



# **Trafford Partnership**

## **Third Sector Strategy**

### **2011 - 2014**

**Version 9.0**

**6<sup>th</sup> December 2012**

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## **1. ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT**

This document describes and defines the Trafford Partnership's Third Sector Strategy for the next three years

The purpose of this strategy is to create a significant shift in the relationship between the statutory, private and third sectors, to one that is based on clear priorities and achievement of improved outcomes for the residents of Trafford, as outlined in the Community Strategy.

The document explains the need for the strategy to be created, giving a background to the sector and its recent achievements. The document defines the key influences in the strategy both internal and external to the council. Following this are the 6 key themes of Trafford third sector journey for the next three years. The final section provides a governance structure and a funding model designed to support the sustainability of the sector.

## **2. VISION**

The Trafford Partnership believes a thriving and sustainable Third Sector is the key to our future ability to service communities well and design the Third Sector into the 'Life of Trafford'.

We want to enable voluntary, community and faith organisations to play a key role in the Borough's future as an independent and innovative force, delivering services and identifying original solutions to the design of future services.

## **3. AIMS AND OUTCOMES OF THE STRATEGY**

### ***Aims of the strategy***

- To support the Third Sector to play a vital role in reviewing the design and size of services that can be provided, and the way in which they can be provided within the current financial climate.
- To meet the growing need for infrastructure support to enable a wide range of innovative services to be safely and easily commissioned from the local Third Sector following the move by both local and governmental towards increased commissioning from the external market.
- To create an environment to encourage Third Sector growth in terms of mutuals, cooperatives and social enterprises; local infrastructure also needs establishing to facilitate partnership commissioning across sectors.
- To support Trafford Partnership and its partners who require grassroots engagement with voluntary groups, communities and/or individuals to unlock the information which is critical to the development of Community Need Action plans.
- To ensure that community grants available from Trafford Partnership organisations are used to address identified need, supports community capacity and neighbourhood development and also facilitates the participation of communities in the decision making process.
- To provide a co-ordinated volunteering support service that meets the needs of increasing numbers of volunteers, organisations and businesses

## ***Outcomes of the Strategy***

A stronger voice, presence & visibility for the Third Sector in Trafford through:

- Improved representation, networking and influencing
- Strengthened governance of the Third Sector
- Better defined networks and information routes
- Clarity about how Third Sector organisations contribute to the identification of service gaps and influence the achievement of better outcomes with their innovation within the current financial climate
- A re-defined, clearer sense of purpose which strengthens the relationship on both sides between Strategic Planners and the Third Sector in Trafford
- Bespoke and grass-roots engagement with voluntary groups, communities and/or individuals to unlock the information which is critical to the development of Community Need Action Plans
- Increased levels of volunteering
- Improved outcomes for residents, communities, businesses and other stakeholders

## **4. WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED TO DATE**

The Third Sector has developed and increased its presence in Trafford considerably over the last ten years. The sector has increased from 100 organisations to roughly 500 organisations, but this is still relatively undeveloped; a borough this size should have over one thousand. However, the increasing numbers allow the sector to develop new relationships and make collaborative bids, for example in children's services where small groups have come together to make applications combining their own diverse range of skills and interests.

There is can-do mentality within the sector, always striving to make things happen, offering support to other organisations within the sector and across the statutory sector, and in a Borough where access to financial resources is limited, the Third Sector in Trafford still currently generates an estimated £10 for every £1 invested, adding value to the Trafford pound. Sector-led training interventions have allowed progress and capacity of small groups to take a more active role, and there has always been a comprehensive training diary for organisations to access, along with sector communication and support networks.

The sector supports communities to come together. The Third Sector acts as a broker for community engagement. They use relationships to broker agreements, bringing honesty to the table without the conflict of interest in outcomes, and enabling Third Sector organisations to work with a diverse range of service users. The sector also plays a central role in strategic initiatives, for example the Trafford Partnership Compact and Links conferences, which are always well attended by sector organisations. These events inspire people to get involved and there is a lot of goodwill to take an active role in the life of the Borough. This is a major change from the environment a decade ago.

There is increasing trust between the third sector and statutory organisations, thanks to the leadership of the sector by key individuals and organisations, who act as a bridge between the sectors to work together in the communities, contributing to partnership activity and actively create a voice for the sector and the communities we serve, building up a comprehensive knowledge base of the sector.

