

A MANIFESTO FOR THE VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH SECTOR IN THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF GREENWICH

Introduction

Royal Greenwich's voluntary, community and faith sector plays a vital role in improving people's quality of life in the borough, through its anti poverty work, ability to innovate and its links to communities that statutory agencies may find hard to reach.

The Royal Greenwich Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector

The sector provides a wide range of services that contribute to the well being of the borough including arts and heritage, sports, services for older people, a wide array of services for children and young people and services supporting victims of hate crime and domestic violence. There are approximately 800 organisations in the borough of which 49% are registered charities. Conservative estimates are that the sector brings in over £10million pounds a year of external investment, employs around 3000 people and supports over 5000 volunteering opportunities

Background

On May 22nd Royal Greenwich's voters will go to the polls to elect a new Council. The sector believes that it is important that whoever leads the Council after May 22nd builds on the good formal and informal relationships that already exist between the sector and the council.

What we are asking of Council Candidates

We are asking you to sign up to this manifesto and if elected abide by its principles when in office.

If you do wish to sign up to this manifesto, please email naomi.goldberg@gavs.biz

Our Commitment to the Public Sector

The sector is committed to working with all public bodies to:

- Address poverty and inequality in Royal Greenwich
- Contribute to the economic growth of the area including employment opportunities
- Promote active citizenship and community cohesion
- Deliver effective local services
- Support community involvement

This manifesto has been produced by Royal Greenwich's Voluntary Sector Leaders' Forum supported by Greenwich Action for Voluntary Service

COMMITMENTS WE ARE SEEKING

We are therefore seeking a commitment from the candidates from the mainstream political parties to:

- An enhanced role for the sector in **commissioning** services with better consultation about needs, priorities and service design; more accessible and transparent tendering processes; decisions about providers that value local knowledge and relationships; and monitoring that is proportionate to the funding provided.
- Building a stronger **partnership** with the voluntary, community and faith sector by ensuring that there is a strong role for the sector in all strategic partnerships and boards.
- Investment in **community premises** owned by the Council and used by local organisations including providing long leases to allow inward capital investment and dealing with the back log of capital works in premises. Buildings should be suitable and safe with more transferred to ownership by the community.
- Protect the right to **campaign** at a local level.
- Championing volunteering by promoting the development of high quality **volunteering** opportunities and effective brokerage arrangements
- Supporting the **infrastructure** of the local sector so that organisations can operate effectively and continue to bring funding and other support into the borough from a wide range of sources.
- Investment** in the sector not just through commissioning but also ensuring that a significant proportion of Community Infrastructure Levy is allocated to the sector and establishing a new small **grants** scheme so that local groups, particularly those serving the most disadvantaged communities, can access resources for their activities
- Recognising that voluntary organisations serving disadvantaged/vulnerable communities are often **best placed** to reflect the views of those communities and, with adequate resources, to consult with them

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