



**KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
SOCIAL COUNCIL**

A strong and thriving community for all

STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY

APRIL 2018 – MARCH 2021

About KCSC

Kensington and Chelsea Social Council is governed by a Board of Trustees. The responsibility for planning, service delivery and reporting is delegated to the Chief Executive and the staff team. The Chief Executive reports to the Board of Trustees. Kensington and Chelsea Social Council is the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea's recognised voluntary-sector 'infrastructure' organisation. It supports voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) through the provision of training, advice and information. It also facilitates voluntary and community participation in relevant forums, presenting the views of the sector at strategic meetings such as the Borough Voluntary Organisation Advisory Group and the local Health & Wellbeing Board.

Introduction

KCSC has been in existence since 2002, following a merger with Notting Hill CVS. Prior to this the Social Council has existed since the late 1960s, set up to be a voice of the community and enable social action following the race riots in 1968. Much of the community that know the history of the Social Council and for those that still understand the reason for its existence trust believe the Social Council to be an organisation that works for the local community. During 2017/18, we re-affirmed our value base and recognition that is our values which drives decisions in what we do and how we do it. KCSC should continue to be known for this as an essential aspect of its reputation with stakeholders.

KCSC reflects and should continue to provide stability within a turbulent environment. We have a responsibility to our stakeholders to rise to social and economic challenges through adapting to changes around us and provide stable services. KCSC has remained stable and steady even in difficult times. We work to ensure that internally staff feel valued and are challenged and externally our stakeholders feel confident that we will be there to provide the support required and to work collaboratively.

KCSC has years of experience and knowledge that is and should continue to be embedded in the way we work, this has enabled KCSC to be held in good esteem to deliver much needed services. We have grasped opportunities and taken risks, which we believe, will strengthen the role and reputation of the voluntary and community sector. Partners feel confident in working with KCSC and that we will deliver what we say we will deliver.

The Grenfell tragedy of June 14 2017 has changed the landscape for KCSC; we can no longer afford to feel comfortable in delivering services in a tried and tested way that has met need in the past. We need to be an organisation that is more flexible in the way we work with long-standing and new and emerging organisations within a more volatile environment. The demands on KCSC have increased with feedback from stakeholders calling on KCSC to strengthen its role as a central co-ordinator, greater source of intelligence and increasing its engagement role between the community and decision makers.

Our journey during 2017 has been a challenging one but it has enabled us to come to terms with where we believe the organisation best fits in terms of what it wants to do and what it wants to achieve.

What we stand for

Our Vision

- **A strong and thriving community for all**

Our Mission

- **Working to strengthen and promote local voluntary and community organisations**

Our Values

- **Social justice** - *our guiding principle*
- **Equality and diversity** - *services reach out to all*
- **Empowering communities** - *enabling the VCS*
- **Collaborative working** - *key to our success*
- **Respect and dignity** - *how we treat each other and our stakeholders*
- **Integrity** - *in the way we work*

Moving forward

During the previous three years KCSC has increased its income source in one key area. The area of health and wellbeing has become a mainstay of our core service. We run a number of services funded by West London Clinical Commissioning Group and this has led to KCSC's increasing reliance on this source of funding whilst finding it more and more difficult to receive funding from other Trusts and Foundations. Together both staff and trustees have recognised both the opportunities and the dangers of being in this position. It is therefore imperative that KCSC seeks to diversify its funding base over the next three years, placing us in a stronger position to deal with changes to the funding environment within the NHS.

In order to remain committed to our mission and values it is also important that it is our mission that drives our funding and not the other way around. In today's climate, it is easy to end up with mission drift as we chase funds or accept funding that takes us away from our core purpose. KCSC must remain first and foremost an advocate for the voluntary and community sector. We recognise post Grenfell that some of our work will lead us to work directly with residents and resident associations but even within this role we should to build a collaborative approach with the voluntary and community sector.

KCSC's core work as a CVS covers key areas which include providing advice and support on fundraising, governance, partnership working and voice and representation. This remains a staple part of our work and we will continue to deliver support services in these areas. We will also seek to deliver our capacity building work in a more personalised way, hand holding small and medium size organisations to ensure that they get the support needed through KCSC or through other agencies we bring in or refer them to.

The challenges we face

We are working in an ever-changing environment – difficult to predict the future from one year to the next. The impact of Brexit means that the economy is unstable which means for the vast majority of the voluntary sector the needs of residents become more and more challenging with increasing cost of living, volatile working environment and growing inequality plays its part on people's ability to navigate their daily lives. KCSC needs to be supporting voluntary organisations to build their resilience even in difficult times. Both large and small organisations have an important role to play and KCSC needs to support both to work together, support each other and to lead in their areas of expertise.

With the increasing ageing population and the stress on the NHS, self-care has risen in profile and with it the important role that the voluntary sector plays in supporting the wellbeing of residents. The challenges that face the NHS will continue to grow but KCSC can ensure that the voluntary sector is a key partner at the table with commissioners to work together to address some of these challenges. Our funding from the NHS has well overtaken all other funding we receive, and this has meant a strategic refocus on how we build our capacity to deliver contracts on behalf of the Clinical Commissioning Group in West London. This remains a challenge in ensuring that this work does not dictate our way of working that puts us in conflict with our vision and mission but rather seeks to bring the vision and mission to life.