## 5. THE RATIONALE FOR CHANGE



### 5.1 Links to National Agendas

#### Localism Bill and the Voluntary Sector

The Localism Bill seeks to empower local people and communities by establishing new rights. The *Community Right to Buy* provides communities with new powers to save local assets threatened with closure, by allowing them to bid for the ownership and management of community assets. In addition, the *Community Right to Challenge* enables voluntary and community bodies, charities, social enterprises, mutuals and co-ops to express an interest in running a service.

Further proposals in the Bill is the *removal of 'Clawback Rights'* which has prevented community and voluntary groups from selling or changing the use of community land or buildings that were funded by specific historic government grant programmes. In effect, local communities will get the freedom to sell, rent or share community owned assets bought with central government money, such as Council buildings, shops and business parks.

The Localism Bill also grants the Third Sector opportunities to influence planning decisions by granting communities the right to draw up a *Neighbourhood Development Plan*, which adds an extra tier to existing development plans. Such plans will be formulated by “neighbourhood forums” and will need to be backed up by appropriate evidence and will be the subject of consultation and independent examination. Provided that this plan is in line with national planning policy, with the strategic vision for the wider area set by the local authority, and with other legal requirements, local people will be able to vote on it in a referendum, in which the plan requires majority support

## Big Society Heatmap

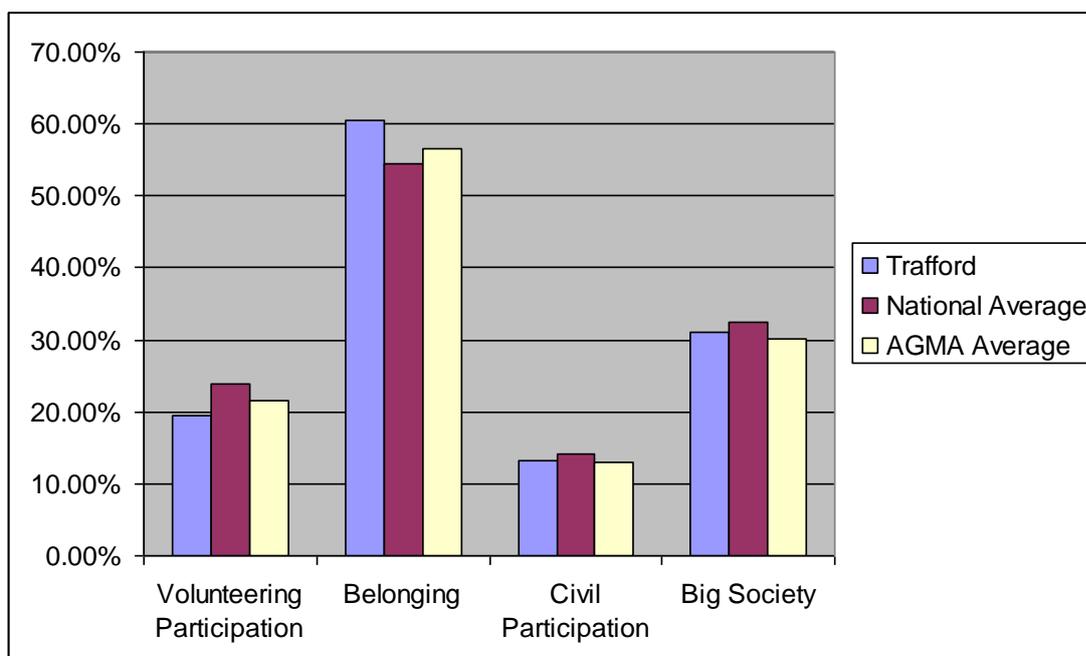
A study by the New Local Government Network (NLGN) has mapped areas of the country most prepared to benefit and most at risk of being doubly deprived from the Big Society agenda.

The Big Society Heatmap provides Trafford with a snapshot of information, and whilst we believe Trafford, its residents and wider community, are well-placed to benefit from the Big Society, we must first address some specific concerns highlighted by this data.

The information used to create the Heat Map is derived from the Place Survey 2009. The key data relates to:

- Volunteering Participation
- Sense of Belonging
- Civic Participation

When combined, this provided an overall Big Society score.



The Heat Map indicates that Trafford's overall score is 1.4 points behind the National Average and 1.1 points above the average across AGMA. This overall score masks two key factors of the Heat Map; volunteering and belonging. The volunteering score for Trafford is 19.5%, 4.4% lower than the national average and 2% lower than the average across AGMA.

On a positive note, Trafford residents have a high sense of belonging to the Borough with Trafford scoring 5.9% higher than the national average and 4.1% higher than the average across AGMA.

