



Supporting Shropshire Communities since 1960

## VCSE Infrastructure Needs Assessment Tender Opportunity April 2024

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Community Resource is an operating name of the Community Council of Shropshire.  
A Company Limited by Guarantee 4652487 and a Registered Charity 1096779  
Registered Office: 4 The Creative Quarter, Shrewsbury Business Park, Shrewsbury SY2 6LG



## Purpose

### ***Introduction***

With the support of Shropshire Council The 'Shropshire Voluntary Community Sector Infrastructure Support' Project (The Voluntary & Community Support team) at Community Resource [Shropshire Infrastructure Partnership | Strengthening the voluntary sector, together \(sipshropshire.org.uk\)](https://www.sipshropshire.org.uk) have received funding from the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (Department for levelling up, housing & communities).

Community Resource wish to outsource the undertaking of a VCSE Infrastructure Needs Assessment within Shropshire.

The purpose of this work will allow the Voluntary & Community Support Team at Community Resource to have a clear understanding of what VCSE organisations within Shropshire both need and want in terms of community infrastructure support and the associated services within their local communities, giving Community Resource the ability to assess current and future service provision in line with the outcomes.

We expect the research to be representative of VCSE organisations across the County of Shropshire (not including Telford & Wrekin, therefore research areas should include the urban population of Central Shrewsbury as well as extend to those VCSE organisations classified as rural and in a sparse setting and everything in between.

### ***Strategic Context***

As part of our aim to demonstrate a difference our goal is to offer services to build a well-informed, vibrant, and sustainable voluntary and community sector, equipped to address local needs. Through the delivery of services that are developed through an evidenced understanding of what our VCSE organisations need. We also want to strengthen our rural services to ensure their resilience, longevity, and increase their opportunities.

Through consultation, we will deliver services that are developed from the latest understanding of what VCSE organisations need, listening and learning from them, not just through a one-off consultation but by having a regular cycle of engagement. We will ensure that the needs of VCSE organisations are heard and that they are able to input into this consultation and any ongoing engagement work we undertake.

### ***Aims***

The VCSE Infrastructure Needs Assessment aims to achieve the following:

- Give VCSE organisations particularly those which are rural, the opportunity to have their voice heard through collaboration and co-production.
- To have strong links within VCSE organisations through effective community engagement.
- To understand what is important to the Voluntary & Community Infrastructure teams existing beneficiaries in the services they engage with - what can the VCST do to improve the services we deliver, what can we learn and importantly what are we doing well that we need to maintain?
- To understand existing stakeholders', need for support in current and future services that support communities and how the voluntary and community support team can support this.

- Share our findings to grow the knowledge of the local voluntary and community sector.

### **Objectives**

Delivery of needs-led services through:

- The undertaking of relevant research to inform findings in the form of a final report.
- To undertake research ensuring representation across Shropshire. To include the identification of VCSE organisations who are focused on rural delivery, as well as central Shrewsbury service delivery.
- The provision of opportunities, for VCSE organisations to engage through a variety of methods that ensure the work is inclusive and accessible to VCSE organisations.
- Understand the challenges VCSE organisations face within Shropshire, the support they need and other services which would be beneficial to their VCSE organisations.
- Having a clear understanding of the service gaps.
- Having a clear understanding of existing stakeholder needs in terms of support for support services.

### **Methodology**

Community Resource are looking to retain the services of an organisation or consultant with experience in undertaking research that involves community engagement that will allow a review of our current infrastructure support services and assess the need for future deliverables, ensuring they are needs-led, with the voice of Shropshire communities central to decision making and design.

The VCSE Infrastructure needs assessment will support the ongoing work of Community Resource by utilising known networks as well as discover new routes for engagement that can be developed from the first point of contact onwards.

As part of the research, it is expected that the following will be included:

#### **Promotion**

Community engagement opportunities should be promoted at all available opportunities and could include but is not limited to:

- Promotion to local community groups.
- Use of Community Resource's village halls network.
- Leaflets/Posters in local community assets e.g. Doctors surgeries, community centres
- Relevant social media / digital channels
- Largescale leaflet distribution for rural communities where internet coverage is problematic.

Through third parties and partners of either Community Resource or the provider.

#### **Research engagement opportunities**

A variety of opportunities should be adopted to ensure inclusivity and accessibility, allowing information and data to be as representative of local VCSE organisations as possible.

Appropriate information should be provided to allow for informed consent to participate as well as adherence to GDPR guidelines as required.

Appropriate methods, should be utilised to understand the needs of existing and future beneficiaries and stakeholders.

**Data/findings presentation**

Final report to:

- highlight the main findings and implications.
- visual aids, such as charts, graphs, and maps, to illustrate findings.
- recommendations and action steps based on your findings.
- solicit feedback and suggestions from audience.

Presentation to Head of Service (Infrastructure & Rural Services), the CEO of Community Resource, and the whole staff team to show findings and recommendations. All raw data will remain the property of Community Resource and should be retained for delivery to us in electronic format at the end of the project.

**Implementation****Management**

Meetings will take place with Community Resource to agree delivery plan and to ensure objectives are being met. A detailed delivery plan will be agreed between the provider and Community Resource within two weeks of the contract start date, this will be followed by monthly update meetings to ensure the agreed plan is on track.

A dedicated point of contact should be available to supply updates from the provider. The dedicated point of contact and team delivering the work must be able to call on relevant expertise to support the contract as and when required. A plan should be in place to ensure continuity and delivery according to the provided timelines.

Update meetings will cover all aspects of the delivery plan to date and progress, including notification of potential delays and/or pinch points.

Where delivery or performance falls outside the scope of the agreed delivery plan, the provider must nominate a separate point of contact to deal with any concerns or under performance.

**Proposed Timeline**

Contract Value	Up to £2,500
Tender release date	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> April 2024
Note of interest submitted by	12:00pm, Monday 6 May 2024
Written proposal (include proposed delivery plan and schedule of costs)	w/c 20 <sup>th</sup> May 2024
Notifications	Tuesday 28 <sup>th</sup> May 2024
Contract start date	Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2024
Delivery period	Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2024 to Monday 23 September 2024
Delivery plan agreement	By Monday 17 June 2024
Monthly update meetings	19 <sup>th</sup> June 2024, 17 <sup>th</sup> July 2024, 14 <sup>th</sup> August 2024.
Delivery of final report	2 <sup>nd</sup> September 2024
Presentation to Community Resource	9 <sup>th</sup> September 2024
Evaluation (joint provider & Community Resource)	w/c 16 September 2024

***Shortlisting from expression of interest to presentation***

Expressions of Interest will be shortlisted based on how well they meet this brief, identifying how they will meet the aims and objectives and undertake the methodology alongside identifying any potential challenges/risks to the successful completion of the work.

Organisations will be notified by Wednesday 8 May 2024 if they are required to present a written proposal. It is anticipated that presentations will be delivered on 23 May 2024 (in the afternoon).

***Governance***

The provider should have demonstrated experience of community consultation and engagement and will have policies, procedures, and systems as appropriate to assure the standards of competences of staff that they employ. This will include but not be limited to:

- i) Employment of appropriately qualified staff.
- ii) Compliance with statutory and other national requirements,

A formal process will be in place to deal with incidents / complaints as they occur, including central reporting and the notification of occurrences to Community Resource within 24 hours. Formal notification will be made to the Community Resource representative who will inform the relevant person within the organisation. The Provider and Community Resource will then engage in the joint resolution of complaints and incidents. For beneficiaries of the charity, complaints and comments will be dealt with as with any other service, following Community Resource complaints procedure.

**To apply for this tender please submit your expression of interest to:**  
**[enquiries@community-resource.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@community-resource.org.uk) with the subject of Community Infrastructure Needs Analysis Application Expression of Interest FAO A Richardson.**

**Any expression of interest should reach us no later than 12:00pm, Monday 6 May 2024**