

Expression of Interest

VCFSE Staffing Host Partner

Pride in Place Programme, Digmoor, Skelmersdale

Overview

West Lancashire Borough Council, as Accountable Body for the Pride in Place Programme and acting in support of the Digmoor Neighbourhood Board, invites Expressions of Interest from suitably qualified VCFSE organisations to act as the employment and organisational host for dedicated Pride in Place-funded staff.

The successful organisation will recruit, employ, support and manage the relevant staff on behalf of the Programme, working in partnership with the Neighbourhood Board and West Lancashire Borough Council (WLBC).

WLBC is the Accountable Body for the start of the Programme. The national programme envisages a transition towards community-led delivery models during the first three years. If there are any changes to governance in West Lancashire, delivery of Accountable Body arrangements will be considered separately and, where required, agreed with MHCLG in accordance with the national programme requirements. Appointment through this Expression of Interest is solely for the initial staffing host function and does not confer Accountable Body status or any preferred status in relation to future programme governance, delivery, anchor organisation or Accountable Body arrangements.

A management fee will be payable to cover the costs of delivering the required functions.

About Pride in Place

Pride in Place is a community-led regeneration programme designed to support positive change in Digmoor and surrounding neighbourhoods. The Programme places local residents and the Neighbourhood Board at the heart of decision-making and seeks to build lasting community capacity, capability and leadership. As the Board does not have its own employing infrastructure, a VCFSE organisation is sought to provide a strong and supportive organisational home for dedicated Pride in Place-funded staff. The host will act as the legal employer and provide active management, supervision and organisational support.

Staff will work in support of priorities determined through the community-led Pride in Place processes. The host organisation will therefore need to work effectively with both the Neighbourhood Board and WLBC, whilst maintaining clear employment and management arrangements. Staffing arrangements should support a visible, regular and accessible presence within Digmoor and enable strong relationships to be developed with residents, community organisations and local partners.

Scope of Support Required

The successful organisation will be expected to provide:

- Recruitment and selection for Pride in Place-funded posts using open, fair and inclusive processes and working appropriately with the Neighbourhood Board and WLBC;
- An approach to recruitment which seeks to attract candidates with strong knowledge of, connection to, or experience of working within Digmoor and Skelmersdale, whilst retaining an open and merit-based process;
- A suitable induction and onboarding process, including access to relevant organisational systems, policies and support working with the WLBC;
- Line management, supervision and staff development;
- Financial administration, monitoring and audit compliance;
- Employment contracts, payroll and HR administration;
- Safeguarding, data protection and statutory compliance in relation to the organisation's responsibilities as employer and staffing host;
- Appropriate equality, health and safety, insurance, IT and information governance arrangements;
- A clear management and escalation structure, including arrangements for appropriate management cover during periods of absence;
- Continuity arrangements in the event of sickness absence, vacancies, management changes or other circumstances affecting the host's ability to support the posts;
- Active organisational support so that Pride in Place-funded staff are integrated into a supportive working environment and are not professionally or operationally isolated;
- Support for staff to maintain a visible, regular and accessible presence within Digmoor;
- Partnership working with the Pride in Place Board and local stakeholders;
- Clear arrangements for managing the respective roles of the host organisation, Neighbourhood Board and WLBC, so that staff receive clear, consistent and appropriate direction;
- Support for the community-led ethos of Pride in Place and, where possible, opportunities to strengthen local skills, networks and VCFSE capacity.

The precise staffing structure and individual role descriptions will be agreed separately.

Applicants are not required to identify or nominate an individual for appointment as part of this EoI.

Neighbourhood Presence and Recruitment

Pride in Place is a neighbourhood-based programme. A key requirement of the staffing model will be that dedicated staff be visibly and regularly present within Digmoor and accessible to local residents and organisations.

Applicants should explain:

- How and where hosted staff would be enabled to work regularly within, or directly accessible to, the Digmoor neighbourhood;
- What access could be provided to suitable local working, meeting or community space;
- How staff would be supported to establish trusted relationships with residents and local organisations;
- How recruitment would seek to attract candidates with relevant local knowledge, experience or connections;
- How the organisation would ensure that staff remain focused on the priorities of the Neighbourhood Board and community-led programme.

