

Voluntary Sector - Recovery Action Plan

Action No.	Action to be taken	Action to mitigate or action for opportunity? (Mitigate or Opportunity)	Lead organisation or partnership	Named Lead (if appropriate)	Timescale Short: 0-6 months, Medium: 6-12months Longer: 12months+	Resources / capacity required	Priority - Essential, Important or Desirable
1	Funding: Funders, including public sector partners, to prioritise core funding when setting any new grant programmes, particularly as heading into 2021/22. This will help to support organisations who have seen a decrease in fundraised income and will enable organisations to continue operating	Mitigate	All funders	Josephine McCartney, Kent Community Foundation (KCF), Lydia Jackson Kent County Council (KCC)	Short Term	Initial action to commit to core funding will be from existing resources. However mitigating the risk will require additional funding.	Essential
2	Commissioning: where public sector partners have contracts in place with the voluntary sector, which are due to end in the next 12 months, to look at flexibilities or extending existing arrangements to create some financial certainty for organisations. The sector is predicted to see a 42% reduction in voluntary income nationally and commissioners should be mindful of the destabilising effect of the cumulative financial impacts.	Mitigate	Strategic partnership board (to be established) to consider cumulative impact	Lydia Jackson, KCC and David Whittle, KCC to liaise with relevant officers	Short Term	Existing resources	Essential
3	Mental Health of Workforce: KCC to establish an online forum for mentoring and wellbeing, which Voluntary Community Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations will be able to access. This is in recognition of the pressures that have been on workforces during the crisis and the change to employees working environment.	Opportunity	KCC	Lydia Jackson, Serena Cunningham, KCC	Short Term	Existing resources	Important
4	Training and networking: Establish peer to peer networks, to facilitate mentoring and support between VCSE organisations to overcome challenges and adapt to 'new normal' way of working. Including access to e-learning and webinars. Opportunities for collaboration and innovative sharing of resources to adapt in recovery.	Opportunity	Social Enterprise Kent (SEK) Sponsored initially by KCC	Claudia Sykes (SEK)	Short Term	Existing resources	Important
5	Increased service demand: reflect on the collaboration and partnership working between KCC, district/borough councils and VCSE to support those who are vulnerable and shielding through the Community hubs and Kent Together. Consider how partnership working and sharing of data can inform predicting future demand particularly around financial hardship but also in other service areas to ensure that services and organisations do not become overwhelmed through spikes or persistently increased demand. Likely that additional investment will be needed to support increased debt advice and support.	Mitigate	Strategic partnership board (to be established)	Lydia Jackson (KCC) working with Debra Exall and Tim Woolmer (KCC)	Short Term	Initial action will be from existing resources. However mitigating the risk will require additional funding.	Important
6	Kent Homeless Population: Lobby central government on the issues surrounding the homeless population in Kent especially as temporary accommodation comes to an end on 4th July.	Mitigate	KCC, VCSE, Districts and Medway	Debra Exall, Tim Woolmer (KCC)	Short Term	Initial action will be from existing resources. However mitigating the risk will require additional funding.	Essential
7	Supported Employment: Lobby central government to recognise the impact of supported employment funding being cut on the lives of disabled people across the County. This should also include supported internship programmes.	Mitigate	Strategic partnership board (to be established)		Short Term	Initial action will be from existing resources. However mitigating the risk will require additional funding	Essential

