



Dear Colleagues,

As I am sure you are aware these are unprecedented times. Our priority as a Council is ensuring that our most vulnerable residents and those affected by COVID-19 are supported. We know that this will require a collaborative societal response; with us all working together. I have no doubt that our local voluntary and community organisations are already providing vital support and advice to those in our community who have already been affected or are concerned about the potential impact COVID-19 will have on their lives.

So firstly, I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for all you do to support those members of our community. Secondly, I wanted to let you know that given the current situation and the need to ensure that we can all focus our efforts and resources on providing that support, we have taken the decision to pause the ongoing VCSE review. This means that we will be further extending any existing arrangements by an additional 6 months to September 2021.

We also understand that you and your organisations may be affected and that there will be times when your staff members and volunteers will not be available. Therefore we will be taking a pragmatic approach to managing current contracts. We will work with you and support you to adapt your services to meet emerging needs or to provide services in different ways. We will also help you to prioritise your resources by not requiring you to comply with the contract performance management requirements at this time.

You may also have heard that the Mayor of London today announced a £1million fund to support organisations facing immediate financial pressures and uncertainty due to the coronavirus. This fund will be managed by London Funders and we are offering our support to ensure local Kingston groups are able to access the fund.

I hope these steps will help you to continue to provide invaluable support to our communities. If you have any issues or concerns then please do not hesitate to contact me or Genine Whitehorne genine.whitehorne@kingston.gov.uk (VCSE review lead).

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Liz Green". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'L' and 'G'.

Liz Green
Leader of the Council,
Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames