundly embedded and second nature in the way that we do business in Leeds.

3.13 The activities set out in the Pledge are guides to encourage development and not limits to restrict contribution.

It is evident that:

- The private sector has a greater role to play;
- Co-production with partners adds value;
- Supporting communities to do things for themselves delivers results;
- Third sector has reach into communities, access to volunteering and financial resources and capacity that can all be applied in the interests of the people of Leeds.

- 3.14 The Council is already committed to a strengths based, co-production model and a way of working which recognises that greater engagement of civil society in the shaping, investment in and delivery on our city priorities is the key to achieving our shared ambitions for Leeds.
- 3.15 Mobilisation of the skills and capacity of all partners in the city is critical to deliver our ambitions.

Next steps, subject to Executive Board support:

- 3.16 The Director of Communities and Environment and the Chief Officer Communities will be the senior officers responsible for the strategic oversight of the promotion and roll out of this approach.
- 3.17 Awareness of the Pledge will be promoted internally in the council through Insite and Essentials.
- 3.18 Council Directorates will be asked to discuss opportunities for consolidating current approaches or identifying new opportunities to strengthen civil society.
- 3.19 The Executive Member for Communities will advise Third Sector Partnership about the LCC endorsement of the Pledge and invite NHS, University and Third Sector colleagues to take the Pledge into their sectors and institutions and seek support and commitment to partnership working on this agenda.

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

- 4.1.1 Third Sector Partnership has a membership of senior council officers, representatives from the University of Leeds and Leeds Beckett University, NHS Leeds CCG and representatives of the third sector. Through a workshop, partners scoped and designed the Pledge. Third Sector Leeds Leadership Group, which reflects and represents the voice of the wider third sector, commented on the drafts. Partners were all invited to secure comment and a steer from their own organisations and sector.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 An equality screening has been undertaken in **Appendix 3**.
- 4.2.2 Delivering on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration has been integral to the development of the Pledge, which sets out actions that are explicit around these areas. For example,
- Encouraging greater active participation of all citizens and communities in democracy and city life.
 - Thriving involvement by everyone in democracy and decision-making.
 - Spaces and opportunities for people to come together to build their communities and good community relationships.
 - All sectors valuing and drawing on communities and partners strengths.
 - The conditions to support strong, resilient, thriving communities that value diversity.
 - A strong and inclusive city partnership infrastructure.

- 4.2.3 The overall objective of the Pledge is to mobilise commitment and additional financial and in kind investment from all partners towards the delivery of the Best City priorities, which has the potential to lead to more positive equality, diversity, cohesion and integration outcomes.
- 4.2.4 The Pledge is intended to encourage colleagues to explore all opportunities to strengthen civil society as they develop policy and projects and give the usual considerations around equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.

4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 Endorsement and promotion of the Pledge presents an opportunity to mobilise awareness of and commitment to the delivery of the Best Council Plan priorities with other city partners. This should result in additional financial and in-kind investment and capacity being applied to these areas of activity. (Health and Wellbeing, Inclusive Growth, Safe and Strong Communities, Growing the Cultural Sector, Child Friendly Leeds, Sustainable infrastructure, Age friendly Leeds).

Climate Emergency

- 4.3.2 The objective of the Pledge is to strengthen the engagement and commitment of the private, public and third sector, communities and citizens in actions that deliver on city ambitions. This approach applies equally to our ambitions on the climate emergency as articulated in the Pledge by the statement “when people and communities thrive and are active for the benefit of themselves and others”.
- 4.3.3 The Pledge includes a specific action around mobilising commitment to the Leeds carbon neutral objective.

4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

- 4.4.1 The objective of the Pledge is to maximise the application of financial and in kind resources, skills and capacity from other partners towards the delivery of the city priorities.
- 4.4.2 The Pledge is intended to help focus the council on galvanising commitment and action from other partners in the city and encouraging greater active participation of citizens and communities in city life. Through this approach to maximise the application of financial and in-kind resources to deliver more positive outcomes.
- 4.4.3 There are no direct resource costs associated with endorsing this Pledge.
- 4.4.4 The endorsement of the Pledge sets out a clear ambition, which can be delivered by the action of existing colleagues through established arrangements and communications. Key messages about the opportunities to be secured through wider engagement of and partnership with civil society will be cascaded through management arrangements and Leeds City Council usual communications through insite.
- 4.4.5 Leeds City Council Directorates will be asked to progress discussions within their management teams where they will identify any opportunities and actions to secure and strengthen civil society.