Whilst residence within Digmoor will not be a requirement for appointment, the ability to establish a strong and sustained neighbourhood presence and develop effective local relationships will be important.

Employment, Management and Staff Support

WLBC and the Neighbourhood Board are seeking an organisation that can provide a positive and supportive employment environment, rather than just payroll and HR administration alone.

Applicants should therefore set out:

- Where the Pride in Place posts would sit within the organisation;
- Who, or what level of post, would have responsibility for day-to-day line management;
- The proposed frequency and nature of supervision;
- How objectives and performance would be managed;
- The HR and wellbeing support available to employees;
- Training and professional development arrangements;
- Arrangements for managing grievances, complaints or other employment issues;
- Management cover and business-continuity arrangements;
- How Pride in Place staff would benefit from being part of the wider organisation whilst retaining a clear and recognisable Pride in Place identity.

Relationship with the Neighbourhood Board and West Lancs Borough Council

The successful organisation will be the legal employer of the relevant Pride in Place-funded staff. The Neighbourhood Board will lead the identification of programme priorities and WLBC will exercise its responsibilities as Accountable Body.

Applicants should explain how they would manage this three-way relationship in practice, including arrangements for:

- Translating Board priorities into appropriate staff objectives and work programmes;
- Line management and performance management;
- Reporting to and supporting the Neighbourhood Board;
- Escalating concerns regarding staffing, workload or performance;
- Providing information and assurance required by the Council;
- Avoiding conflicting or unclear instructions to employees.

Staff will remain employees of the host organisation and will normally be subject to its employment and HR policies. The host will also be required to meet relevant Pride in Place programme requirements and the requirements contained in its funding or contractual agreement with WLBC.

Management Fee

Applicants should set out a proposed management fee, the basis of cost calculations, and any additional value that their organisation can contribute. Applicants should clearly identify what is included within the proposed management fee, including as applicable:

- Management and supervision;
- HR and payroll;
- Recruitment costs;
- Finance and administrative support;
- IT, equipment and systems;
- Office or local working accommodation;
- Training and staff development;
- Insurance and organisational overheads;
- Board or secretariat support;
- Any in-kind organisational contribution.

Any costs not included within the management fee should be clearly identified.

The final fee arrangement will be agreed with the preferred organisation following clarification of the staffing and service requirements and subject to satisfactory due diligence and WLBC's relevant financial, procurement and governance requirements.

Managing Conflicts of Interest

Applicants must disclose any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest. This may include existing delivery services in Digmoor or West Lancashire, representation on the Pride in Place Board, or involvement in funding applications that may benefit from programme decisions. This disclosure should include, but is not limited to:

- Any relationship between the applicant organisation, its trustees or directors, senior employees or representatives, and members of the Neighbourhood Board, including the Chair;
- Any representative of the applicant organisation who sits on the Neighbourhood Board;
- Any involvement by the applicant organisation or its representatives in the development, consideration or approval of this opportunity;
- Existing delivery activity or financial interests within Digmoor which may interact with Pride in Place decisions;
- Current or anticipated applications by the organisation for Pride in Place funding;
- Any current or anticipated role delivering projects funded through Pride in Place;
- Any current or potential future interest in taking on a wider governance, anchor organisation, delivery or Accountable Body role within the programme.

Applicants should explain the controls they would implement to manage conflicts, maintain transparency and preserve public confidence. Examples include declarations of interest, decision-making separation arrangements, and maintenance of a formal register of interests.

Organisational Capacity and Employment Environment

Applicants should demonstrate that their organisation can provide a safe, supportive, stable and sustainable organisational home for Pride in Place-funded employees. Information should include:

- Legal status and governance arrangements;
- Current organisational staffing and management capacity;
- Financial stability and appropriate financial controls;
- Experience as an employer;
- HR and people-management capacity;
- Safeguarding arrangements;
- Equality, diversity and inclusion arrangements;
- Data protection and information governance arrangements;
- Health and safety arrangements;
- Appropriate insurance cover;

- Experience of managing publicly funded posts or programmes, where relevant;
- Relevant community development, neighbourhood, regeneration or partnership experience.