8	Diversity and Equality: Work with VCSE organisations who have expertise or work with Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities to understand the impact of COVID, including exacerbating mental health issues. To also understand better the inequalities that exist within our communities and ensure that collectively partners work across the county to really address these issues- more effectively than before.	Mitigate	All partners		Short Term	Additional resources may be required	Essential
9	Partnership working: establish a strategic partnership board for statutory bodies to come together to deliver the actions from the voluntary sector cell and consider strategic issues involving the sector. This will include the district councils and KCC, NHS and a VCSE representative.	Opportunity	KCC to take the lead in convening	Josephine McCartney KCF and Lydia Jackson, KCC	Short Term	Additional resources required to support ongoing delivery and management of the Board	Essential
10	Partnership: building on the success of the recovery cell and the partnership working during the pandemic, establish a steering group of VCSE representatives. This would be to help inform the development of support to the sector during the recovery period and longer term and will link into the strategic partnership board	Opportunity	KCC with Kent Community Foundation (KCF)	Lydia Jackson, KCC Josephine McCartney, KCF	Short Term	Existing resources	Important
11	Volunteering: bring together shared learning and data on volunteering during the crisis, by convening working group of the volunteer centres. Linking in with NHS and districts for the GoodSam and community hubs work.	Opportunity	Ashford Volunteer Centre, with support from KCF, KCC and Medway	Beth Peal, CEO Ashford Volunteer Centre	Short Term	Existing resources	Important
12	Communication and networking: further develop the offer of peer to peer support and mentoring following the initial programme during COVID-19 led by Social Enterprise Kent. Develop options for ongoing engagement across the sector and with public sector partners. Learn from and build on use of digital platforms and develop face to face networks as allowed.	Opportunity	Social Enterprise Kent (SEK) working with KCC and partners	Claudia Sykes (SEK)	Medium Term	Additional resources may be required to deliver ongoing networking	Desirable
13	In Person Service Delivery: Make a commitment to utilise the voluntary sector to deliver the 'in-person' support for those that cannot be reached digitally, or where it is not appropriate. This could be in regards to mentors, therapy and outreach work that cannot and should not be delivered longer term, online or by video conference and risks isolating those that are already vulnerable.	Mitigate	Strategic partnership board (to be established) as a vehicle to discuss strategy	Josephine McCartney as VCSE representative	Medium Term	Will require additional funding	Important
14	Volunteering: establish a coordinated and properly resourced volunteering system across the county working with the volunteer centres/bureaus, building on good practice. To be informed by the lessons learnt from COVID-19 and the increased participation in volunteering seen during the crisis.	Opportunity	Ashford Volunteer Centre (acting as coordinator across VCs) working with public sector partners including NHS.	Beth Peal, CEO Ashford Volunteer Centre Lydia Jackson (KCC) as point of contact for public sector engagement- including NHS partners.	Medium Term	Existing resources but a coordinated and sustainable model will require investment across public sector partners (where they are not currently funding)	Desirable
15	Sustainability and resilience: Consider the development of a good governance checklist and financial planning template for the VCSE or access to a suite of resources to help build financial resilience.	Mitigate	KCF, KCC, Medway	Josephine McCartney KCF, Lydia Jackson, KCC	Medium Term	Additional resources may be required	Desirable

16	Workforce and training: look to develop a business case on potential for VCSE organisations to have access to KCC training particularly around mental health and wellbeing. There will be a particular focus on smaller organisations who do not have the resources to access training for staff, particularly when funding is reducing. <i>(This will follow the lessons learnt and workforce training in the short term actions).</i>	Opportunity	KCC and with potential for other partners to support	Lydia Jackson, KCC	Medium Term	Additional funding likely to be required to deliver training.	Desirable
17	Intelligence: Run routine surveys of the sector, to look at changing needs to inform future planning and understand pressures or risks.	Opportunity	KCF	Josephine McCartney, KCF	Medium Term	Existing resources	Important
18	Funding and leadership: continue to champion and advocate for local sector with national funders and Department of Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, to ensure future funding (particularly 2021-22) opportunities meet the needs of the wider voluntary sector. This should include the sector advocating through their membership bodies and lobbying for local needs using the power of their affiliated national brands.	Mitigate	Partnership between KCC, Medway and Kent Community Foundation (KCF) and all VCSE organisations, that have a relationship with national bodies	Josephine McCartney KCF, Lydia Jackson KCC	Medium Term	Existing resources	Essential
19	Partnership and collaboration: Look for opportunities for VCSE organisations to co-locate, where appropriate or of more innovative use of spaces. Explore potential opportunities for public sector buildings and estates to be offered as spaces for the VCSE, as part of building reviews and future infrastructure strategies.	Opportunity	All partners and the VCSE to consider opportunities	Josephine McCartney, KCF, Kent Finance Officers Group, Kent Estates Partnership	Medium Term	Would require additional resource commitments in terms of assets.	Desirable
20	Commissioning: review and reflect on service delivery models and the culture of commissioning - lessons learnt from COVID-19 to inform future strategy. Particularly consider the impact of a reduction in voluntary income during COVID-19 and the fragilities that has exposed e.g. issues around full cost recovery. Look at opportunities for more innovative, sustainable and flexible commissioning and service delivery. Treating the VCSE as an equal partner and involving the sector in discussions to improve and reform service delivery.	Mitigate future risks	Strategic partnerships board (to be established) as the vehicle to discuss strategy	David Whittle and Lydia Jackson as KCC leads	Longer Term	Existing resources	Important
21	Support offer: Explore potential options for a sustainable model of support to the VCSE similar to that delivered by Small Charities Coalition but as a local model.	Opportunity	Strategic partnerships board (to be established)	Lydia Jackson, KCC	Longer Term	Existing resources with potential for additional funding	Desirable
22	Partnership: Ensure VCSE is represented in future recovery structures and governance (Kent Resilience Forum), in order to be better prepared for a second wave or future emergency planning.	Mitigate	KCF, KCC	Josephine McCartney KCF, Lisa Guthrie, KCC	Longer Term	Existing resources	Desirable
23	Mental Health: Review of early intervention provision for mental health in Kent and Medway. Recognise the role of the voluntary sector in early intervention. Commit to a strategic funding plan for voluntary sector organisations operating in this space.	Opportunity	Strategic partnerships board (to be established) as the vehicle to discuss strategy		Longer Term	Additional resources would be required	Important