4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

- 4.5.1 There are no legal implications associated with the endorsement of the Pledge.
- 4.5.2 Any policy or action that colleagues initiate to progress implementation of the Pledge ambitions will be subject to scrutiny and legal, equality and other considerations at the time and as appropriate.

4.6 Risk management

- 4.6.1 Failure to explicitly focus on maintaining and strengthening civil society will result in lost opportunities to maximise engagement, commitment and resources from all partners and citizens.
- 4.6.2 Any policy or action to progress implementation of the Pledge ambitions will be subject to risk assessment and other considerations at the time and if appropriate.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 Leeds has a strong foundation of civil society engagement, collaboration and action and recognises the positive impact that this mobilisation of all partners and citizens can deliver in terms of community leadership, investment in services and the strengthening of democratic engagement.
- 5.2 The Council recognises that this approach is the way to deliver on our ambitions for Leeds.
- 5.3 It is clear that there is the potential to achieve greater impact and mobilise more resources and capacity. We can do this if we proactively focus on strengthening our approach to engaging civil society in Leeds, with a focus on the activities set out in the Pledge.
- 5.4 Endorsing the Pledge is an opportunity to clarify and determinedly set out a clear Leeds approach around the mobilisation of the skills and capacity of all partners and citizens

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 Executive Board is invited to endorse the Leeds Pledge to Strengthen Civil Society
Appendix 1 Leeds Pledge to Strengthen Civil Society
- 6.2 The Executive Member for Communities as chair of the Third Sector Partnership is requested to invite the NHS, University and Third Sector colleagues to take the Pledge into their sectors and institutions and seek support and commitment to partnership working on this agenda.
- 6.3 To note that the Director of Communities and Environment and the Chief Officer Communities are the senior officers responsible for the council's oversight of the Pledge and its promotion and roll out.

7 Background documents¹

- 7.1 No background documents

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

Appendix 1

The Leeds Pledge to strengthen Civil Society

We will achieve the best for everyone when everyone plays their part

We recognise that:

A strong civil society is a foundation stone for our ambitions for Leeds and the people who live and work here

We will have a stronger civil society when:

- everyone plays their part
- people and communities thrive and are active for the benefit of themselves and others
- all organisations take action for the benefit of Leeds and the community and facilitate collaboration, partnership and leadership

In order to strengthen our civil society we need:

- The people of Leeds driving the ambitions and making a difference to our approaches around health, wellbeing, a thriving economy and other key city agendas
- People encouraged and enabled to do more for themselves and others
- Thriving involvement by everyone in democracy and decision making
- Spaces and opportunities for people to come together to build their communities and good community relationships
- All sectors valuing and drawing on communities and partners strengths
- All sectors working together to create the conditions for a thriving third sector that can deliver for Leeds
- The conditions to support strong, resilient, thriving communities that value diversity
- Corporate and individual giving - encouraged, recognised and incentivised
- Businesses committed to Corporate Social Responsibility, Community Investment and Employer Supported Volunteering
- All sectors and citizens encouraged and enabled to play their part in delivering a carbon neutral Leeds, bringing environmental, health, and social benefits for everyone
- A strong and inclusive city partnership infrastructure

Endorse the Pledge

Play YOUR part in Leeds'

Appendix 2

Civil Society in Action in Leeds

Civil Society in Action in Leeds *Leeds Community Foundation*

Leeds Community Foundation is a not for profit third sector organisation which supports thousands of charities and voluntary groups across the city every year. Since inception in 2008, they have invested £42m in voluntary and community organisations and community activity in Leeds. They broker relationships, secure investment through the generosity of individuals and businesses, and administer some public sector funds.

