Lancashire Early Action Delivery Grant Prospectus

Adults, Health and Wellbeing



Supporting Community Powered Solutions across Lancashire

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Lancashire County Council

SUPPORTING COMMUNITY POWERED SOLUTIONS ACROSS LANCASHIRE

Contents

Foreword 4

Creating the Conditions for People to Live Well 6

1. Introduction 10
1.1 Working with the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise Sector (VCFSE) in Lancashire 10
1.2 Purpose of the Grants Prospectus 13
1.3 Scope of the Prospectus 16

2. Our Approach 18
2.1 How the Prospectus Works 19
2.2 Principles 20

3. Early Action Priorities 22

4. Outcomes Framework 24
4.1 Core Early Action Outcomes 24
4.2 Applying the Outcomes Framework 26
4.3 Measuring Impact 26

5. Funding and Grant Arrangements 28
5.1 Grant Duration and Continuity 28
5.2 Scale and Proportionality 28
5.3 Use of Funding 29

6. Social Value 30

7. Collaboration 31
7.1 What We Are Looking For 31
7.2 How Collaboration Will Be Considered 32

8. Application, Assessment and Decision Making 33
8.1 Application Process 33
8.2 Stage 1: Eligibility 34
8.3 Stage 2: Assessment Approach 34
8.4 Clarifications 35
8.5 Decision-Making 35

9. Who Can Apply 36

10. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning 38
10.1 Monitoring Arrangements 38
10.2 Key Performance Indicators 39
10.3 Key Human Indicators 39
10.4 Learning and Improvement 40

11. Shaping the Future Together 41
11.1 Ongoing Engagement and Development 43

Foreword from Helen Coombes, Executive Director of Adults, Health and Wellbeing



Early Action is at the heart of our vision for Adult Social Care in Lancashire. Through our model of care Better Care, Better Lives, we have set out our ambition to work differently with people, families, communities and partners, helping people to remain independent, connected and well for longer.

Across Lancashire, communities play a vital role in supporting health and wellbeing. Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) organisations provide trusted relationships, practical help, opportunities to participate, and connections that strengthen resilience and reduce isolation. We know that timely support can make a significant difference. When people can access help early, they are more likely to maintain their independence, stay active within their communities and achieve the outcomes that matter most to them.

This Early Action Grants Prospectus is an important step in turning our ambition into action. It reflects our commitment to investing in community-powered prevention and early action approaches that help people stay well, safe, independent and connected to their communities, reducing the need for more intensive support and enabling people to live fulfilling lives in a place they call home.

We also recognise that achieving this vision cannot be done by the Council alone. Partnership is central to this Prospectus. By strengthening our relationship with Lancashire's VCFSE sector, we aim to build on the strengths that already exist within our communities and create more opportunities for people to access support earlier, closer to home, and in ways that work for them. Through this Prospectus, the Council is providing a consistent framework for future grant funding opportunities, while retaining the flexibility to respond to local priorities, emerging needs and learning from delivery.

This approach reflects our wider ambition to transform the way care and support are provided across Lancashire. Working alongside our provider market, community organisations and system partners, we are developing models of care that place a stronger emphasis on prevention, early intervention, community resilience and personalised support. This ambition runs throughout everything we do and is fundamental to creating a more sustainable system that helps people live well and maintain their independence for longer.

The launch of this Prospectus marks the beginning of an ongoing programme of investment in early action. Individual funding opportunities issued under the Prospectus will set out specific priorities, outcomes and funding requirements, while contributing to our shared ambition of creating healthier, stronger and more resilient communities across Lancashire.

Together, we can build a more preventative, connected and sustainable approach to support - enabling people to live better lives, access the right support at the right time and remain independent for as long as possible.

Creating the Conditions for People to Live Well

Our ambition is to create the conditions for people to live good lives. Lives where people feel connected, valued, in control and able to achieve the outcomes that matter to them.

Prevention remains fundamental to improving health, wellbeing and independence. Through conversations, people told us that Earlier Action gives this ambition a more human voice, one that focuses not only on preventing crisis, but on creating the conditions for people to live good lives.

> Earlier Action is about working alongside people, families, communities and neighbourhoods to build on strengths, remove barriers and maximise life chances. It means acting early, listening deeply and ensuring people have access to the right support, relationships and opportunities at the right time.

Models of Care Co-production group

At its heart, Earlier Action is about shifting power. As one contributor reflected, it is about "putting the power where it needs to be, which is with people themselves." It challenges us to move beyond asking how we prevent crisis and instead ask what needs to be present in people's lives and communities for them to thrive.

> The ambition surely has to be bigger than preventing something bad from happening. It should also be about creating the conditions for something good to become possible: relationships, contribution, belonging, independence, opportunity and the ability to direct your own life.

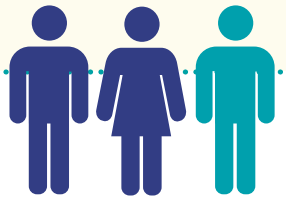
Dr Clenton Farquharson CBE

By bringing together prevention, co-production and strengths-based practice, Earlier Action offers a new way of thinking about support, one that enables people not simply to avoid poor outcomes, but to achieve the outcomes that matter most to them.





