



**Kim Groves,
Chair of Third Sector Leeds**

TSL Round up June 2024

In this period of profound change, we find ourselves at a pivotal moment for our sector and communities. Over the past month, TSL has been using the four key messages we developed to lobby candidates for the General Election and urge their support.

Leeds has one of the strongest and most mature third sectors in the country. It's worrying that essential and valuable services to communities through experienced organisations are being reduced or, sadly, closed. Thank you to all those who have worked to make a difference and to those who are having to do more with a lot less funding. As a sector, we must continue to shape how funding is commissioned and offer constructive feedback on how grants and contracts can be delivered differently, ideally by locally based and experienced partnerships.

Recent high-profile events in our city have showcased and attracted global investors. We must explore how the third sector can be involved in this success, as social value is a key priority in the Third Sector Leeds Strategy. The third sector delivers social value every day, working with partners from Leeds City Council, Health, and the private sector. We recently hosted a roundtable with Leeds City Council to begin discussions developing a new model that unites stakeholders with the goal of

delivering more through social value and enacting meaningful changes.

I attended a very special event earlier in June at Leeds City Museums, showcasing the diversity of our volunteers and the incredible breadth of work that they do in Leeds through a series of volunteer portraits. This exhibition will run throughout September to December, and I really encourage you to see it if you can.



Finally, I would like to express our gratitude to Tom Riordan, outgoing Chief Officer at Leeds City Council for his hard work and public service to the people of Leeds. Tom's leadership and personal values shine through in the council's strategies, even amidst financial challenges, including widening city strategies to be inclusive of, and to value, the third sector. Tom recognises the importance of our sector not just locally but also regionally and nationally, and has helped to create the environment for our sector to be as valued as it is - which is not the case everywhere! While we do not know his future plans, we hope that his expertise, knowledge, and kindness will continue to drive transformation and change.

Kim Groves

Chair of Third Sector Leeds

In this round up we talk about:

[General election](#)

[UKSPF](#)

[Third Sector Partnership Meeting](#)

[Social Value Round Table](#)

[Leeds City Council Chief Officer](#)

[Next Meeting](#)

[Further Resources](#)

[General election 4 July](#)

TSL has written an open letter to candidates from all major parties across Leeds outlining our 4 Key Messages, and asking them to pledge their support for the third sector in Leeds.

We have asked them to detail what their party will be doing locally and nationally to address these issues, and will publish a live update on these responses on the Doing Good Leeds website.

[View local candidates responses to our open letter](#)

[Read TSL's 4 key lobbying messages](#)

[UK Shared Prosperity Fund](#)

Funding made available through Pillar 3 (People and Skills) has now been awarded to the following organisations across West Yorkshire:

- An innovative pilot between Bradford Council, and local community and outpatient health services, supporting stroke patients receive extra rehabilitation for people with long COVID to help them return to work,

while the businesses they work for will receive tailored support to better accommodate their return to the workplace.

- Stepping Stones, an initiative which will provide free access to much loved “community shops” in Leeds, Bradford and Wakefield. Once there, people will be able to buy discounted food and groceries, as well as access grants to pay for expenses like travel and childcare, while they undertake a supportive programme designed to help them humanely back into work.
- Community grant funding will be available for voluntary and community organisations, in order to tap into their extensive local knowledge and relationships with vulnerable people, to ensure the support gets to those who need it the most.
- Two projects are being launched by The Education Development Trust: Future Forward, designed to support 16–24-year-olds into employment or further education, and Pathways to Progress, a work and health programme aiming to break down the health barriers to employment.
- Kirklees Council’s project will help people facing health-related barriers to employment, with specialised training set to be provided to frontline staff.

Find out more about Community Grants (deadline 28 June)

TSL Leadership Group have all fed into some wider reflections and feedback around the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which will form the basis of ongoing discussions with colleagues at West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

Third Sector Partnership Meeting

Third Sector Partnership Group is a cross-sector meeting that takes place every two months, chaired by Councillor Mary Harland (the Executive Member for Communities) with Kim Groves as the vice-chair.

Increasingly, this meeting is an important forum for discussions and decisions relating to the third sector.

TSL has a number of places on the Partnership Group, and different

representatives attend depending on the agenda planned. If there is something that you think should be discussed at Third Sector Partnership, please contact your TSL rep or megan.russell@val.org.uk

Social Value Round Table

At our TSL Goes Local events last year, you told us as TSL members that your priorities for this year from the Third Sector Strategy were: commissioning and funding, partnerships and social value.