2018 / 2019 investments highlights:

- £4.1m of investment through grants
- 634 grants
- £5000 average grant
- 59,000 people benefitted

Leeds Community Foundation – some of the Funds, investors and focus

The Leeds Fund

- Welcomes financial contributions from individuals and businesses who want to support the city in which they live and work.
- The Leeds Fund bridges the gap between those in need and those able to help.
- Since its launch in 2016, The Leeds Fund has attracted significant investment from key organisations including John Lewis, Asda Foundation and HARIBO.
- The fund has three levels of grants: micro, small and strategic. Strategic grants are themed and focus on current priority needs of the city. These are identified by working in partnership with the third sector and key public sector organisations in Leeds
- The priority for the first series of strategic grants was Mental Health and, in 2019, the strategic priority for the city is Loneliness and Inclusion.

Named Funds

- Provide a simple alternative to establishing an independent Charitable Trust, allowing investors to give back to the local community and make a genuine and positive impact now and into the future.
- LCF manage a portfolio of Named Funds across Leeds and Bradford on behalf of individuals, families, business and statutory organisations, as well as national funders such as The Pears Foundation and The Henry Smith Charity.
- Leeds Community Foundation handles the investment, correspondence, compliance and governance checks, helping to direct funding to charities and community projects that match fund holders' values. The aim is to help investors to support high impact grassroots groups, making a real difference in the communities.

The 100 Club

- A popular supporter's scheme for individuals and businesses who contribute £1000 a year towards the core costs of LCF, enabling the Foundation to become increasingly independent, resilient and maximizing the impact of other investment.
- This ensures that Leeds Community Foundation is able to commit long term to supporting community groups and grassroots projects who create positive change.

Set out over below is *an extract from a discussion with a 100 Club member, about what she loves about the city, and why she is involved in the foundation*

100 Club member: Lyn Ayrton, Partner at Lake Legal LLP

Lyn Ayrton, Partner at Lake Legal LLP, is a member of the Leeds Community Foundation's 100 Club, a patronage scheme for individuals who are motivated to make a difference in Leeds.

What is your favourite thing about Leeds?

I live just outside Leeds and love the fact that I can drive one way and be in the bustle of the city centre, yet drive the same distance the other way and be in acres of open parkland.

What inspired you to join the 100 Club?

When you have reached a certain level of success; you have a responsibility to invest some of your own time, money or energy back into your community roots. Leeds Community Foundation does a fantastic job engaging the business community to raise funds that support groups across the entire city.

It was therefore a no brainer for the firm to join the 100 Club as soon as the introduction was made.

What community issues are important to you?

One group that is often overlooked are the elderly, and the loneliness they endure. With a fair wind, old age will happen to us all, but not convinced that it is a headline cause for concern.

Civil Society in Action in Leeds

Voluntary Action Leeds and Asda

Voluntary Action Leeds (VAL) are a third sector infrastructure support organisation, which aims to ensure that voluntary and community organisations have the support they need to set up, operate and develop. VAL's Employer Supported Volunteering project works with companies to enable them to turn their Corporate Social Responsibility commitment through their Employer Supported Volunteering initiative into projects, activities and relationships that have community benefit.

VAL have worked in partnership with Asda for the last five years, coordinating their head office-volunteering programme. Asda employ almost 4000 staff in their head office who are all allocated two days each year to volunteer. VAL have facilitated Asda staff delivering indoor and outdoor activities with voluntary organisations and community projects, including; gardening, painting, organising donated stock, grounds maintenance, serving food, litter picking and housekeeping.

In 2018, 50 team volunteering days involving 500 staff were delivered. The 2019 target is 100 team-volunteering days with 1000 staff. Up to September 769 Asda colleagues have volunteered in 2019, with a further 326 booked to volunteer before the end of the year.

Civil Society in Action in Leeds

Damasq CIC and Greggs making unused food available in Burmantofts

Damasq CIC is a Syrian led not for profit community project, which aims to support new migrants to settle and reach their potential in Leeds. They are based in Ebor Gardens.

Damasq volunteers noted that there were individuals and families without food. They approached Greggs who agreed to make its unsold food available for people in Burmantofts. Damasq have managed to ensure that food is available for many people in the area, including isolated seniors, disabled people, refugees and asylum seekers.