Early Action 1: Core Narrative





People and Communities

People experience life events, changing circumstances or emerging needs



Earlier Community-Based Support

Accessible support, advice, information, activities, volunteering opportunities, peer support and community connections



VCFSE Organisations Trusted local organisations working alongside communities to provide flexible, preventative and person-centred support



Improved Outcomes for People

Improve health and wellbeing, strengthen community connections, promote independence, support unpaid carers and create more opportunities for people to take part in community life



Stronger Communities Increase volunteering, strengthen local networks, encourage greater civic participation, and build more resilient communities



Prevention Impact Reduced, delayed or avoided escalation into formal health and Adult Social Care services where appropriate



Key Messages

Prevention starts in communities
Many people achieve better outcomes when support is available earlier, closer to home and connected to community assets.

The VCFSE sector is a key part of the solution
VCFSE organisations are often best placed to build trusted relationships, understand local needs and support people before situations escalate.

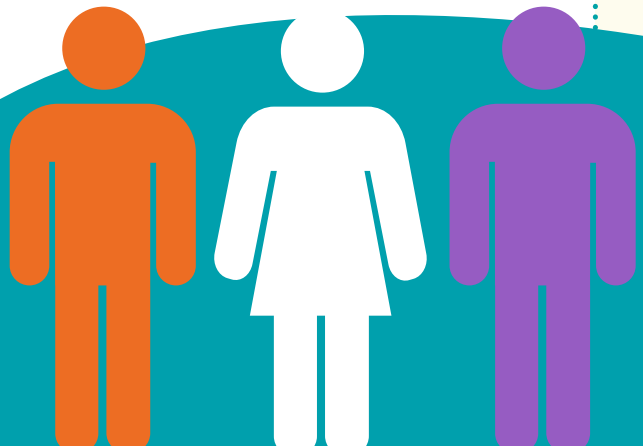
Prevention improves lives
The aim is not simply to reduce demand on services, but to help people maintain health, wellbeing, independence and connection to their communities.

Strong communities create stronger outcomes
Investment in community capacity, volunteering, local leadership and social connections benefits both individuals and places.

> The VCFSE sector does more than deliver services. It builds belonging, strengthens communities and creates lasting social value.

> It should be more about outcomes and not really about how many hours of service.

> The future of care and support is rooted in communities, shaped by local people and powered by the VCFSE sector.



Introduction

1.1 Working with the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise Sector (VCFSE) in Lancashire

The Council is committed to strengthening how it works with and invests in the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise sector.

We recognise that local organisations bring expertise, trusted relationships and a deep understanding of the communities they serve. They are often able to engage people who may not access traditional services and can provide flexible support that reflects the unique strengths and needs of local places.

Our future Model of Care, Better Care, Better Lives, is Lancashire's approach to supporting people to live independent and healthy lives connected to their community. It brings together prevention, community support, personalised care and specialist services, ensuring people receive the right support, at the right time, built around what matters most to them.

Communities and the VCFSE sector are central to Lancashire's Model of Care. They provide the relationships, local knowledge and trusted support that help people stay connected, independent and well. By Commissioners working in partnership, investing in community capacity and working alongside VCFSE organisations, Lancashire can support people earlier, build on strengths, reduce reliance on formal services and create more sustainable, neighbourhood-based support close to home.

Through this Prospectus, the Council aims to create a more transparent, proportionate and accessible approach to earlier action and prevention funding. The framework is designed to support a diverse range of organisations; from

large established providers to smaller grassroots groups, ensuring that funding opportunities are available to those best placed to make a positive difference within local communities.

The Prospectus promotes partnership working, encourages innovation and focuses on outcomes rather than prescribed delivery models. While Key Performance Indicators can tell us what was delivered, Key Human Indicators **help us understand what was experienced.**

They capture the human impact of change through measures such as

- Feeling heard
- Having influence
- Building confidence
- Strengthening connections
- Increasing choice and control

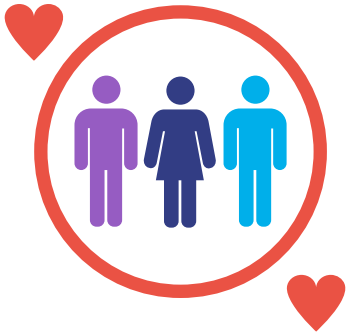
> This is where the data begins to acquire a soul.
>
> Dr Clenton Farquahdson CBE.

It reflects a commitment to working alongside communities to develop solutions that build on local strengths and improve people's lives.



Why the VCFSE Matters

The VCFSE sector is at the heart of Lancashire's Early Action approach. Trusted by communities and rooted in local relationships, VCFSE organisations help people access support earlier, stay independent and remain connected. Through this Prospectus, we are investing in community-led solutions that strengthen resilience, improve outcomes and build stronger communities.



