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Voluntary Sector NW



VSNW Bulletin #125

Chief Executive's Introduction

Warren Escadale

Dear Colleagues



2020 has been a difficult year for us all nationally and regionally, across many different services and employment. The voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) sector has been vital in encouraging cohesion and providing help and support to those most in need in our communities. It has supported those who have found themselves for the first time needing to access resources such as food banks and it has continued to support those who even pre-pandemic were most vulnerable.

Voluntary Sector North West (VSNW) and its member organisations have played a crucial role in responding to the immediate challenges posed by Covid-19. We are currently leading and facilitating conversation within the sector to collectively design what is required to rebuild a world that is fairer across society, economy, well-being, health and inequalities. VSNW have carefully coordinated conversations which have developed from initial emergency responses to Covid-19 into looking forward at a future where we can 'build back better' as a region and as a sector.

The Festival of North West Thinking



#FestivalNWThinking
www.vsnw.org.uk/festival

We held four online events from October to December with the aim of bringing together the different threads of the Covid-19 recovery conversation across the North West. This was our opportunity to listen and learn from each other and analyse the issues we are collectively facing as a sector. We were able to discuss notions of recovery strategy as a way of rebuilding a society which is more equal and community orientated.

Event 1: **Covid-19 Recovery: VCSE Leadership Voices** **Assembly with a focus on Inequalities:**



Guest Speaker Highlights

Event 2: **Covid-19 Recovery: The VCSE Infrastructure Perspective:**



Part 1: The Sub-region Perspective

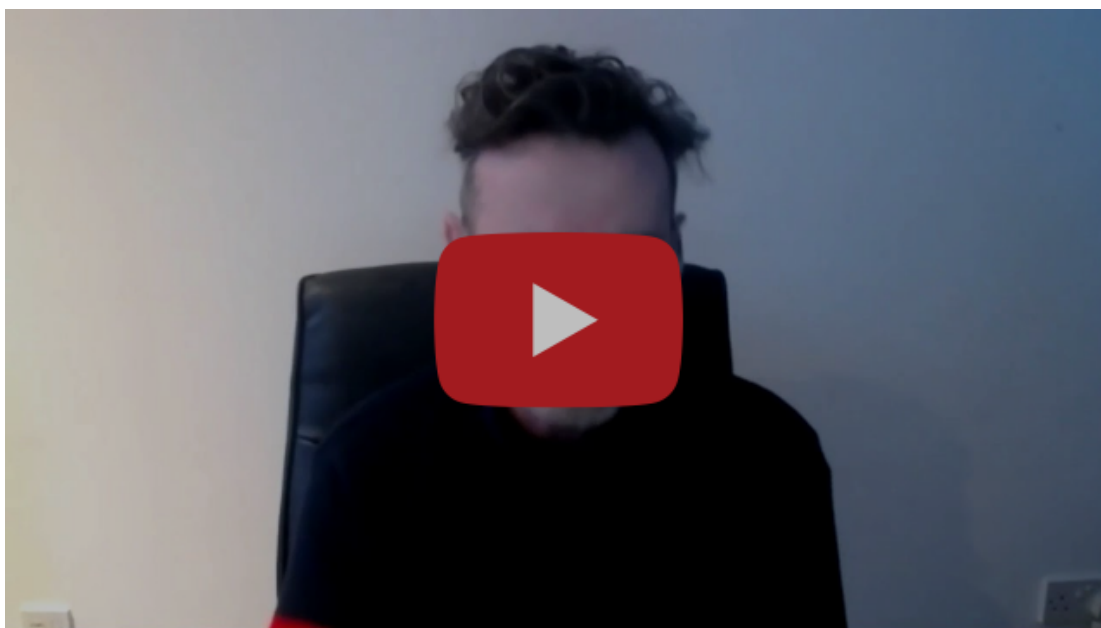


Part 2: The National Perspective

Event 3: **Beyond 2020: The Role of the VCSE Sector:**



Part 1: The Funders Perspectives



Part 2: The Think Tank Perspective

Event 4: No Going Back: In Conversation with the North West's Metro Mayors:



Opening Remark Highlights

New Trustees:

During our third Festival of North West Thinking event, which incorporated our AGM, we were delighted to welcome **three new trustee members**:

- Gill Bainbridge the Chief Executive at Merseyside Youth Association in Liverpool City Region;
- Dr Ridwanan Gurjee, who is a Principal Lecturer, leading the Centre for Volunteering and Community Leadership (CVCL) at the University of Central Lancashire in the School of Social Work, Care and Community and;
- Khansa Taha, a trainee solicitor, who is soon to qualify and intending to continue practicing within Family Law.

We look forward to working with them all and welcoming back all of our old trustees too.

Thriving Communities:

Thriving Communities is a new national support programme for VCFSE groups supporting communities most impacted by Covid-19, which aims to work alongside social prescribing link workers. We are working in collaboration with the National Academy for Social Prescribing (NASP), along with our regional partners: Burnley Pendle & Rossendale CVS, Salford CVS & Sefton CVS who are acting as the North West Regional Leads.

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- [Thriving Communities Fund](#)
- [NHS Charities Together Grants](#)
- [Thriving Communities Network](#)
- [Learning Together Programme](#)

Please follow the links for more information and how to apply for relevant programmes and funds.

Are you interested in becoming a member of VSNW and joining a strategic network of organisations across the North West?

[Join Here](#)

As we now start in 2021, whilst it is important to reflect on what has gone by, we must also use this knowledge to work together and find solutions to our collective problems. We can develop our discussions and put forward sector-led responses to our local authorities and leaders and make sure that the VCFSE sector helps lead the 'build, back better' response. With Metro Mayor and local elections coming up in many regions of the North West this year, we can make our case clear to ensure that our communities are supported and that the needs of the people are at the forefront of the conversation.

Thank you to all the work that we as a sector and as a region have achieved & we look forward to working with you this year in 2021.

**Have a Happy, Healthy New Year,
from everyone at VSNW.**

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