



BRADFORD DISTRICT COMPACT

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1. Introduction

1.1 What is the Compact?

The Bradford District Compact (The Compact) is a local agreement between the public sector and the district's Voluntary and Community Sector. It was first established and approved in February 2010 and this is a renewed 2015 version taking account of the developments and changes within the public sector over the last five years.

This local Compact provides a set of guiding principles at the heart of what the public sector and the VCS are trying to achieve. It is based on the national Compact which outlines the relationship between the Government and the third sector and has been tailored to local Bradford District issues.

The Compact approach is important as it acknowledges the importance of the public sector and VCS and their distinct and complementary roles setting these in an agreed framework with the aim of promoting and enhancing successful relationships for mutual advantage and community gain.

The Compact provides a positive framework for joint working based on shared principles and commitments that will contribute to ongoing good practice. The Compact is jointly owned by the VCS and the public sector and is overseen by Bradford District Partnership (BDP). Signatories to the Compact are outlined in section 4.

1.2 The Compact aims

While there are many differences between the public sector and the VCS which must be respected there are many shared aims and principles which are captured in this Compact

The Compact aims are to achieve an increased understanding across, and better communication between the public sector and the VCS. This will give more effective and accountable relationships between the public sector and the VCS, more inclusive working practices, sharing good practice and a way to work through any problems that arise in the relationships between the public sector and the VCS

1.3 Compact Principles

The Compact outlines the relationship between the public sector and the VCS giving more effective joint working that strengthens communities and improve people's lives across all Bradford District.

The shared Compact principles show the Compact is not a set of rules or a bureaucratic burden but a way of working together that help deliver real outcomes and improvements for our population.

The shared Compact principles are:

- Respect: The public sector and the VCS are accountable in different ways but both need to act with transparency and integrity.
- Honesty: Strong partnerships can only be built and maintained through open and honest communication.

- **Independence:** The independence of the VCS is recognised in this Compact and supported. This includes the right within the law to campaign, to comment on and challenge public sector policy and to determine and manage its own affairs regardless of any funding or other relationship.
- **Diversity:** This Compact recognises that Bradford is a diverse district and welcomes the wealth of experience and knowledge that this brings.
- **Equality:** Equality is fundamental to this Compact and the public sector and the VCS will work together to achieve fairness of opportunity for everyone regardless of their background.
- **Citizen Empowerment:** Everyone should have the right to have a say in the decisions that affect their lives. This Compact aims to deliver change that is built around the people and communities across Bradford having a say in the decisions that affect them.
- **Volunteering:** This Compact values the skills, knowledge and energy generated when people give their time for the benefit of everyone in the district through volunteering and will seek to support this.

1.4 Sector development

A strong VCS makes an important contribution to a prosperous and cohesive society, both by offering services directly to communities and by engaging people and communities in identifying and addressing their own needs.

The compact acknowledges the importance of the VCS as partners in collaboration and their contribution to the provider landscape. It recognises and values the sector as a key contributor in the design and delivery of services to residents across the District. This requires, active involvement in preparing, agreeing, and delivering strategic priorities, working alongside the VCS to understand the market, as well as exploring different ways of provider service delivery e.g. through co-operation in alliances, consortia and being part of collaborative approaches to co produce solutions to service and budget challenges.

The Compact recognises the importance of ensuring that the VCS's own infrastructure support services are of good quality and accessible to VCS groups across the district. This includes the maintenance of information networks and supporting groups as accessing these is a vital aspect of sector development and assists the access to resources, training and support.

There is a need to ensure there is no conflict of interest with the Infrastructure Support Services (ISO) in this role and their role as providers.

The Compact will work together to enhance the skills and effectiveness of all VCS organisations ensuring that their staff and volunteers have access to appropriate training support including or those involved in voluntary governance.

2. The Compact Commitments

To achieve the Compact aims and to make the shared principles actually happen the public sector and the VCS agree to a set of commitments in their working relationship. These are explained in more detail in the following section.

2.1 Consultation and engagement

2.2 Allocation of resources

- 2.3 Equality and diversity
- 2.4 Active Citizens and Volunteers

2.1 Consultation and engagement

The governing principle for engaging people and for consultation is proportionality with the emphasis being on achieving real and meaningful engagement. Consultation is part of a wider programme of engagement with the commitment being for open and honest policy and decision making rather than just consulting at set points in the process.

Compact recognises the importance of transparency in decision making and will seek to increase engagement with interested parties to improve the quality of decision making and bringing to bear expertise and alternative perspectives. The public sector has acknowledged the importance of capturing the voice of the VCS through sector membership on strategic bodies such as the Bradford District Partnership Board, Strategic Delivery Partnerships, Health & Wellbeing Board and local Transformation Improvement Groups.

