

Greater Manchester VCFSE Leadership Statement on Manchester Pride

The Greater Manchester voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) Leadership Group are saddened and shocked to learn of the collapse of Manchester Pride, which not only affects the LGBT+ community but also the wider VCFSE sector.

Pride has always been about protest. It is a celebration and a protest for the rights, equality, visibility and dignity of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, and other identities, and we are confident our sector and queer leaders in Greater Manchester will continue to push to ensure we are an advocate for the acceptance that Pride represents.

Our thoughts are with all those affected including the Manchester Pride staff team. As a VCFSE leadership group, we are looking at how we can support employees, including guaranteed interviews for those meeting relevant job criteria.

The VCFSE sector has been facing a growing and significant period of instability due to disinvestment, underfunding and more recent financial pressures (such as the increase to National Insurance costs in last year's Budget). [Our campaign](#) earlier this year sought to grow awareness of these issues facing our sector and garner support from our commissioners.

Additionally, organisations in Greater Manchester supporting those on the fringes of society are facing compounding financial pressures due to perceived controversy in terms of who they are providing support to. Growing anti-trans and non-binary rhetoric based in misinformation and hate is directly and adversely affecting our sector's ability to provide much needed services to often incredibly vulnerable people. Organisations supporting these people need support more now than ever.

We, as VCFSE Leaders, hope to provide assurance that the VCFSE sector in Greater Manchester is made up of dedicated and passionate people who are supporting our diverse communities at a time of growing intolerance around race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity and other identities.

The VCFSE Leadership group will not tolerate any weaponisation of this situation to hurt and undermine LGBTQ+ individuals, communities, and organisations.

We have always and will continue to stand against hate of all kinds.

“Manchester Pride is a huge part of the identity, reputation and success of our city, our city region and of the North West. It is a living testimony not only to the pride and love of our LGBTQ+ communities but also of the power of citizens and community-led action. We must not lose sight of either of those truths.” **Warren Escadale, Chair, GM VCFSE Leadership group.**

“I appreciate that the collapse of Manchester Pride is an extremely emotive situation for so many people for so many reasons. As the leader of a GM VCFSE organisation I know how difficult the environment is for the VCFSE sector; whilst as an LGBTQ+ person I

know how unsafe the world feels at the moment. However, I know how resilient my community is and how strong the VCFSE sector is in GM and I know we will rally together to find a way forward and will play my part to support that journey.” **Duncan Craig OBE, Chief Executive Officer, We Are Survivors.**

LGBT Foundation have offered staff and suppliers of Manchester Pride priority access to their counselling services. This can be accessed by enquiry via their helpline on 0845 3303 030, which is also open to anyone affected by the recent news.

If your organisation has any vacancies and is willing to offer guaranteed interviews to Manchester Pride employees, please get in touch with lucy.north@vsnw.org.uk and we will do our best to pass this information on to those affected.

Local VCFSE infrastructure organisations can point the members of staff who may be out of work in the direction of job vacancies in the sector:

Manchester: <https://manchestercommunitycentral.org/>

Bolton: <https://www.boltoncvcs.org.uk/>

Bury: <https://www.buryvcfa.org.uk/>

Oldham: <https://www.actiontogether.org.uk>

Rochdale: <https://www.actiontogether.org.uk/rochdale>

Salford: <http://www.salfordcvcs.co.uk/>

Stockport: <https://www.sector3sk.org/>

Tameside: <https://www.actiontogether.org.uk/tameside>

Trafford: <http://www.thrivetrafford.org.uk/>

Wigan: <https://wbcf.co.uk/>

GM Recruitment Hub: <https://gmworkforcehub.org.uk/recruitment-hub/>