Applicants should also provide information that demonstrates the organisation's approach to employee support, development and wellbeing.

The Council may undertake proportionate due diligence and seek supporting evidence or references before confirming an appointment.

Community-Led Working and Added Value

Applicants should explain how their organisational approach and values would support the community-led principles of Pride in Place.

In particular, applicants should explain how they would ensure that:

- Hosted staff work in support of priorities determined through the Neighbourhood Board and wider community;
- The organisational interests of the host do not inappropriately influence the Programme Team's work;
- Staff are able to build effective relationships across a broad range of community organisations and residents, rather than only organisations already connected to the host;
- The arrangement contributes, where possible, to lasting local skills, capacity and leadership.

Applicants are also invited to identify additional value their organisation could contribute, for example through local networks, community facilities, volunteering infrastructure, training, mentoring, communications capability or other relevant resources.

Future Programme Development and Transition

Pride in Place is a long-term programme. National programme arrangements envisage a transition towards greater community-led delivery over time. The governance and delivery arrangements operating at the start of the programme may therefore evolve.

Appointment as staffing host through this EoI relates only to the staffing-host function and does not create an entitlement, presumption or preferred status in relation to any future programme delivery, anchor organisation, governance or Accountable Body arrangements. Any such arrangements will be considered separately in accordance with national programme requirements.

The successful host will be expected to cooperate fully with any future review, transition, reorganisation or change in delivery arrangements. This will include, where relevant:

- Maintaining programme records and information in a form capable of effective transfer;
- Providing reasonable access to records and information required by the Council and Neighbourhood Board;
- Supporting effective knowledge transfer and handover;
- Cooperating with arrangements for the transfer or continuation of programme functions;
- Complying with any applicable employment-law obligations arising at the relevant time;

Detailed exit, handover, information and employment provisions will be included within the final agreement with the preferred organisation.

Duration of Services

Applicants should note that the initial staffing-host arrangement will be subject to periodic review to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the Programme, provides value for money, and remains appropriate as Pride in Place governance and delivery arrangements develop.

The final agreement will set out the initial term, review arrangements, notice provisions and arrangements for extension or transition.

Assessment of Expressions of Interest

Expressions of Interest will be assessed against the overall suitability of the organisation to provide a strong, supportive and community-focused organisational home for Pride in Place staff.

Assessment will consider:

- Organisational capacity, governance and financial resilience;
- Quality of the proposed employment, management and staff-support arrangements;
- Relevant experience and track record;
- Approach to recruitment and ability to support a visible and accessible presence within Digmoor;
- Understanding of community-led working and proposed arrangements for working with the Neighbourhood Board and Council;
- Management of actual, potential and perceived conflicts of interest;

- Continuity, resilience and ability to support future transition if programme arrangements change;
- Added value and contribution to local capacity;
- Management fee and overall value for money.

The Council and / or Neighbourhood Board may seek clarification from applicants and may invite shortlisted organisations to a discussion before a preferred organisation is identified.

Any individuals involved in the assessment will be required to declare and appropriately manage any relevant conflicts of interest.

Timeline for Applications and Appointment

Issue of EoI:	Week commencing 31/08/2026
Deadline for clarification questions	23:59 20/09/2026
Clarification question responses	17:00 23/09/2026
Closing date for EoI	23:59 04/10/2026
Assessment	Week commencing 05/10/2026
Shortlisting (if required)	Week commencing 12/10/2026
Preferred organisation agreement of final arrangements	16 - 23/10/2026
Due diligence and agreement of final agreements	October 2026
Recruitment process commenced	October / November 2026
Mobilisation of staffing-host arrangement	As soon as practicable thereafter

How to Apply

Please complete the form set out as **Appendix 1** to this document.

Please return to:

Gerry Allen, Community and Place Grants Manager

gerry.allen@westlancls.gov.uk

West Lancashire Borough Council, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk, Lancashire, L39 2DF.

By:

23:59 on Sunday 4 October 2026