VCS organisations, including those with no budgets and those with no public funding, are often in a good position to understand what people in the community want and how their needs can best be met. The VCS can bring innovative ideas to designing policies and programmes built around communities and individuals to reflect their choices and address their needs and should be included. When done properly this will not affect competitive neutrality and this must be a guiding factor throughout.

<u>Public Sector Commitments</u>	<u>VCS Commitments</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To continue to consult and engage through the VCS Assembly • To use the principle of proportionality on the type and scale of consultation so that longer more detailed consultation is used where smaller more vulnerable organisations, communities or groups of people may be affected • To start engagement early in the process of policy development or when changing allocation of resources to make sure that views can genuinely be taken into account and can have a genuine opportunity to influence the final decisions • To recognise that modern communications technology gives broader more targeted and faster discussion and to use a range of techniques that can reach a broader audience • To respect the principles of transparency and accessibility making clear what the objectives are and making the consultation as easy to understand as possible • To ensure that timeframes for consultation are proportionate and realistic to allow time for a considered response. All consultations will be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote participation in the public sector consultations to members of the VCS Assembly and the wider Bradford VCS. • To accept the principle of proportionality and that consultations will be of different lengths according to the complexity of the topic and the expected audience • To involve service users, beneficiaries, members, volunteers and trustees when preparing responses to consultations and to clearly state who has been involved. • To be clear about whose views are being represented and what those views are. This will include explaining whether views have been gathered directly or whether they come from the organisations knowledge of the topic. • To give feedback to those involved in preparing responses on what the final representation to the consultation was.

<p>typically between 2 and 12 weeks depending on the complexity of the topics and the range of people who need to be consulted. The capacity of the groups being consulted will be taken into account and the length of time adjusted accordingly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To take account of the impact of holidays and use the Government guidance on extending consultations to mitigate the impact of holidays on consultations. • To explain the results of the consultation and publish the results within 12 weeks of the consultation being closed that including an indication of the number of responses received. 	
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2.2 Allocation of resources

When awarding funding the public sector must ensure that they comply with EU legislation, UK Public Contracts Regulations, other relevant legislation and their organisations internal constitution and rules.

The public sector recognises the valuable contribution that VCS organisations make within the District and will work to promote competition and ensure that funding is awarded in an open, transparent and fair way and avoid any practices that may restrict or distort competition.

This section includes commitments for the whole commissioning cycle including the application and bidding process, assessment of applications, delivering projects and services and de commissioning.

2.2.1 Application and bidding process

<u>Public Sector Commitments</u>	<u>VCS Commitments</u>
<p>Whilst complying with the legislation and rules described above:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that all application and bidding processes are proportionate and well managed, to encourage a diverse range of organisations to apply ensuring the most suitable organisation is awarded the contract or grant. • To ensure that all application and bidding processes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ are publicised widely ▪ are proportionate to the nature of the risk and the value of the contract / grant ▪ provide sufficient information to ensure that organisations can make informed decisions on whether they want to tender / apply • To plan new programmes and policies with a focus on outcomes at the centre of every 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To involve users, trustees, beneficiaries, members and volunteers when designing and reviewing programmes and services. • Before tendering for a contract or applying for grant funding to ensure that their organisation is able to meet the requirements of the specification / award criteria and be clear on their reasons for bidding and what they are aiming to achieve. • To submit clear, relevant, timely responses to all tender / grant award processes. • When forming partnerships or consortia to apply for funding to be clear who is accountable and how any risks will be managed.

<p>process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To advocate that public and private sector organisations allocating public resources will work within the Compact by making it a requirement within the terms and conditions of the contract or grant award , when sub contracting. • Where considered the best option by the public sector (and able to do so), to award multi year contracts 	
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2.2.2 Assessment of applications

<u>Public Sector Commitments</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To publish how the tenders / grant applications will be evaluated ensuring transparency by providing a clear rationale / award criteria for all decisions • Make decisions based on quality and value for money which will take into account the wider social value and community benefits. • To ensure all contract / grant award decisions are made as soon as possible before the planned start date • To provide constructive feedback to any requesting organisation who applied for the contract / grant. • To discuss any risks to the project and agree delivery terms before the agreement is signed. The public sector will ensure that the delivery terms and risks are proportionate to the nature and value of the opportunity.