The Third Sector Strategy seeks to build upon the strengths and address the areas of concern, particularly volunteering.

## **The National Survey of Charities and Social Enterprises, 2008 and 2010**

The National Survey of Charities and Social Enterprises was conducted by Ipsos MORI on behalf of the Office for Civil Society in two waves in 2008 and 2010. Charities, social enterprises and voluntary organisations were surveyed across all upper tier authorities in England. The survey provides us with a picture of what the third sector itself is thinking.

In short, data from the 2010 survey indicates that the health of the third sector in Trafford has largely stayed the same over the past 2 years. This was with the exception of the proportion of organisations surveyed who are satisfied with the support offered to them, which has increased over the past 2 years, rising from 10% to 19% of positive responses.

Whilst the data shows no apparent decline in Trafford, it masks the fact that Trafford still performs slightly lower than national and regional standards (significantly in some areas). The data indicates that we have some way to go to improve our relationship with the third sector, with 11% of bodies thinking they have a positive influence with us and other statutory partners, compared to 18% nationally. In addition, only 30% feel that we and our partners add value to the work of their organisation, compared to 39% nationally and those satisfied with our grant funding and bidding contracts still falls 6% behind the national average.

### **5.2 *Links to other strategies***

This strategy has clear links to Trafford's Community Strategy and the Trafford Compact.

#### **Trafford Partnership's Sustainable Community Strategy – 'Trafford Vision 2021: a blueprint'**

The Strategy sets out how the Trafford Partnership will deliver to improve the lives of Trafford residents by the year 2021. The 7 Key Objectives are:

- Safety and Reassurance
- Strong Economy
- Strong Communities
- Brighter Futures
- Positive Environmental Impact
- Better Homes
- Health & Improved Quality of Life for all

Further information on the Sustainable Community Strategy can be found at <http://traffordpartnership.org/documents/keydocuments/2021-blueprint.pdf>

### **Trafford Compact**

The Trafford Compact is an agreed framework within which Trafford's statutory, voluntary, community and faith organisations work together to improve their relationship for mutual advantage and for the benefit of all Trafford residents. It is our shared commitment to improving the way we plan, design, deliver, review and improve our services to all Trafford residents

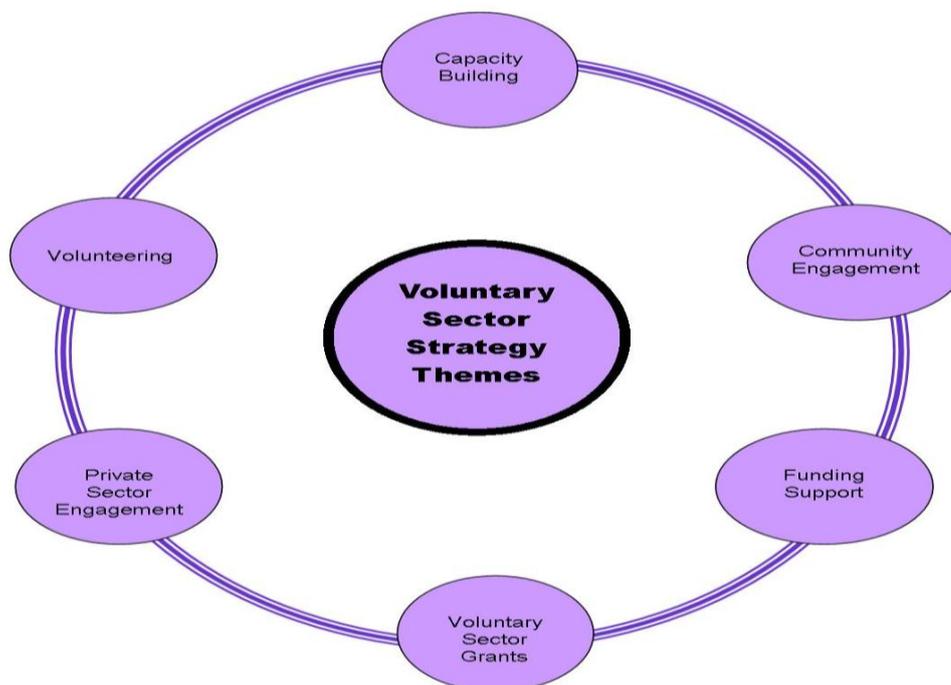
There are five codes of practice, in relation to:

- Funding and Commissioning
- Volunteering and Workforce Development
- Engagement
- Community Groups
- BME Groups

Further information on the Compact can be found at <http://www.vcatrafford.org/trafford-compact>

## 6. THEMES OF THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR STRATEGY

This strategy sets out a long-standing commitment to improvement that will become embedded in the culture of the Borough. There are six key themes, or work areas, in the strategy. Underpinning each of these is the imperative need for *sustainability* within the sector. The Third Sector is often delicately balanced, based on short-term grants and with competition between similar organisations, colleagues and friends. In Trafford we want to move away from this as much as we can, toward both a thriving and stable Third Sector.