As part of our work on social value, TSL held a roundtable event with senior leaders in Leeds to discuss the opportunities and challenges in working together differently to achieve more around social value. The roundtable included three workshops to address different aspects of what we recognise as 'social value activity':

- Leveraging in more investment for communities
- Effectively matching or 'brokering' skills sharing between private and public sector organisations, and communities and third sector
- Making the most of social value opportunities within contracting

Summary of actions and agreements

There was a clear need identified independently at each of the three workshops for a time-limited working group to look at the following:

- Investment – a group to look at funding the infrastructure for organisations to work together to secure and manage investment
- Brokerage – a group to create a clear, costed brief for a future model for brokerage across the city
- Commissioning – a group to look at social value within contracting to develop a consistent approach through:
 - Sharing learning from current practice
 - Agreeing some Leeds-specific TOMs (themes, outcomes and measures) that we all use
 - Creating a social value provider list for informal, low-cost purchases

[Read the full notes here](#)

How can I get involved?

If you're interested in social value, or have some examples of social value activity that has worked well, we would love to hear from you! Please contact megan.russell@val.org.uk or call 0113 297 7928

Leeds City Council Chief Officer

Tom Riordan, Chief Officer at Leeds City Council, will be stepping down from his role at the end of 2024.

"After fourteen of the happiest years, I've decided that the time is right to move on and I will be leaving the council at the end of 2024. I have genuinely loved being Chief Executive of Leeds City Council, working with the best people in the best city. Together we've built a Team Leeds culture that delivers. A generation of children are growing up with the support of outstanding rated teams, thousands of vulnerable people are supported compassionately, more workers have access to better jobs, investors have confidence in Leeds as an economic and cultural hub, and older people are helped to live independent and fulfilling lives, in a city admired for what it gets done and the way it works. Rated as a global leader on both climate action and healthcare innovation, and by the Sunday Times as the best place to live in the North, if the country built houses at the rate of Leeds, there wouldn't be a UK housing crisis. Huge challenges remain, especially on poverty and inequality, despite our efforts, and public transport has to improve, but the devolved future is brighter with bus reform and mass transit on the way. A generation of talented, diverse leaders are emerging from communities across Leeds in business, public life, and the arts who make me hugely optimistic for the city's future." **Tom Riordan**

TSL has built up a strong relationship with senior leaders across Leeds over time, including Tom Riordan, who the Leadership Group hold regular Breakfast Meetings with. Our next Breakfast Meeting will be held with Tom and other council officers on Friday 20 September, to discuss the outcome of the General Election and succession plans for council leadership, to ensure that TSL continues to work closely with our public sector partners.

Next meeting

Our next TSL Leadership Group meeting will take place 8th July 1:30 - 3pm and will be looking at:

- Leeds Volunteering Strategy update
- Leeds Arts Health and Wellbeing Network
- General election outcome and next steps for TSL

If you would like to feed into these topics, please contact the relevant representative by checking our Leadership Group membership list below.

View our Leadership Group membership

Further resources and sector news

[Overlooked and underfunded \(Centre for Social Justice\)](#) - this report outlines the imbalance in spending in the third sector, with 85% of all charitable income in England and Wales going to just 4% of registered charities.

The Social Change Agency has recently released a [comprehensive guide](#) to everything organisations need to create a fair and equitable payment for involvement policy.

If your organisation has new or first-time trustees, or trustees that may be interested in peer support, the next [Leeds Trustee Network Meeting](#) takes place on 26 June.

One of the networks represented at TSL - Leeds Older People's Forum - has just released their new [Manifesto for Change](#).

Work to develop a Leeds Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy is in its final stages, and needs your input! Feed in your views on themes [here](#) - deadline 28 June.

Upcoming training at Voluntary Action Leeds on having the [Confidence to Challenge](#), [Encouraging Participation in Community Groups](#), frontline staff having effective [First Contact](#) with distressed and vulnerable people and [more](#).

We want to hear from you!

If you have any questions or comments around this update, or if you would like to share your thoughts about any of the topics covered here, then please contact Meg Russell on megan.russell@val.org.uk or by calling 0113 297 7928

Want to share good news from your community?

[Doing Good Leeds](#) is a great place to share your successes and promote the work of the third sector in building strong and resilient communities in Leeds. [Click here](#) to register and take the first step in sharing your good news!



Voluntary Action Leeds (VAL), a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales no: 555150 and registered charity number 225863. VAL's registered office is: Stringer House, 34 Lupton Street, Leeds, LS10 2QW. Our VAT number is 790014059.

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