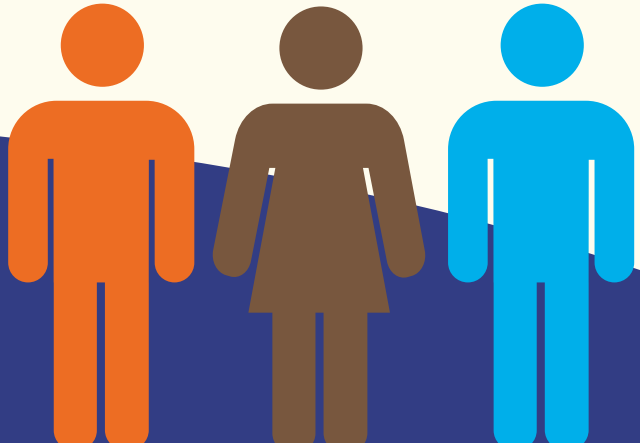
"The VCFSE sector reaches people first, knows communities best and delivers the trusted relationships that transform lives."

"VCFSE organisations are not an addition to the system. They are a vital part of the solution."

"The VCFSE sector does more than deliver services. It builds belonging, strengthens communities and creates lasting social value."

"For every challenge facing our communities, there is expertise, passion and innovation within the VCFSE sector ready to respond."

"The greatest impact happens when funding, trust and decision-making are placed as close as possible to the communities they serve."



The key aims that have guided the development of this Grants Prospectus are to:

- **Support prevention and early action** by investing in community delivered and directed activity that helps people maintain independence, wellbeing and connection, reducing escalation into statutory services.
- **Strengthen partnership with the VCFSE sector** through a relational funding approach that values trust, local knowledge and community relationships.
- **Enable innovation and local solutions,** allowing organisations flexibility to design responses that reflect the strengths and assets of their communities.
- **Build and sustain social capital** by supporting activity that strengthens informal networks, peer support and community resilience.
- **Ensure proportionality and inclusivity**, using grant based arrangements that enable participation from organisations of different sizes, including small and grassroots groups.
- **Deliver value for money and wider social value** by investing in approaches that achieve positive outcomes for people, carers and communities.

1.2 Purpose of the Grants Prospectus

This Prospectus provides the overarching framework for early action grant funding across Lancashire.

It explains:

- the outcomes the Council aims to achieve;
- the principles that will guide funding decisions;
- the approach to applications and assessment;
- monitoring and evaluation expectations; and
- how learning will be used to inform future investment.

The Prospectus creates consistency across future funding opportunities whilst allowing flexibility to respond to changing needs and priorities.

Each Funding Opportunity issued under the Prospectus will be supported by a Funding Opportunity Brief describing the specific outcomes, eligibility requirements, funding levels and application arrangements that apply to that opportunity.

Funded activity may contribute to a range of early action priorities, including:

- Falls prevention
- Reducing loneliness and social isolation
- Supporting unpaid carers
- Mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Opportunities aimed at supporting people living with specific health conditions, disabilities and additional support needs, including but not limited to learning disability, autism and neurodivergence
- Support during key life transitions
- Community safety and safeguarding
- Community outreach and neighbourhood-based support
- Increasing participation, volunteering and social connection

Through this approach, the Council aims to make funding opportunities easier to understand, more transparent and more accessible for organisations seeking to deliver prevention-focused activity.

The Prospectus complements the Council's wider customer journey by increasing the range of community-based options available to Customer Access Service, the Prevention and Early Intervention Team, Occupational Therapy services, Brokerage, neighbourhood teams and wider partners.

By investing in community led early action, the Council aims to support earlier intervention, improve access to local support and reduce avoidable pressure on statutory services wherever appropriate.

What People Told Us Matters Most

People told us they want support that is easy to access, shaped around their goals and connected to their communities.



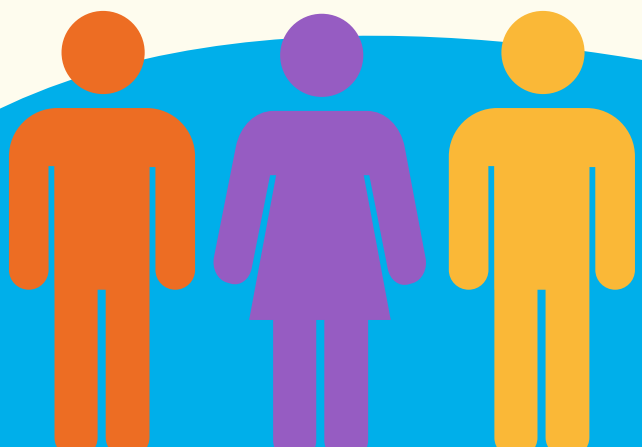
They value choice, independence, trusted relationships, community connections and a stronger voice in decisions that affect them.



Our Core Prevention Outcomes are designed to help people live well, achieve what matters to them and remain connected to the people and places they value most.

> Support should be based on what people want to achieve

> People shouldn't have to fit into services.