The Grenfell Tower fire has catapulted the borough of Kensington and Chelsea into the limelight for all the wrong reasons. It has brought to the fore issues of local empowerment and influence, which for people in the north has felt the council have not given opportunities for this to happen. Since the fire, it is most certainly a more challenging environment that KCSC now operates in, with a mix of new and emerging organisations and bodies that want to deliver services for the residents mixed in with existing organisations that may feel under threat. There are also new bodies that we may engage with that we would not have previously done so such as residents associations or local constituted campaigning groups. We have a council where previous relationships are now strained and will need to be rebuilt but also a council whose is in crisis mode and may remain this way for sometime. We will also need to be open to researching and lobbying on local issues that affect our community and the voluntary sector. KCSC needs to

learn quickly to be responsive to this way of working whilst showing stability and security at a time when this is so badly needed.

In a fast changing environment with so much information coupled with the community's need to be kept up to date with all things Grenfell, KCSC is challenged with collecting and providing the intelligence to our stakeholders. Our organisation should be seen as a local resource to provide capacity building tools, local news and downloadable information.

Future Opportunities

We therefore recognise from the challenges we face the opportunities, which arise for KCSC. Our work to continue to provide dedicated support to particularly small and medium size organisations to ensure that they can be resilient organisations for the future. We need to strengthen our approach, but the outcome remains the same. Through partnerships and collaborations with larger organisations and with KCSC, we see this as a credible way of building the resilience of smaller organisations as well as supporting partnerships and consortiums between smaller organisations.

As we seek to adapt to changing environment we need leaders that understand what that change means for their organisation as well as the sector. We will want to continue to support local leaders to support and enhance organisations wish to adapt and to encourage those who may not see the need.

As WLCCG seeks to implement its new integrated care strategy, KCSC will want to ensure that the voice and the services of the local voluntary sector are an essential part of the implementation. This will potentially lead us into larger contracts with greater risks placed on the voluntary sector than ever before. However, KCSC has a role to play to ensure there is a level playing field for voluntary organisations to bid to be partners in the delivery of services as well as KCSC itself to be a lead agency in managing contracts in partnership with the voluntary sector. This work will require a lot of dedication, resources and skills to take us to the next stage and delivering over the next 3 years.

Whilst KCSC has already embarked on engagement work since the Grenfell fire, we will need to commit longer term to this area of work and the way it will inform our future support for the local sector. The engagement work may take us into new territory which has not been our 'business as usual' e.g. we may do work directly with local residents but we will ensure that whatever the direction of this work it will fit within our vision, mission and values.

Stakeholders have told us that they look to KCSC to keep them informed and up to date with information relevant to the sector. Coupled with fallout from the Grenfell tragedy, KCSC can develop itself as the go to organisation for information and intelligence. Our communications should be optimised and our IT infrastructure strengthened to support this. Below is a summary three key objectives and activities we will build into our wider organisation objectives following the Grenfell tower fire:



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Running focus groups , deciding on concrete issues for action
- Raising voice for influence not just for information
- Designing action
- Upskilling community developers within the VCS
- Where possible reflect community need which includes wider civil society groups e.g residents associations



COMMUNICATIONS & INTELLIGENCE

- Establish a Grenfell Network Forum
- Develop KCSC as trusted source of information post Grenfell and future of the local community - honest and critical analysis
- Improve communication tools e.g website, web portal, twitter
- Gatherer of intelligence to help inform cohesive/collaborative working e.g maintain oversight of funding coming into the borough
- Main source of communication on funded services being provided to residents linked to Grenfell



POLICY

- Establish grassroots input to inform KCSC's research /policy work
- Policy work focus on how to rebuild and harness community spirit
- Act as bridge between community and statutory sector

ORGANISATION DEVELOPMENT



Strategic Aims and outcomes

Looking at both the challenges and opportunities for KCSC, the following strategic aims and outcomes are proposed which will drive our work over the next 3 years.

Strengthen the capacity of small and medium size VCOs

- There is strong leadership and effective governance within the voluntary sector as well as improved skills and capabilities to forward plan and raise funding to maintain or grow needed services

Support VCOs to adapt to change

- VCOs have responded to environmental changes and have the potential to be sustainable for the next 3 years

Coordinate partnerships and networks

- Services meet the needs of residents based on strong and effective working relationships

Support leadership and voice

- Local policy decisions are influenced for positive change for the voluntary sector and the communities they serve

Be a trusted source of information

- All stakeholders have confidence in KCSC in what we say and how we say it

How we will deliver our Strategic Aims

Strengthen the capacity of small and medium size VCOs

- Generalist advice and information
- Tailored Group and one-to-one support

Support VCOs to adapt to change

- Specialist advice and information through group work and one to one support
- Contract readiness support
- Consortium and partnership development
- Policy awareness, development/ and research

Coordinate partnerships and networks

- Partnership development through advice and information as well as tailored support between small and/or BME organisations
- Partnership development and advice and information as well as tailored support between large and small organisations
- Facilitate collaboration between VCOs and other sector agencies/organisations collaborations/partnerships, networks and consortiums

Support leadership and voice

- Grenfell engagement and community empowerment and voice activities
- Policy awareness and development in response to changing environment
- Research and campaigning on local issues most relevant for the community/VCS
- VCS strategic representation
- Coaching, mentoring and training in influencing and leadership skills

Be a trusted source of information and resources

- VCS online directories
- Online news and updates
- Online capacity building resources

Current staffing structure

