

Third Sector Leeds: Terms of Reference

Third Sector Leeds (TSL) is the forum in Leeds that promotes, represents and advocates for not-for-profit groups and organisations (known as the 'Third Sector') in Leeds. We are the leading policy body that advocates for the third sector's, values and interests in supporting Leeds' *Best City* ambition.

We are a collective body that brings together the views of the different parts of the third sector (e.g. organisations working in health and care, with young people, or on race, gender or LGBT+ equality). We do this through representation on our steering 'Leadership' Group drawn from the sector's strategic and thematic forums and, where there is no forum affiliated to TSL, by sector leaders selected by transparent recruitment.

TSL's overarching aims are that:

- Third sector organisations influence key strategic and policy developments in the city of relevance to the sector
- Third sector organisations and groups working at a local level are actively involved in discussions on city-wide challenges and solutions
- Third sector organisations can access information and sources of support to enable them to continue to thrive
- To further collaboration and co-operation in the third sector

Each year TSL should set out a group of strategic aims which form the basis its workplan for the coming year. Additionally, TSL commits to responding to and amplifying issues that are of key concern to thematic networks and forums and to Leadership Group members who have been selected to reflect the views of thematic areas of work.

TSL's organisational status

Third Sector Leeds is an unincorporated organisation (it has no legal status and does not have a bank account). It is funded by Leeds City Council, and supported by Voluntary Action Leeds (VAL) who provide secretariat and developmental support.

TSL's definition of a Third Sector Organisation

TSL defines a Third Sector Organisation as any body that is:

- Non-governmental
- Value-driven
- Mainly reinvests any financial surpluses to further social, environmental or cultural objectives

They may be an informal self-help group, a registered charity or community interest company often found providing support for local people.

The term encompasses voluntary and community organisations, social enterprises, charities, faith groups, cooperatives and mutuals, both large and small.

Membership of Third Sector Leeds

Any Third Sector Organisation (TSO) working in and supporting communities in Leeds is eligible for membership of Third Sector Leeds. TSOs will be considered to be members if they have requested to receive regular 'e-news' updates from Third Sector Leeds and have indicated they wish to be members.

TSL members will:

- Receive regular communications from TSL
- Contribute to shaping TSL priorities through a programme of workshops, biannual 'Goes Local' events across Leeds' three locality areas and through a range of other channels
- Nominate their people for vacant selected TSL Leadership Group positions, where they have the appropriate skillset and have the opportunity to take part in candidate interviews for organisations working in their area of interest.
- Influence TSL's workplan by engaging with regular feedback opportunities.

Communication with members

TSL provides a regular e-newsletter to members which provides useful information about key areas of work and the sources of support that will enable them to thrive. It also shares information about its work, including minutes of TSL Leadership Group meetings through its web page at www.doinggoodleeds.co.uk. TSL uses social media to provide information to members and stimulate debate with members about the way Leeds is developing. From time to time, TSL consults with members around key developments in Leeds. The main way it does this is through e-surveys, but it may also use other methods, such as face to face interviews or focus groups.

TSL holds regular workshops that enable members to meet with each other to share ideas and experiences and to influence key developments. Every six months, TSL delivers a series of three 'Goes Local' events aimed at organisations in their locality. It also delivers at least citywide events each year that focus on particular themes (e.g. mental health, or enabling people who recently migrated to Leeds to settle). One of these citywide events brings together TSL's members to review and set its strategic direction for the coming year.

TSL wishes to be proactive to reaching out to members that have less capacity to engage by, for instance, undertaking work to target organisations working a particular field and visiting them to gather knowledge about their work, aspirations for the future and challenges / opportunities.

TSL Values

TSL members should seek to uphold our values in their work and in their interactions with others:

- We are proactive and ambitious
- We are accountable to the community
- We work in the greater interest
- We are solutions focussed
- We take a restorative approach
- We strive for excellence
- We are accessible to all
- We are optimistic

TSL Leadership Group

The Leadership Group undertakes a strategic leadership role on behalf of TSL, working closely with strategic partners. In order to ensure TSL meets its primary aims we will:

- Hold regular Leadership Group meetings to plan our work
- Share relevant information, updates and intelligence from our forums, networks and areas of work
- Play an active role in the Third Sector Partnership (Appendix 2) alongside statutory colleagues
- Work with partners to create a good commissioning environment
- Organise thematic workshops and a twice-yearly programme of TSL Goes Local events around issues of importance
- Respond proactively to emerging challenges and opportunities

The Leadership Group has a particular role in taking action to ensure that it finds out about and responds to the views of groups that are seldom heard. To support this we will:

- Shape engagement ensuring that debates in and about the third sector are accessible to as many organisations as possible
- Be proactive in identifying and encouraging organisations from under-represented areas to attend and contribute to the Leadership Group

The Leadership Group works with VAL on an ongoing basis to shape the support it requires, within the available resources, to help deliver on its primary aims.