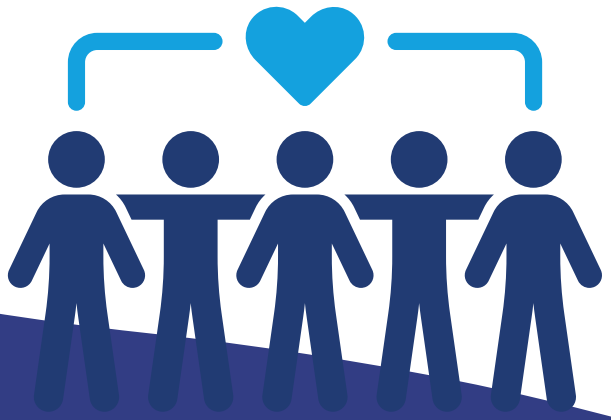
1.3 Scope of the Prospectus

This Prospectus focuses on early action activity that improves health, wellbeing, independence and community connection.

The intention is to support more people across Lancashire to remain independent, connected and in control of their lives, with access to trusted support and opportunities within their local communities.

It supports activity that:

- Helps people access holistic support earlier
- Builds resilience and self-management for people, carers, families and wider support networks
- Strengthens community networks and local capacity
- Reduces the likelihood of escalation into statutory services
- Connects people to local community assets, information, advice, activities and support through community-based navigation, connector or locality-based approaches
- Supports participation in education, volunteering, employment, skills development or other opportunities that promote independence, confidence and inclusion
- Reducing health inequalities and improving access to support for communities facing barriers to participation, wellbeing and independence



The Prospectus is primarily aimed at VCFSE organisations, alongside other organisations that can demonstrate a strong commitment to delivering community benefit and positive outcomes for the people in Lancashire and its communities.

It is intended to improve outcomes for the people of Lancashire. Individual Funding Opportunity Briefs will set out any specific geographical eligibility requirements. Applications delivering activity across local authority boundaries may be considered where they can demonstrate a clear benefit for the people and communities across Lancashire.

All funded activity must:

- align with the prevention priorities set out in this Prospectus;
- demonstrate a clear connection to local communities; and
- deliver outcomes that are co-produced with the people of Lancashire, ensuring that what matters most to them shapes both design and delivery.

This prospectus does not replace existing services. It is intended to add value by supporting community led approaches that complement and strengthen the wider system.



2. Our Approach

The Council will take an outcomes focused approach to early action funding.

Rather than prescribing detailed service models, the Council will establish clear outcomes and allow organisations the flexibility to determine how those outcomes can best be achieved within their communities. This reflects the belief that local organisations are often best placed to understand local need and develop effective responses.

The Prospectus is designed to balance accountability with flexibility by focusing on:

- outcomes rather than activity;
- learning rather than compliance;
- collaboration rather than competition;
- proportionality rather than unnecessary bureaucracy; and
- community strengths rather than deficits.

This approach aims to encourage innovation, support a diverse provider base and enable organisations to deliver services that respond to local circumstances and priorities and reflect the strengths and needs of their communities.

Evidence demonstrates that investment in prevention can generate significant social and economic benefits, with national modelling suggesting returns of approximately £3.17 for every £1 invested in prevention activity. Through this Prospectus we aim to support community-powered approaches that create lasting social value, strengthen neighbourhoods and improve outcomes for Lancashire people.

2.1 How the Prospectus Works

The Prospectus establishes the framework within which individual Funding Opportunities will be issued.

Funding Opportunity Briefs will:

- Set out the core prevention outcomes and priority areas for action.
- Invite organisations to propose how they will deliver these outcomes.
- Apply proportionate requirements based on the scale and nature of the activity.
- Support participation from a diverse range of organisations, including small and grassroots groups.

Applicants will be invited to demonstrate how their proposed activity will contribute to the specified outcomes and deliver benefits for local communities.





2.2 Principles

All funding opportunities issued through this Prospectus will be guided by the following principles:

Early Action & Prevention: Supporting people before needs escalate and helping them maintain health, wellbeing and independence.

Person-Centred Approaches: Focusing on what matters to people and supporting them to achieve outcomes that are important to them.

Community Led Solutions: Building on local strengths, assets and knowledge to create responses that reflect local needs and circumstances.

Collaboration: Supporting partnership working where it improves outcomes, strengthens delivery or extends reach.

Social Value: Recognising the wider benefits generated through community-based activity, including stronger communities, increased participation and improved wellbeing.

Proportionality: Applying requirements that are appropriate to the size, value and complexity of the funding opportunity.

The principles and priorities set out in this Prospectus are informed by relevant national legislation, statutory guidance, our strategies, population needs assessments and evidence relating to prevention, health, wellbeing and Adult Social Care, to directly support our wider ambitions for prevention, early intervention, neighbourhood working and reducing avoidable pressure on statutory services.

It has been informed by:

- The Care Act 2014, including the duty to prevent, reduce and delay the need for care and support
- Lancashire's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

- Lancashire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2024-2030
- Lancashire County Council's Corporate Plan 2025-2030
- Lancashire County Council's Public Health and Adult Social Care strategies and transformation programmes
- Relevant national policy, guidance and best practice relating to prevention, independence, wellbeing and community-based support
- Early Action and Prevention Commissioning Strategy

Together, these documents provide the strategic framework for the outcomes, principles and priorities set out in this Prospectus.



