

The Civil Society Group

News Release

Wednesday, 21 September 2022

For immediate release

Charities call on Chancellor Kwasi Kwarteng to act now on the cost-of-living crisis

The Civil Society Group (CSG) has written to the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, Kwasi Kwarteng MP, reacting to the Government's announcement about the energy price guarantee and urging strong action on the cost-of-living crisis.

Members of the Group, which contains over 80 membership and representative bodies from across the charity sector and civil society, welcomed the energy price guarantee for households and expressed their appreciation that the Government had specifically included charities in the new non-domestic energy price guarantee alongside business and the public sector. Both initiatives were announced by the new Prime Minister, Liz Truss MP early in September, with further details expected imminently.

However, the letter also argues that despite these initiatives, many people on low incomes, disabled people, and other marginalised groups will be unable to pay bills or afford basic necessities due to the ongoing effects of inflation on food and fuel, childcare costs, social care and housing. Further, individuals who are in work or would not normally consider themselves to be 'low-income' are increasingly finding themselves in financial difficulty.

The letter, signed by 42 leaders of organisations representing charities and civil society from across the UK, points out that charities form a sizeable part of the UK economy, employing close to a million people and comprising 3% of the UK workforce. The sector provides vital public services across the spectrum, mobilises millions of volunteers, supports economic growth and employment, and helps make communities stronger and neighbourhoods places where we are proud to belong. However, charities are not immune from current economic pressures which threaten the viability of key public services and even the solvency of some organisations, at the very time when demand for many of those services is rising rapidly.

In advance of the Chancellor's fiscal statement expected on Friday 23 September, the letter asks for early conversations with officials about the energy review and how charities can work with government to continue to support communities.

[ENDS]

Notes to editors

- For media enquiries please contact policy@dsc.org.uk / 07989 187 537
- For information about the membership of the Group and how to join, please contact collaboration@dsc.org.uk

About The Civil Society Group:

Our vision: Charities and other social change organisations are valued parts of our society and communities, providing effective, equitable support and opportunities for all. There is wide recognition that a strong civil society is a key part of creating stronger, more inclusive communities and a fairer, more prosperous economy and society.

Our purpose: Increasing collaboration between infrastructure, representative and member organisations across civil society to harnesses the collective strengths of the diverse charities and social enterprises in their networks. This supports the vital work of civil society to help build stronger, more inclusive communities and a fairer, more prosperous economy and society.

Our mission: We are making working together the norm, not just something that happens in times of crisis. We are identifying and collaborating on our shared priorities. We're creating the space for charity and volunteer leaders to voice ideas and opinions, provide support to each other, and develop shared approaches to the challenges we face.

Objectives:

The aims of The Civil Society Group are to:

- 1) use our collective power to engage and work with civil society ministers, governments, and stakeholders to ensure the best outcomes for communities;
- 2) coordinate the identification, promotion, and support of programmes of mutually beneficial change across civil society, and;
- 3) maintain a mechanism for relationships, cooperation and communication of ideas and information.