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### Theme 1 - Capacity Building

The introduction of the Localism agenda provides the ideal landscape for the Third Sector to play a much greater role in the delivery of and development of services. To ensure sustainability of organisations and for the sector to thrive, voluntary, community and faith organisations require support to build capacity in the following areas:

- Governance and management
- Business planning
- Managing risk
- Sustainability
- Project development
- Funding models
- Stakeholder management

By building capacity, the sector will be able to maximise the opportunities presented by the following growth areas:

- Community ownership of assets
- Development of new service delivery models i.e. Social Enterprises, Co-operatives and Mutuals
- Increase in the number of Voluntary Sector Consortia to compete against the organisations that have traditionally provided the bulk of commissioned services.

The following outcomes are to be achieved:

- Increased sustainability, skills, quality, governance and capacity of the Third Sector to meet community needs
- A Third Sector that is responsive to outsourcing of public services, personalisation, co-production, integration and transfer of assets
- Increased partnership, co-ordination and consortia working within the Third Sector to maximise value, efficiency, resources and skills
- Reduction in the number of organisations that face financial difficulty which puts residents and communities at risk
- Increased third sector growth in terms of mutuals, cooperatives and social enterprises
- A developed set of outcome-focused performance management targets, indicators and measures with Third Sector organisations to clearly demonstrate the impact of services on residents and communities in Trafford

## **Theme 2 - Funding Support**

The Third Sector has the capacity to attract funding which larger organisations can not access. Attracting external funding, beyond grants from public agencies, increases the sustainability of the sector. The Strategy seeks to ensure that, within Trafford, there is a robust method by which:

- All available funding opportunities are captured and communicated across the Sector
- Organisations are supported in their applications and the outcomes captured
- Identifies and supports collaboration across organisations
- Maximise the use matched funding to increase the investment within the Borough

In addition the Third Sector need to be sighted, and be supported, in accessing new funding initiatives e.g. Social Investment Bonds.

The following outcomes are to be achieved:

- Increased inward investment in to the Borough from external grant sources, including the private sector
- Increased number of collaborative applications for funding
- Increased ratio of successful applications to total applications

### **Theme 3 - Community Engagement**

Big Society will require not just a mechanism to ensure that community ideas are progressed, but will also require practical support for local groups and individuals to develop projects and concepts relating to greater community ownership and addressing local issues. The views of the community are essential to assessing the need, but furthermore residents and communities often have the solution. We have seen how the personalization agenda has led to great innovation by service users and providers.

The Trafford Partnership is committed to the ethos of residents and communities taking control, making decisions and delivering for themselves. This will only be sustainable if communities have ownership of the issues they face, and the solutions they can provide. Engagement has to be more than one-off conversations, more continuous dialogue between all partners to sustain activity and outcomes. This engagement will be crucial to altering the balance between the State and the Individual and also the design of future services.

The following outcomes are to be achieved:

- Increased numbers of residents participating in local decision making and co-production of services and evidence of their involvement making a clear impact
- Increased numbers of community groups managing community assets
- Improved rates of customer satisfaction with public and third sector services
- Improved understanding of local needs and ways to address them
- Reduced individual and community barriers to engagement and participation e.g. physical, language, economic, cultural
- Improved perceptions of community ownership and resilience
- Improved range of positive activities and vocational opportunities which supports the reduction of worklessness

### **Theme 4 - Voluntary Sector Grants**

The strategy supports the approach adopted by the Council to commission an Infrastructure Body to create a framework which not only manages community grants but also builds capacity within Neighbourhoods and Communities of Interest to identify need, develop sustainable projects to meet the evidenced need and also to establish appropriate governance from decision making to outcome monitoring.

The criteria for awarding grants will move away from the broad outcomes in the Community Strategy, to ones which address identified need and supports community capacity and neighbourhood development. A Participatory Budgeting Model, which involves residents and communities in decision-making, will be developed.