3. Early Action Priorities

Early action is about helping people get the right support at the right time, before challenges become crises. For some, that may be access to advice when life feels uncertain. For others, it may be rebuilding confidence after a significant change, connecting with others, learning new skills or finding ways to stay active and independent. At its heart, early action is about enabling people to live well, stay connected to their communities and maintain control over the things that matter most to them.

Through this Prospectus, the Council will invest in community-led activity that supports people to stay well, independent and connected. Rather than prescribing services, we will focus on the outcomes we want to achieve, creating space for organisations to develop solutions that reflect the strengths, assets and needs of their communities.

Funding priorities may evolve over time in response to local need, evidence, available resources and engagement with Lancashire people, communities, partners and the VCFSE sector. This ensures investment remains responsive while maintaining a clear focus on early action and prevention.

The themes set out in Section 1.2 should not be viewed in isolation. People's lives are shaped by many interconnected factors, and organisations often work across several areas at once. We welcome approaches that recognise the links between health, wellbeing, independence, relationships, participation and community life.

Successful applications will show how their work contributes to the outcomes outlined in this Prospectus and responds to the needs and aspirations of the people they support. We are particularly interested in approaches that build on community strengths, create opportunities for people to participate and contribute and strengthen sustainable networks of support.

By taking this approach, we aim to support a diverse range of organisations, ideas and partnerships that improve outcomes for Lancashire people while strengthening the communities in which they live.

All funded activity must contribute to one or more of the Core Prevention Outcomes set out in Section 4, alongside any additional outcomes identified within the relevant Funding Opportunity Brief.





4. Outcomes Framework

The Outcomes Framework provides a shared understanding of the difference we are seeking to make through early action funding. It creates consistency across Funding Opportunities while allowing organisations the flexibility to design approaches that reflect the needs of the people and communities they support.

Different organisations will contribute to these outcomes in different ways. Some may focus on reducing loneliness, others on supporting unpaid carers, improving confidence, preventing falls or helping people build skills and independence. What matters is that funded activity can clearly demonstrate the positive difference it is making to the people of Lancashire and its communities.

The outcomes set out in the next section provide the foundation for funding opportunities issued through this Prospectus.

4.1 Core Early Action Outcomes All funding opportunities issued under this Prospectus will contribute to one or more of the following outcomes.

Health, Wellbeing and Independence: People are supported to stay well, maintain their independence and live the life they choose.

Earlier Support: People can access support at the right time, before problems become more difficult.

Access to Information and Support: People and carers know where to go for help and can access the support they need.

Confidence and Resilience: People feel more confident, capable and able to manage everyday challenges.

Community Connections: People build relationships, reduce isolation and feel connected to their communities.

Support for Unpaid Carers: Unpaid carers are recognised, valued and supported **in their caring role.**

Participation and Opportunity: People can take part in learning, volunteering, employment and community life.

Positive Experiences: People feel listened to, respected and supported in ways that work for them.

What Success Looks Like

Ultimately, we want more Lancashire residents to be able to say:



"I can access help when I need it."

"I feel connected to my community."

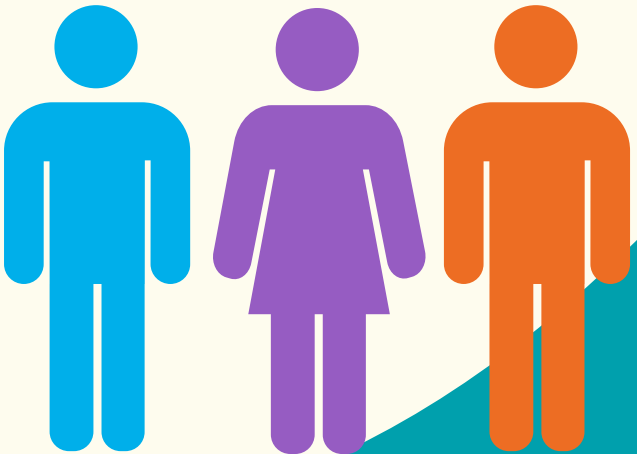
"I am able to maintain my independence."

"I have opportunities to participate and contribute."

"I feel confident about managing my wellbeing and daily life."

"I receive support that focuses on what matters to me."

"I am treated with dignity and respect."



4.2 Applying the Outcomes Framework

The outcomes provide a consistent foundation for all Funding Opportunities issued through this Prospectus. They create a shared framework for understanding the difference funded activity is expected to make for people, carers and communities.

Each Funding Opportunity will identify the outcomes that are most relevant to its aims and priorities. This may include a combination of Core Prevention Outcomes and additional outcomes linked to a specific area of focus.

For example, a Funding Opportunity may seek to achieve outcomes such as:

- increased confidence and reduced fear of falling;
- reduced loneliness and improved social connection;
- improved wellbeing for unpaid carers;
- increased participation in community activities;
- improved access to support following hospital discharge;
- increased volunteering, mentoring or peer support opportunities; or
- improved access to employment, learning or life skills development.

Applicants will not be expected to contribute to every Core Outcome. Expectations will be proportionate to the purpose, scale and nature of the funding opportunity.

Applications should clearly demonstrate how proposed activity will contribute to the outcomes identified within the relevant Funding Opportunity Brief and how progress towards those outcomes will be evidenced.

