



Chief Executive Office

Steve Rumbelow
Chief Executive

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Coronavirus: Our commitment to the voluntary sector in Rochdale

From Rochdale Council, NHS (HMR) Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale Clinical Commissioning Group and Action Together

We want to start by offering our thanks for all the extremely valuable work the sector is doing to help people across Rochdale Borough support each other during these difficult times. We want to reassure you that we stand with you during this unprecedented period and we will work in partnership with you. We want to do everything we can to enable the VCSE sector to focus on the vital work you do supporting some of the most vulnerable people in our communities.

We know that the skills, energy and compassion of the VCSE sector is vital in keeping our communities strong. But we also recognise the huge pressure that this is putting on your staff, volunteers & budgets.

Today we are setting out our commitment on how we can support and work with you during these challenging times to ensure that our collective networks, skills, resources and relationships can be used for best effect. We also want to reassure you that we will take the learning from this experience to consider what future resources might be required to reduce pressure on the sector going forward.

To support you in the coming months we will commit to:

- Work with you to understand how you can help respond to COVID-19 and be flexible about the utilization of your existing funding from us where it will have the greatest effect.
- Provide guidance and support to help you to deploy your staff and volunteers safely in the best way that you can through a co-ordinated effort that adheres to government guidance.
- Pause routine contract monitoring initially for 3 months (April, May and June 2020) to enable you to focus on business continuity plans, outbreak plans and re prioritising service delivery to best support vulnerable groups and the community response.
- Promote Action Together's fundraising for the community emergency response in Rochdale, all money raised is being used to provide grants to Rochdale's VCFSE. We will work hard with local partners to secure other grant funding to be distributed where possible to support the VCFSE sector to respond and be resilient.

In return, we ask you:

- To work with us as part of a co-ordinated response and stay informed, through Action Together, on how you can help;
- Use your networks, your relationship with your communities and your experience to provide us with advice about what needs to happen;
- Communicate any significant changes to your funded activities to your contract manager or grant manager;
- Understand we are also facing severe pressures, with many similar demands on our finances and our time.

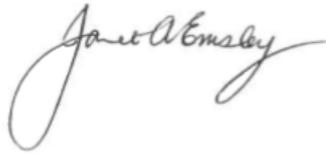
For additional practical support visit <https://www.actiontogether.org.uk/>.

We want to finish by offering our thanks again to everyone across the sector for everything you are doing. We will do whatever we can to support you.

Yours sincerely,



Steve Rumbelow
Chief Executive Rochdale Council
& Accountable Officer of HMR
CCG



Cllr. Janet Emsley
Cabinet Member for
Neighbourhoods, Community &
Culture



Liz Windsor-Welsh
Chief Executive Officer,
Action Together