Civil Society in Action in Leeds

LCC Employer Supported Volunteering for community benefit

To celebrate the Year of Volunteering in 2010, LCC approved and launched an Employer Supported Volunteering scheme, which entitles all Council employees to access up to 10 hours of paid special leave to volunteer in any 12-month period. Staff need their manager's approval and the activity they undertake has to be for community benefit.

Many people use the scheme to undertake additional work with organisations and communities that they are already involved with. Some colleagues have used the opportunity to undertake activities as a group as a team building exercise.

The LCC Funding Support Scheme is an ESV project run within the Council, which aims to draw on people's transferable skills to support small community organisations make better funding bids e.g. providing data to support bids.

Civil Society in Action in Leeds

Zarach: meeting the basic needs of school children

In August 2018, research showed that 5500 children in Leeds did not have a bed. In 2017, a primary school teacher learned that a child in her class was sleeping on a cushion because there was no bed. Her response was to set up Zarach, which aims to 'ensure that every child in the city has their basic needs met, gets a good night's sleep and an equal opportunity to get the best education at school'.

Zarach provide Bed bundles: these include a brand new bed, mattress, duvet, pillow, bed sheets, pyjamas and hygiene kit. They also work with local partners to include Food parcels and if needed a school uniform. 350 Bed Bundles have been given out to date.

They secure money through crowd funding, fund raising events, collections at churches, through individual and corporate contacts.

LCC Children and Families have circulated information to schools about Zarach and the support available to children. In the week beginning 6 October 24 teachers made referrals.

Zarach meet needs across the city, including in areas where people might assume there is no poverty Pudsey, Armley, Wetherby, Garforth, Middleton, Cookridge, Horsforth, and Yeadon.

Civil Society in Action in Leeds

Local community activists invited the neighbourhood Co-op to meet the needs of local people in food poverty

Thanks to the initiative of two local activists, the Co-op store at Hawksworth Wood agreed to make surplus food available so that it could be discretely distributed to families in food poverty in the area. Because of this initiative, the YMCA is now working with partners to explore setting up a food bank in the area.

Civil Society in Action in Leeds

LCC rolling out the asset based approach in communities

Driven by LCC Adults and Health, the Council has put significant effort into rolling out the asset based approach to working with communities. The vision is for everyone in Leeds, including those with care and support needs, to have the opportunity to contribute to, be valued by, and be involved with where they live. For communities to recognise their assets, forge strong connections with one another and feel able to make the changes they want to see.

The assumption is that, given the tools and the opportunity, small groups of local residents can change the things that they believe need changing in their community better than anyone else could. We are excited by this way of working and have been amazed by the transformative potential of people coming together to make changes for themselves. In Leeds, we are fortunate to have a strong and vibrant third sector with a diverse range of organisations, some of whom have been using ABCD or asset based approaches for years, whether by name or otherwise. It was from this strong position that we have been able to galvanise asset based approaches and the use of ABCD.

Building on existing work, learning from the approaches in 'A Glass Half Full' and through some training, we started to test out ABCD as a means to support older people to be more connected to where they lived. This was first trialled in three Neighbourhood Networks in Leeds back in 2013/15. This was using what we would now call the 'ABCD framework' of: establishing a **Community Builder** in the neighbourhood, who identified, enthused and supported **community connectors**, provided some "small sparks" funding and developed community led **asset maps**.

We now have 11 ABCD pathfinder sites hosted in Voluntary Sector organisations across Leeds using the ABCD framework.

Civil Society in Action in Leeds

Leeds LGBT+ Business Alliance making resources and support available to the LGBT+ community

Blacks Solicitors in partnership with LCC established the Leeds LGBT+ Business Alliance whose members also include Leeds Bradford Airport, Pinsent Masons, DWF, Lloyds Banking Group, Asda and Branded3.

Leeds LGBT+ Business Alliance aims include supporting and mentoring LGBT+ employees across all sectors; Establishing a CSR funding pot for LGBT+ community groups; making practical and professional advice and support for LGBT+ communities and organisations from businesses

There are many other examples of individuals, community and voluntary sector groups, public and private sector companies making a difference by 'doing their bit for Leeds'