4.3 Measuring Impact

Understanding the impact of prevention and earlier action is essential to ensuring that funding makes a meaningful difference for people and communities across Lancashire. We believe success is not defined solely by what services deliver, but by what people are enabled to achieve in their lives.

Through this Prospectus, monitoring and evaluation will focus on the difference funded activity makes, rather than simply measuring levels of activity. We want to understand how people's lives have improved, how communities have been strengthened, and how funded activity has contributed to wellbeing, independence, connection and resilience.

We recognise that some of the most important outcomes cannot always be captured through numbers alone. Alongside measuring outputs and outcomes, we want to understand how change is experienced by people, families and communities, including whether people feel heard, connected, empowered, included and better able to live the lives they choose.

Monitoring requirements will be proportionate to the size, value and nature of the funding awarded, balancing accountability with a practical understanding of organisational capacity.

Evidence of impact may include:

- the number of people supported through earlier action without requiring Adult Social Care intervention;
- outcomes achieved and evidence of positive change;
- feedback from people, carers and communities;
- stories, case studies and lived experiences that bring impact to life;
- participation, engagement and community involvement;
- learning, reflection and continuous improvement; and
- evidence of wider community benefit and social value.

The Council will work with funded organisations to agree proportionate and appropriate approaches to evidencing outcomes and impact. The emphasis will be on learning, continuous improvement and shared understanding, rather than creating unnecessary reporting burdens.

Learning from funded activity will help shape future Funding Opportunities, inform investment decisions and support the ongoing development of Earlier Action, prevention and community-led support across Lancashire. Monitoring and reporting arrangements, including Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Key Human Indicators (KHIs), are set out in Section 10.



5. Funding and Grant Arrangements

Funding Opportunities issued under the Prospectus will set out the specific funding available, eligibility requirements and outcomes that organisations are expected to achieve. Our aim is to create funding arrangements that are accessible, proportionate and flexible, recognising the diversity of organisations working across Lancashire communities. Funding awarded through this Prospectus should support activities that contribute to the outcomes described in Section 4 and deliver value for the people and communities in Lancashire.

5.1 Grant Duration and Continuity

During early action activities it often takes time to build trust, develop relationships and demonstrate impact. For this reason, grants will normally be awarded for a period up to 24 months, although arrangements may vary depending on the nature of the Funding Opportunity.

When determining the length of funding, the Council will consider:

- the purpose and scale of the activity;
- the outcomes being sought;
- the level of funding awarded; and
- the proposed delivery model.

Where funded activity is demonstrating positive outcomes, strong delivery and continued alignment with local priorities, the Council may explore opportunities to extend funding or develop alternative longer-term arrangements, subject to the availability of funding and relevant approvals.

5.2 Scale and Proportionality

We recognise that valuable early action activity is delivered by organisations of different sizes, from small community groups to larger established providers.

Funding Opportunities will therefore be designed to encourage participation from a diverse range of organisations. Expectations relating to governance, monitoring and reporting will be proportionate to the value, scale and risk of the funding being awarded. Our intention is to ensure that funding processes remain accessible while maintaining appropriate accountability for the use of public funds.

5.3 Use of Funding

Funding may be used for costs directly related to delivery, including:

- staff and sessional delivery
- venue and local delivery costs
- volunteer support and coordination
- equipment and materials
- appropriate overheads

Appropriate organisational overheads may be included where these are necessary to support the delivery, management and governance of the funded activity. This may include costs such as finance, human resources, premises, information technology, governance and management support.

Applicants must demonstrate how funding will deliver outcomes and complement existing provision. Organisations should demonstrate how funding will contribute to the outcomes set out in Section 4 and the requirements of the relevant Funding Opportunity Brief.



6. Social Value

Funded activity creates value beyond delivering agreed outcomes. It helps strengthen communities, build relationships, increase participation, support volunteering, and improve people's connection to their communities. These wider benefits are a vital part of prevention and contribute to better outcomes for people and places.

We recognise that social value is often embedded in how organisations work and do not want to create unnecessary reporting burdens. Funded organisations should consider and describe the wider benefits their activity creates, where relevant. This may include strengthening community connections, increasing participation, building confidence and independence, supporting inclusion, reducing isolation, and improving community capacity and resilience.

Social value may be reflected through themes such as stronger communities, participation and inclusion, confidence and opportunity and community capacity. Many of these benefits develop over time and may not be captured through traditional performance measures.

We are interested in understanding the difference activities make. Evidence of social value may include participant feedback, case studies, volunteering data, examples of community-led initiatives, outcome information and learning from delivery. Approaches to demonstrating impact will be proportionate to the level of funding and focused on learning, understanding and continuous improvement rather than compliance.



7. Collaboration

The best outcomes are often achieved when organisations, people, communities and services work together. We recognise that no single organisation can meet every need, and that prevention is most effective when different strengths, skills and perspectives are brought together.

Collaboration can take many forms, from formal partnerships and consortium arrangements to working alongside local groups, community assets, volunteers and statutory services. What matters is that the approach adds value and improves outcomes for the people being supported.