2.2.3 Delivering projects and services

<u>Public Sector Commitments</u>	<u>VCS Commitments</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To specify performance and contract management arrangements within the contract terms and conditions / grant agreement. • To work to remove barriers that may prevent organisations from accessing funding. Ensure use of appropriate funding and financing models, • To aim to give a minimum of three months notice in writing when ending any grant award (except for breach) • To clearly state within the contract or grant terms and conditions the start and end dates of the funding. • To clearly state within the contract or terms and conditions the start and end dates of the funding. To provide a notice of decommissioning as necessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To demonstrate a clear understanding of all the costs associated with delivery of their project or programme of services • To apply Compact principles when sub contracting public sector funding • To have appropriate governance arrangements in place to ensure that everyone involved understands and works to the agreed terms and conditions • To agree monitoring and reporting arrangements before an agreement is signed and to ensure that systems are in place to achieve these. To be open and transparent in reporting • If the VCS organisation is unable to deliver the contract / grant to inform the public sector organisation as soon as possible and discuss and agree a timetable of actions to improve performance before making a

	<p>decision to end the financial relationship unless there is a strong reason not to. To consider any impact on beneficiaries, service users and volunteers before deciding to reduce or end funding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VCS to ensure they are aware of the contract/grant requirements and associated expiry dates and liaise with the relevant commissioning bodies accordingly.
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2.3. Equality and diversity

The Compact recognises and celebrates diversity, it respects and values people's differences and aims to encourage people to achieve their full potential and contribute fully to Bradford district. The Compact will promote equality and diversity ensuring that everyone in the district has an entitlement to equality of opportunity and to fulfil their potential free from prejudice and without discrimination or harassment.

The Compact recognises equality as ensuring people or groups of people are treated fairly and equally and no less favourably specific to their needs including the areas known in the Equality act 2010 as the protected characteristics. These are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation and, to a more limited extent, to the protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership in employment.

Public Sector and VCS shared Commitment

- To comply with all equalities legislation introducing specific conditions in funding agreements and appropriate monitoring measures in line with the Equality Act legislative requirements.
- To work in a way that is open, accessible, accountable and inclusive helping all partners promote the wellbeing and sustainability of Bradford District's communities.
- To identify groups that are in danger of being marginalised, excluded, or are currently under represented and put measures in place to promote their involvement.
- Ensure that when reviewing the development and implementation of policies, procedures and practices evidence is assessed to ensure that no groups are disadvantaged
- Promote fair employment practices in all aspects of employment including recruitment and training and development. To share training, resources and expertise on equality and diversity issues.
- To work together to develop equality monitoring for all those involved in delivering and accessing services

2.4 Active Citizens and Volunteers

The Compact will promote Active Citizens and all kinds of ways to contribute time in a voluntary way as the energy and commitment from people makes a huge contribution to wellbeing in the district.

Active citizens get involved in many different ways, as good neighbours, community

activists and campaigners though not necessarily in a formal volunteering role.

Volunteering is based on the notion of mutual benefit. Volunteers offer their contribution and skills for no financial reward, but should benefit in other ways in return including the reimbursement of any costs incurred. Volunteers have differing needs and abilities and should be provided with the necessary support, so that volunteering is open to all.

<u>Public Sector Commitments</u>	<u>VCS Commitments</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider the impacts of policy decisions on opportunities for volunteering and for being active citizens • To recognise the need for infrastructure support for volunteering, and consult with infrastructure organisations on decisions which are likely to affect volunteering • To recognise the value of the role of volunteers in the provision of services • To encourage workforce to engage with volunteering activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide a framework of good practice opportunities for people to volunteer, and for recruiting and managing volunteers in a way that will benefit all. • To support initiatives which provide accessible information about volunteering opportunities, and ensure that all volunteers have a clear understanding of what is involved • To work to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to volunteer if they want to identifying groups of people who are underrepresented and promoting their involvement by taking practical action in tackling barriers to volunteering • To give specific recognition to the work and worth of volunteers in a variety of ways and encourage the accreditation of skills required whilst volunteering, where appropriate.

3. Dispute resolution

Where problems arise between the public and voluntary sector organisations with regards to decision making and in terms of following the Compact approach, then organisations will follow their standard complaint procedures to resolve problems and concerns.

4. Signatories



Cllr David Green
Leader Bradford Council
Chair Bradford District Partnership Board



Paul Stephens
Chair, Bradford District Voluntary and Community Sector Assembly



Helen Hirst
Chief Officer of Bradford City and Bradford Districts CCGs
Clinical Commissioning Groups



Simon Atkin
Chief Superintendent
Bradford District
West Yorkshire Police