Membership

The Leadership Group strives to provide both strategic leadership and achieve a coverage of voices that reflect the diversity of the sector. It should have no less than 8 members and should not exceed 21.

The Leadership Group reserves 3 additional positions to which it can choose to allocate to enable access for seldom heard groups.

From time to time, the Leadership Group will review and publish its composition to ensure that it continues to achieve the necessary balance. The current composition of the Leadership Group is included at Appendix 1

Term limits

Leadership Group members will normally serve for 3 years and will be able to serve 2 terms consecutively.

Recruitment of the Leadership Group

Leadership Group members are recruited by three means.

Delegated to thematic forums and networks: there are a number of third sector forums in Leeds that focus on specific areas of interest (e.g Children and Young People, Health). Each of these forums will nominate a Leadership Group member and deputy every three years. Forums may choose to review their nomination more regularly as required.

By Selection: where no forum exists for a specific area of interest, positions for a 3 year term will be advertised to the membership and a fair selection recruitment process will be followed:

- nominations will be sought and their suitability approved by TSL members
- if there is more than one nomination then a candidate recruitment panel will be held. Recruitment panel members will consist of:
 - the Chair of TSL Leadership Group
 - a member of TSL Leadership Group
 - a member working in the area of interest for which the Leadership Group member is sought (interview panel opportunities will be advertised electronically and members will put themselves forward to be chosen at random).

By co-option: from time to time additional Leadership Group members may be co-opted to address the need for specific skills or knowledge. Co-option will be by consensus in the Leadership Group.

Co-opted members should not normally attend Leadership Group for more than 1 year. If the Leadership Group member is to continue after this time then efforts should be made to allocate a formal position.

TSL's Independent Chair

TSL will appoint an independent Chair. Due to the importance of ensuring the role retains its independence, The Chair should not currently be employed by a third sector organisation in Leeds.

The tasks to be undertaken by the Chair will be set out in a role description and person specification. The post will be advertised widely and recruited using a transparent selection method. It is open to any individual with appropriate skills and experience regardless of sector. Members of the Leadership Group will lead the selection process in terms of shortlisting, interview and confirmation of successful candidate.

Should the Chair be temporarily unavailable for a meeting, or recuse themselves from discussions, then Leadership Group will choose an interim Chair from those members present.

Deputies

Forums may choose to nominate a deputy to attend TSL Leadership Group where the lead nominee cannot attend. Where roles are filled by selection TSL Leadership Group may offer deputy positions to unsuccessful candidates. From time to time TSL Leadership Group may agree to the attendance of deputies nominated by the place holder.

Deputies should have the skills and experience to fully perform their TSL Leadership Group role. The place holder will work with their deputy to ensure that they have opportunity to build relationships with key partners and the information necessary to perform their role.

TSL Leadership Group will agree whether it wishes to nominate a Deputy Chair or whether members will deputise for the Chair on an ad hoc basis as required.

Meetings of the Leadership Group

TSL Leadership will meet at least six times per year. TSL will take action to ensure that its meetings are accessible including for instance, varying meeting times and venues or meeting 'virtually' using phone conferencing or other technology.

The quorum for Leadership Group meetings is attendance of 5 members.

TSL Leadership Group members will be notified of meetings no later than one month in advance and the agenda and supporting documentation for the meeting will be circulated no later than five working days in advance.

Minutes of TSL Leadership Group meetings will be published in draft form on TSL's webpage no later than three weeks after each meeting and approved at the subsequent meeting. Once the minutes have been formally approved the final version will be published on TSL's webpage.

In circumstances where confidentiality overrides the wider interest, the Chair may direct that parts of the minutes are not shared outside of the Leadership Group.

Non attendance

In keeping with its values, and in order to ensure that TSL is effective in its work, the Leadership Group expects a high level of commitment from its members.

TSL Leadership Group members should endeavour to attend every meeting and should send apologies if they are unable to attend. If a member of Leadership Group has not attended three consecutive meetings then the Chair, or a VAL officer as delegated by the Chair, will contact them to discuss the barriers to their attendance, and whether alternative arrangements would remove or lower these barriers.

When this conversation has taken place, if the member does not attend for a further two consecutive meetings then Leadership Group will be deemed to have resigned from their position.

Review of the Terms of Reference

TSL's Terms of Reference should be reviewed every year.

The next scheduled review of the Terms of Reference will be in November 2022.