We also believe that people and communities should play a meaningful role in shaping activities and services. Applicants are encouraged to demonstrate how people with lived experience have influenced, or will influence, their approach.

7.1 What We Are Looking For

Where relevant, applications should demonstrate how collaboration and co-production will contribute to successful delivery. This may include:

- working in partnership with other organisations;
- drawing on community assets and local networks;
- building links with health, care and other local services;
- involving people with lived experience in design and delivery;
- strengthening community capacity and resilience; and
- developing sustainable networks of support.

Collaboration should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the funding opportunity. Organisations will not be disadvantaged where formal partnerships are unnecessary or add limited value.

7.2 How Collaboration Will Be Considered

As part of the assessment process, we will consider how proposed collaborative approaches strengthen delivery and improve outcomes. We will be interested in how collaboration increases reach and accessibility, makes effective use of local knowledge and resources, strengthens community capacity, and supports lasting impact.

We are not looking for collaboration for its own sake. The strongest applications will be those that clearly demonstrate how their chosen approach is right for the people and communities they support.



8. Application, Assessment and Decision Making

Funding Opportunities will be delivered through a fair and transparent process. We want organisations of all sizes to be able to access funding opportunities and demonstrate the difference they can make for the people in Lancashire its communities.

The application and assessment process has been designed to support good decision making while remaining accessible and proportionate to the value and complexity of the funding opportunity.

8.1 Application Process

Each Funding Opportunity will be accompanied by a Funding Opportunity Brief and supporting guidance setting out:

- the purpose of the funding opportunity;
- the outcomes applicants are expected to contribute towards;
- eligibility requirements;
- available funding;
- application timescales; and
- assessment arrangements.

Applications must be submitted using the relevant application form and include sufficient information for the Council to assess how the proposed activity will contribute to the agreed outcomes.



Applicants are encouraged to demonstrate:

- a clear understanding of the people and communities they intend to support;
- how their proposed activity will contribute to the outcomes described in Section 4;
- how funding will be used effectively; and
- how their approach will be delivered in practice.

8.2 Stage 1: Eligibility

Applications will first be reviewed to confirm that they meet the eligibility requirements of the Prospectus and the relevant Funding Opportunity Brief. Full eligibility requirements are set out in Section 9.

Applications that do not meet the eligibility requirements will not progress to full assessment. Proportionate due diligence checks may also be undertaken where required.

8.3 Stage 2: Assessment Approach

Eligible applications will be assessed using a structured assessment approach that considers the overall strength of the proposal rather than relying solely on numerical scoring.

Assessment will consider:

- contribution to the relevant outcomes;
- understanding of local need and context;
- quality and deliverability of the proposed approach;
- collaboration and use of community assets, where relevant; and
- value for money and wider community benefit.

Assessment expectations will be proportionate to the scale and complexity of the funding opportunity.

8.4 Clarifications

Where appropriate, the Council may seek clarification on aspects of an application before a final decision is made. This may include requests for additional information or discussion about proposed delivery arrangements, outcomes or monitoring requirements.

The purpose of clarification is to support effective decision-making and ensure a shared understanding of the proposal.

8.5 Decision-Making

Funding decisions will be made in line with the Council's governance arrangements and the requirements of the relevant Funding Opportunity.

Decisions will consider the strength of the application, alignment with intended outcomes, value for money, available funding, evidence of need and the overall balance of provision across Lancashire. This approach supports fair access to prevention activity while recognising the diversity of communities, places and communities of interest across the county.

Where appropriate, assessment and moderation processes may involve partners, VCFSE representatives and people with lived experience. Applicants will be informed of the outcome, and feedback will be provided wherever possible to support future learning and development.



9. Who Can Apply

This Prospectus is open to organisations that can demonstrate a clear commitment to improving outcomes for people and communities across Lancashire through prevention-focused activity.

Applicants must:

- have appropriate governance, safeguarding and financial arrangements in place;
- be able to demonstrate the experience, capacity or capability required to deliver the proposed activity; and
- show a clear connection to, and understanding of, the communities they intend to support.

Eligible organisations may include:

- registered charities;
- charitable incorporated organisations (CIOs);
- community interest companies (CICs);
- community benefit societies;
- co-operatives;
- social enterprises; and

other not-for-profit organisations that can demonstrate community benefit.

National organisations may apply where they can demonstrate an established presence within Lancashire and a strong understanding of local needs and communities.

- Local limited companies may be eligible where they can clearly demonstrate that:
- the proposed activity delivers identifiable community benefit and contributes to the outcomes described in Section 4; and
- any grant funding will be used solely for the purposes of the funded activity and not for profit distribution or shareholder return.
- Evidence of local relationships, community partnerships, lived experience involvement, established delivery within communities or demonstrable understanding of local needs and assets.

For the purposes of this Prospectus, a local limited company is an organisation that can demonstrate an established and active presence within Lancashire and a clear commitment to delivering community benefit for Lancashire. Evidence requirements will be set out within the relevant Funding Opportunity documentation.

Additional eligibility requirements may be specified within individual Funding Opportunity Briefs where these are necessary to reflect the nature of the funding opportunity.

