



Service Level Agreement

Between

**The City of York
Council
West Offices
York, YO1 6GA**

and

**York CVS
Priory Street Centre
15 Priory Street
York, YO1 6ET**

From the period 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2024

A grant of £10,000 p.a.

For York: Human Rights City Community Voices Project

BACKGROUND:

Community Voices is a City of York Council (CYC) initiative with two main aims:

- 1) To acknowledge that York is an increasingly diverse city, and to try to ensure that this diversity of voices is heard in decision-making processes in the city. It places a particular focus on groups marginalised even within their communities of identify.
- 2) To support communities in setting their own agenda and bringing their priority concerns to CYC and other stakeholders, in preference to conventional, more top-down consultation exercises.

At the launch of this initiative in 2018 it was intended that the new arrangements should:

- Recognise that the communities of York are changing and growing. We want to embrace this diversity and bring together people who perhaps wouldn't otherwise come together due to their cultural beliefs, religion, disability, vulnerability, need or experience. We feel they have an important voice and one that isn't always heard. We believe they have important experience of living in York and ideas about how their experiences could be improved. We want to create an opportunity for them to be heard both individually and collectively and influence policy making.
- Work with our partner organisations / forums so we can collectively engage the people we all support to bring them together to get to know one another, learn more about their experiences, and stimulate ideas.
- Allow our communities to set their own agenda rather than telling them what to talk about.
- Bring a focus on the important topics and create opportunities to inform, engage and consult with partners, city leaders and a wider forum of people on one or more topics.
- Create a supportive and positive environment, helping grow ideas into something real and enabling people to use their voice.
- Enable 'Community Voice Volunteers' to contribute to and influence the work of York's various strategic decision-making

boards and to reflect back the views of communities of interest groups on topics of importance.

- Work within a Human Rights framework reflecting the York City of Human Rights declaration.
- Feed back to and hold to account the Council's Executive and other statutory organisations in the city.

The York Human Rights City network (YHRCN) has run the Community Voices Project since 2018 with York CVS being the accountable body for the funding.

As a result, Community Voices is shaped by human rights law and principles (participation, non-discrimination). To date YHRCN has worked with homeless people, those subjected to hate crime and with disabled people. Research has been conducted with these particular groups, culminating in reports submitted to the Human Rights and Equalities Board for discussion and action.

2021-24:

In the period 2021-24 the project will seek to build on but also to expand this model for delivering Community Voices. The approach will evolve in response to the following issues:

- 1) The need to combine working with communities of identity or marginalised groups with more cross-cutting support for the voluntary sector e.g. human rights training, establishing Community Voice Volunteers
- 2) The limitations of an approach that works with a group for a year and then moves on, and the preference for longer-term engagement.
- 3) The existence of a number of other, potentially mutually supportive, initiatives including: the development of a new volunteering strategy for the city; interest in co-production of policy and service delivery; the creation of the Place Board which will require co-production to redesign services and pathways; and the development of new policy tools (Community Impact Assessment Template; Human Rights and Equalities Impact Assessment).

In response to these drivers the Community Voices project will:

- Work with two communities of identity or marginalised groups between 2021 and 2024, each for two years. Up to 21 this will be disabled people (this work having commenced in 2020. A further group will be identified in consultation with the Human Rights and Equalities Board for 22-24.
- Support agenda-setting and engagement with CYC for these two groups, developing models for and enhancing co-production of policy and service delivery.
- Develop a cohort of Community Voice Volunteers, for example working with individuals within the disabled people target group (2020-22) to work with the next target community of identity (this pattern could be replicated over time, expanding the number of volunteers).
- Deliver alongside this targeted approach more sector-wide forms of support, such as training. This will require collaboration with other agencies (York CVS, British Institute of Human Rights) and initiatives (the new volunteering strategy).
- Pilot the use of Community Voices as a multi-faceted human rights intervention. This could move it beyond participation to provide a space for accountability, for example hosting events which monitor the progress of co-produced interventions.

EVALUATION:

CVS will ensure that YHRC provide quarterly updates to CYC project activities. These updates should set out:

- A succinct description of project activities
- Qualitative analysis of the project's impacts
- Feedback to the council from the perspective of the communities of identity worked with

SERVICE STANDARDS, STATUTORY AND POLICY CONDITIONS:

York CVS will comply with the Charity Commission requirements and any other standards or requirements appropriate to the services provided.

FUNDING CONDITIONS:

The Council may require CVS to repay all or part of the funding if:

- the funding is not used for the service or activity specified
- CVS is not able to provide the service or activity specified to the agreed standard
- CVS is wound up or otherwise ceases to exist

The terms of the agreement may be varied or the agreement terminated by mutual consent of York CVS and the Council.

SIGNATURES:

This agreement is accepted on behalf of York CVS by the authorised officers:

Position	Signature	Print name
Date		

This agreement is accepted on behalf of the Council by the authorised officer:

Position	Signature	Print name
Date		