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- Connexions
- Hull City Council
- Hull Council for Youth Voluntary Services
- Hull CVS
- Hull Developing Our Communities
- Hull Federation of Community Organisations
- Hull University
- Humberside Fire Service

- Humberside Association Neighbourhood Watch Groups
- Humberside Police
- North Bank Forum
- The Learning Skills Council
- The Local Strategic Partnership
- West & East Hull Primary Care Trusts.

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Compact for Hull

A Compact between the Public Sector and the Voluntary and Community Sector in the City of Hull

The Compact

A compact is an agreement intended to provide a framework for developing effective relationships between the public and voluntary and community sectors in the city of Hull. Its objective is to create a level playing field and ensure that services are delivered in the best way possible and to the needs of local people.

As part of that process, this Compact sets out the key principles and undertakings which will underpin the relationship between the public and voluntary and community sectors in the city of Hull.

Status of the Compact

1. This Compact has been drawn up in partnership, following extensive consultation between the public and voluntary and community sectors in Hull. The Compact is deliberately not exhaustive, but recognises the diversity of the voluntary and community sector and its activities. It is both a general framework and an enabling mechanism that enhances the relationship between the public and voluntary and community sectors.
2. This Compact is an agreement about relations between the public and voluntary and community sectors. It is not a legally binding document, but its authority is derived from its endorsement by all parties during the process through which it was drawn up, and with their ongoing involvement in its review and development.

Shared vision

1. This Compact arises out of the national Compact prepared by the Government and the voluntary and community sector. In discussions held locally between representatives of the public and voluntary and community sectors, it was agreed that both sectors

have a number of complementary functions and shared values, and a Compact to further their understanding and develop their relationship would be highly desirable.

2. This Compact is an expression of the commitment of the public and voluntary and community sectors to work in partnership to increase the quality of life of the residents of Hull, ensure mutual respect and to work jointly to influence local and national policy where appropriate.
3. Voluntary and community activity is fundamental to the development of a democratic, socially inclusive society. Voluntary and community groups as independent, not-for-profit organisations bring distinctive value to the city of Hull and fulfil a role that is distinct from both the public and the private. Their work enables individuals to contribute to public life and to the development of their communities by engaging life experiences and developing vocational skills. In doing so they engage the skills, interests, beliefs and values of individuals and groups, which in turn increases active citizenship.
4. Voluntary and community organisations make a major contribution to the social, cultural, economic and political life of the nation. They act as providers of services and involve users in the design and delivery of them. They act as advocates for those who otherwise have no voice. In doing so they promote both equality and diversity. They help to alleviate poverty, improve the quality of life and promote social inclusion. Voluntary and community sector activity also makes an important direct economic contribution to the city and the region.
5. The scope of activities delivered by the voluntary and community sector is so wide that locally derived policies and services are bound to have an impact on the work of the sector. The compact is designed to make that impact positive.

Shared principles

The shared principles which underpin this Compact are that:

1. Voluntary activity is an essential component of democratic society.
2. An independent and diverse voluntary and community sector is fundamental to the wellbeing of society.
3. In the development and delivery of public policy and services, the public and voluntary and community sectors have distinct but complementary roles.
4. There is added value in working in partnership towards common aims and objectives. Meaningful consultation builds relationships, improves policy development and enhances the design and delivery of services and programmes.
5. The public and voluntary and community sectors have different forms of accountability and are answerable to a different range of stakeholders, but common to both is the need for integrity, objectivity, accountability, transparency, honesty and leadership.
6. Voluntary and community organisations are entitled to campaign and lobby within the law in order to advance their aims.
7. The public sector plays a significant role, among other things, as a funder of some voluntary and community organisations. Some voluntary and community organisations raise and attract significant funds for the benefit of the city of Hull. Funding can be an important element of the relationship between the public and voluntary and community sectors.
8. Both the public and voluntary and community sectors in the city of Hull acknowledge the importance of promoting equality of opportunity for all people, regardless of race, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation or religion.

Shared undertakings

Partner signatories to the Compact will:

1. Take account of codes of practice which will be established to complement this compact.
2. Mutually respect the basis on which confidential information is shared, when given access to it on that basis.
3. Actively participate in the sub-regional and regional networks and to ensure that information is shared.
4. Review the operation of this Compact and associated codes of practice annually.
5. Seek ways of engaging and building up the capacity of the black and minority ethnic voluntary and community organisations, so that they have the opportunity to participate fully.

Undertakings by the Public Sector

Independence

1. To recognise and support the independence of the voluntary and community sector, including its right-within the law - to campaign, to lobby, to comment and challenge public policy and operations, irrespective of any funding relationship that might exist, and its right to determine and manage its own affairs.

Funding

1. To develop, in consultation with the voluntary and community sector, a code of good practice to address principles of good funding to guide the public sector. This will promote:
 - a) the allocation of resources against clear, consistent and agreed criteria, including value for money;

- b) funding policies which take account of the objectives of voluntary and community organisations and their need to operate efficiently and effectively;
 - c) common, transparent arrangements for agreeing and evaluating objectives, performance indicators and their associated targets, facilitating prompt payment, reviewing financial support, consulting upon changes to the funding position, and informing voluntary and community organisations about future funding as early as possible, normally before the end of the current grant period;
 - d) the value of long-term, multi-year funding, where appropriate, to assist longer-term planning and stability;
 - e) the concept of full cost recovery and explore how this can be included in the longer-term planning and sustainability of the sector.
2. Recognise the importance of infrastructure to the voluntary and community sector and, where appropriate, support its development.