Partnership and consortium applications are welcome where they strengthen delivery, reach or impact. Where organisations apply jointly, roles, responsibilities and accountability arrangements should be clearly defined. Further information regarding collaboration can be found in Section 7.



10. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

Monitoring and evaluation help us understand the difference funded activity makes for people and communities and ensure that funding is being used effectively. Our approach will be proportionate to the size and nature of the funding awarded and focused on learning as well as accountability.

Funded organisations will be asked to provide evidence of progress against agreed outcomes, using measures that are appropriate to the activity being delivered. This may include both quantitative and qualitative information. The outcomes and impact measures that apply to each Funding Opportunity are described in Section 4 and the relevant Funding Opportunity Brief.

10.1 Monitoring Arrangements

Monitoring requirements will be agreed as part of the funding arrangement and will reflect the outcomes identified within the relevant Funding Opportunity Brief.

Evidence may include:

- outcome and participation data;
- feedback from the people in Lancashire, carers and communities;
- case studies and stories of change;
- volunteering and community engagement information; and
- evidence of social value and wider community benefit.

Requirements will be proportionate to the funding awarded and the nature of the activity being delivered.

10.2 Key Performance Indicators

Where appropriate, Funding Opportunity Briefs may include Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to help assess progress, delivery and impact. KPIs will be aligned to the outcomes being funded and proportionate to the scale and nature of the activity. They provide measurable evidence of what has been delivered, who has been reached and the outcomes achieved.

KPIs may include measures such as participation levels, service access, outputs delivered, community engagement, partnership activity, improved outcomes for individuals and communities and evidence of earlier support and intervention.

10.3 Key Human Indicators

We recognise that meaningful change cannot always be captured through quantitative measures alone. Alongside KPIs, we may therefore seek evidence through Key Human Indicators (KHIs), which focus on the lived experiences, perceptions and stories of the people, communities and partners involved.

KHIs help us understand how change is experienced in practice and whether people feel heard, connected, empowered and able to influence the decisions that affect their lives. They provide insight into outcomes such as increased confidence, strengthened relationships, improved wellbeing, enhanced community capacity, inclusion, belonging, choice and control.

Human indicators may be reflected through statements such as:

- I feel heard.
- I helped shape something.
- I can see things changing.
- I have some power over what happens.
- I feel connected to my community.
- I know where to go for support when I need it.
- I have greater choice and control in my life.



Evidence may include participant feedback, stories of change, case studies, reflective learning, testimonials, practitioner observations, partnership insights and examples of good practice.

By considering KPIs and KHIs together, we can build a more complete picture of impact, recognising both measurable outcomes and the human experiences behind them.

Data with soul

KPIs tell us what has changed. KHIs help us understand how change has been experienced by people and communities.

10.4 Learning and Improvement

Learning from funded activity will help inform future Funding Opportunities, strengthen our understanding of prevention and support the ongoing development of this Prospectus. We encourage organisations to share both successes and challenges, recognising that honest reflection is an important part of improving outcomes for the people of Lancashire and its communities.





11. Shaping the Future Together

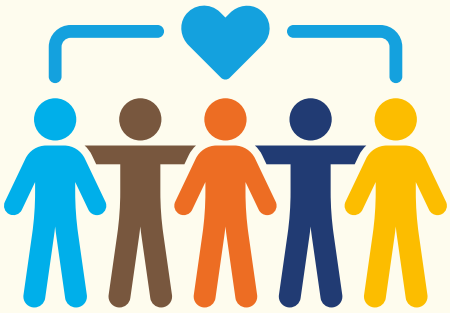
This Prospectus has been shaped through engagement with people across Lancashire, people with lived experience, VCFSE organisations, partners and colleagues. Their insight and experience have informed both the principles and practical approach set out in this document.

A strong message emerged throughout this engagement: the importance of early action, prevention, local solutions, meaningful partnerships and funding approaches that are accessible, proportionate and focused on outcomes. These principles underpin this Prospectus and will continue to shape future Funding Opportunities.

This Prospectus is intended to be a framework for investment, learning and continuous improvement rather than a static document. We are committed to maintaining an open dialogue with communities, applicants and funded organisations, learning from what works, responding to feedback and improving how we invest in prevention across Lancashire.



Communities Know What Works



> The best solutions grow from local people, trusted relationships and community strengths. This Prospectus is about working together to support earlier action, improve outcomes and create opportunities for people to thrive.



By working together, we can build on community strengths, support people to live well and improve health, wellbeing and independence across Lancashire.

11.1 Ongoing Engagement and Development

Lancashire County Council will continue to work with communities, funded organisations and system partners to ensure future Funding Opportunities reflect local priorities and emerging needs. We are committed to:

- maintaining clear communication about funding opportunities;
- listening to feedback from applicants and funded organisations;
- sharing learning and good practice; and
- using insight, evidence and evaluation to inform future investment and the ongoing development of this Prospectus.



Lancashire Early Action Delivery Grant Prospectus

Adults, Health and Wellbeing

For queries relating to this funding opportunity, or to sign up to an engagement session please contact:

StrategyPartnerships@lancashire.gov.uk

Lancashire County Council

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