It is envisaged that this methodology is adopted across all members of the Partnership who currently administer community grants. By involving partner organisations by pooling community grants, the community and voluntary sector will be offered a more-streamlined grant application process, and the Council and Partnership a more effective way of managing resources, enabling more effective use of resources.

The following outcomes are to be achieved:

- Robust projects that demonstrate long term outcomes for communities in the neighbourhoods and communities-of-interest
- Evidence of the Social Return on Investment
- Partners, organisations and residents working as a community towards independence, for example taking ownership of assets
- Wide community group, partner and resident involvement in the proposed schemes and Participatory Budgeting days, with an aim of having direct involvement from 5% of residents in the process.
- Communities, groups and partners applying for alternative internal and external funding
- A doubling of Trafford's success-rate in applications to external funding schemes, such as the National Lottery Awards for All or Lloyds TSB Foundation
- A developed Neighbourhood Model and a Communities-of-Interest Model for the VSG process, to be followed in future years

### **Theme 5 - Private Sector Engagement**

Trafford is the economic powerhouse of the region, with the largest business park in Europe and the base for a number of multinational organisations. Yet to date this is an area which has not been exploited. This relationship has the potential to deliver massive mutual benefits for the Public, Third and Private Sectors across the Borough. Opportunities will arise around:

- Corporate Social Responsibility
- Mentoring e.g. business planning
- Leverage of funding

The following outcomes are to be achieved:

- Increased involvement of the private sector in supporting local communities and the third sector
- Establishment of employee volunteering schemes across private sector organisations
- Public sector procurement to value social return on investment
- Improved understanding of local needs and ways to address them
- Improved perceptions of community ownership and resilience
- Improved range of positive activities and vocational opportunities which supports the reduction of worklessness

### **Theme 6 - Volunteering**

The benefits of volunteering are well documented in particular in relation to gaining new skills, job experience and positive impact on community cohesion and individual's health and wellbeing. This is central to improving the life chances of residents and reducing individual reliance on the state. Big Society embraces these benefits and seeks to increase community participation.

National data has indicated that Trafford records a low level of volunteering. There is a perception that the measurement methodology does not capture all the volunteering activity which takes place within Trafford.

However both pieces of intelligence indicate the need for a co-ordinated approach to volunteering across the Borough; the brokerage which matches citizens and employees to volunteering opportunities and also to provide practical support to develop quality volunteering.

Volunteering is a golden thread running throughout the strategy as it draws together public, private, community, voluntary and faith sectors and individuals. There is also a timely opportunity to engage citizens and employees in Volunteering through the Olympics. Furthermore, more is required than simply increasing the number of volunteers now. There needs to be a sustainable approach to encouraging, recruiting and valuing volunteers to ensure the pool of resources never runs dry.

With this in mind, we are advocating the development of the *Volunteering England* standards within Trafford, adhering to the principles of choice; diversity; reciprocity and recognition through volunteer management; Investment; promotion and infrastructure development.

The advantages of having the branding *Volunteering England* are:

- Opportunities to draw on specialist, national funding streams which lead to increased services and further income and job creation for the Borough
- Promotion of volunteering opportunities through the national database [www.do-it.org](http://www.do-it.org),
- Trafford residents will have a local service provider and will benefit from the added value volunteering brings to its social capital rather than losing this to neighbouring GM districts.

The following outcomes are to be achieved:

- A co-ordinated volunteering support service which meets the needs of volunteers, organisations and businesses across the Borough.
- Increased amount and quality of volunteering and social capital within our communities.
- Improved range of positive activities and vocational opportunities which support personal & vocational development

## **7. DELIVERY AND MONITORING OF THE THIRD SECTOR STRATEGY**

### ***7.1 Governance Arrangements***

This strategy is a 'living document' and we anticipate it will be refined over time. Primary accountability for the Third Sector Strategy will sit with the Trafford Partnership Executive.

The Strong Communities Partnership Board will monitor the delivery of the strategy, and provide immediate governance over the activity of the Infrastructure Organisation, who has been commissioned to deliver the Strategy, its key themes and associated work streams.



**7.2 Funding the Strategy**

The strategy will be funded from both the Council and also the Trafford Partnership, through the Local Area Agreement Reward Grant.

However there are a number of innovative funding opportunities available to support the strategy and as part of the delivery plan these opportunities will be maximised. As outlined above, the private sector in Trafford presents considerable untapped potential, alongside other possible sources from local partners

The diagram below shows the main areas of funding which the Trafford expect the whole strategy to be delivered.