Policy development and consultation

1. To develop jointly with the voluntary and community sector a code of good practice covering consultation, policy appraisal and implementation. This will promote:
- a) the appraisal of new policies and procedures, particularly at the developmental stage, so as to identify as far as possible implications for the voluntary and community sector;
 - b) consultation with the sector, subject to considerations of urgency, sensitivity or confidentiality, on issues that are likely to affect it, particularly where the public sector is proposing new roles, tasks and responsibilities for the sector - for example, in the delivery of statutory services;

- c) timely consultation allowing reasonable timescales for response, taking into account the need of voluntary and community sector organisations to consult their users, beneficiaries and stakeholders;
- d) positive account being taken of the specific needs, interests and contributions of those parts of the voluntary and community sector which represent women, minority groups and socially excluded people, as well as recognition, by the public sector, of the role of voluntary and community organisations in representing the views of such groups and individuals whose voices otherwise might not be heard;
- e) respect for the confidentiality of information provided by the voluntary and community sector, within the constraints of the law and the proper performance of public duties, when given access to it on that basis.

Better Government

1. To promote effective working relationships, consistency of approach and good practice between the public sector and the voluntary and community sector, particularly where cross-departmental and cross-agency issues are concerned.
2. To adhere to the principles of open government and good regulation and ensuring that, wherever possible, decisions and findings are made public and explained.
3. To take account of codes of good practice which will be established to complement this Compact.
4. To review the operation of this Compact and associated codes of practice annually, jointly with the voluntary and community sector.
5. To actively participate in the sub-regional and regional networks and to ensure that information is fed back.

Undertakings by the voluntary and community sector

Funding and accountability

1. To maintain high standards of governance and conduct and meet reporting and accountability obligations to funders and users. Where applicable, to observe the accounting framework for charities.
2. To respect and be accountable to the law and, in the case of charities, observe the appropriate guidance from the Charity Commission.
3. To respect the public sector's statutory responsibilities to deliver services within financial and other regulatory constraints placed upon them by central government.
4. The voluntary and community sector will endeavour to work co-operatively to ensure funding is directed to those who are able to deliver the outcomes for the benefit of local people.
5. To develop and apply quality standards appropriate to the organisation.

Policy development and consultation

1. To ensure that users, volunteers, members and supporters are accurately informed and consulted about issues that affect them and to communicate the views put by them in any response to consultation exercises.
2. To mutually respect the confidentiality of information, when given access to it on that basis.

Good practice

1. Promote effective working relationships with other agencies and the voluntary and community sector and link into sub-regional and regional networks, where appropriate.

2. Involve users and members, wherever possible, in the development and management of activities and services.
3. Put in place policies for promoting best practice and equality of opportunity in activities, employment, involvement of volunteers and service provision.
4. Take account of good codes of practice which will be established to complement this Compact.
5. Review the operation of this Compact and associated codes of practice annually, jointly with the public sector.

Issues relating to black and minority ethnic organisations

1. Particular consideration needs to be given to the specific needs, interests and contribution of black and minority ethnic voluntary and community organisations.
2. Many black and minority ethnic voluntary and community organisations feel outside the traditional structures of the voluntary and community sector. This Compact provides a framework for ensuring that support and involvement are mainstreamed for both the public and voluntary and community sectors.
3. In particular, resources need to be targeted at black and minority ethnic infrastructure organisations whose aim is to increase the effectiveness of the black and minority ethnic organisations. Equally, steps will need to be taken by the public and voluntary and community sectors to ensure that black and minority ethnic organisations have the opportunity to be directly involved in partnerships, consultation and decision making. This will help these organisations to develop and realise their potential.

Disputes and Resolutions

The Compact seeks to clarify and enhance the relationship between the public sector and voluntary and community sector. It is recognised, however, that from time to time disagreements may arise. Initially, the parties involved should deal with the dispute and seek to resolve the matter. If it cannot be resolved, there will be an opportunity for independent mediation at a local level. If, in the unlikely event it cannot be resolved, then the matter will be referred to the Compact Mediation Scheme, which is funded by the Active Communities Unit.

Taking the Compact Forward

The Compact is a framework document and is the starting point, not the conclusion. The public sector and the voluntary and community sector are committed to working together to develop its application and effectiveness.

1. A joint Compact Action Plan for the next three years, which will be reviewed annually and will cover:
 - a) codes of good practice, which will be prepared by representatives from the public and voluntary and community sectors in areas of black and minority ethnic voluntary/community organisations, community groups, consultation and policy appraisal, funding and volunteering. Other good practice guides will be developed as appropriate.
 - b) the role and expectations of the steering group, working groups and Compact champions.
 - c) raising the profile of the Compact, through awareness and joint training events. Targeting socially excluded groups by removing the barriers that prevent engagement at a local level.

- d) devising mechanisms that ensure compliance with the Compact, i.e. dispute resolution and monitoring system. Support in place for the voluntary and community sector to fulfil their undertakings.
- e) devising an evaluation system for measuring how the Compact is working; for example, annual local compact survey or seminar.