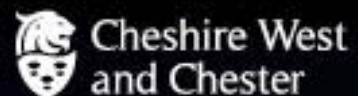


Cheshire West & Chester Council

A Compact for Cheshire West and Chester



Welcome to 'A Compact for Cheshire West and Chester'

This is an agreement between the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector and the Public Sector in Cheshire West and Chester to improve the ways in which we work together. It sets out a framework for better working relationships through shared principles, undertakings and actions.

The Third Sector Assembly endorses and supports the Compact and its aims of building a closer, clearer and stronger relationship between the third sector and the public sector. The Assembly hopes to see the Compact as a living document which is the fundamental basis for effective collaborative working and is committed to supporting and working within its principles and processes. We are satisfied that the partnership approach this document embodies is to achieve real improvements for all those living and working in Cheshire West and Chester.



Arthur Neil
Chair, Third Sector Assembly

Cheshire West & Chester Council is committed to working with our 3rd sector partners and recognises their unique ability to support and compliment our work and help us to improve local public services and quality of life for local people. We recognise the importance of the Compact as a way of providing a firm basis from which all partners can achieve more for our communities, including the most vulnerable and disadvantaged. There are many important issues which affect the residents of Cheshire West & Chester and by improving the way we work together we can make a real difference in providing local solutions. The more local organisations work together with local people, the more we can achieve together.



Councillor Mike Jones
Leader, Cheshire West & Chester Council

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Executive Summary:

A Compact for Cheshire West and Chester

What is the Compact? The Compact for Cheshire West and Chester is a framework which is designed to:-

- build upon relationships between all organisations within the public, voluntary, community and faith sectors for mutual advantage,
- lead to improved partnership working, and
- create sustainable, quality services for all communities.

The Compact sets out the key principles by which the voluntary, community and faith sectors and public bodies will work together. The public sector includes organisations such as Cheshire West & Chester Council, Western Cheshire Primary Care Trust, Cheshire Fire & Rescue service and Cheshire Constabulary. The VCFS refers to local Voluntary, Community and Faith organisations, charities, social enterprises, housing associations, cooperatives and mutual's whose profits are re-invested into their services or beneficiaries these are also referred to as the Third Sector.

There are four central principles that underpin compact working, known as PACT principles: (i) **Proportionality** (ii) **Accountability**, (iii) **Consistency** & (iv) **Transparency**

Central Government requires all public bodies to develop and deliver a local Compact with the Voluntary, Community and Faith (VCFS) sector, which sets out the ways in which both parties will work together. This recognises the importance of the VCFS sector in terms of service provision, value to the economy, positive impact on well-being and quality of life, and promotion of volunteering and good citizenship.

What will the Compact achieve for Cheshire West and Chester? The Compact is far more than a written agreement; it is a locally developed, negotiated and agreed process for partnership working. The Compact is based on the development and consultative work carried out in the former three districts in the Cheshire West and Chester area. It is a tried and tested way of working where all those organisations involved - including all their staff and volunteers - agree to change how they engage and work together, which will lead to improved decision making, more effective and cost efficient services and stronger community engagement and unity. As a result the Cheshire West and Chester Compact provides a firm foundation from which we can work collectively to achieve more for all of our communities, including the most vulnerable, elderly and disadvantaged residents, who frequently use and rely upon services provided by all partners.

What makes up our Compact framework? There are five codes within the compact based on good practice for improved relationships and compact compliance around specific topics:-

- Funding, Commissioning and Procurement
- Consultation and Policy Appraisal
- Volunteering
- Community Groups
- Black and Minority Ethnic Voluntary and Community Sector Groups

Each code of good practice contains both shared commitments and requirements specific to each sector involved and committed to the Compact, should embed within their own ways of working.

Though relations between both sectors are generally good, this Compact document also includes a procedure for resolving any compact breaches or disputes between or within the sectors. The Resolution Procedure covers this eventuality by providing a local mechanism to help the organisations involved to resolve such difficulties.

The Appendices to the Compact contains specific guidance on late payments and actions which presents the local VCFS sector with significant cash-flow and operational difficulties. A checklist on the management of volunteers has been developed locally and is included to provide guidance on best practice. Also included is a list of organisations committed to the Compact, a list of individuals to contact for further information, and a Glossary of terminology.

How has the Compact been developed?

The Compact has been developed using local and national good practice and replaces the 3 previous district Compacts. Consultation on the draft Compact for Cheshire West and Chester started in National Compact Week 2008 for 14 weeks. During this period a series of consultation events were held across the Cheshire West and Chester area in which organisations from VCFS and public sector took part. The main points of the consultation have informed the final document.

How will our Compact be delivered? To deliver and implement these commitments, an Action Plan will be produced to include specific actions and outcomes. Once the Compact is agreed, it will be adopted for use by all sectors.

The Compact has been developed through a partnership which included representatives from the VCFS and all public sector stakeholders. The Compact can only be successful if it has the commitment and buy in from all stakeholders and delivered through a partnership approach.

How will our Compact be kept up-to-date and relevant? Compact working and its implementation is an on-going process. As the Compact is a developing relationship then so is the Compact document, all partners have agreed to review and evaluate on a regular basis and to update its written codes and procedures annually. A Review Event will be held annually to enable all partners to decide any necessary changes, to put forward their needs and issues, identify progress and achievements against the agreed actions and set out future activities.

Introduction

What is a Compact?

The Compact is a national policy which has been developing since 1998. Compacts are locally negotiated written agreements that are jointly drawn up by the Voluntary, Community and Faith, Public sectors to improve the ways in which they work together.

All local authority areas in England are now required to have a Compact and public bodies are expected to meet standards of good practice as set out in Compact guidelines. There are currently discussions at a national level about giving the Compact statutory powers.

The Compact process

The Compact is far more than a formal agreement; it is a way of working where partners develop and build upon relationships to change how they behave, engage and work together.

The Compact process - from drafting the document to implementing agreements and reviewing progress – will be jointly owned by the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector and Public Sector with each partner expected to play a full part and show willingness to work together for mutual advantage.

To give the Compact the opportunity to make a difference to the communities in Cheshire West and Chester, each partner must embed its Compact working and commitment throughout their organisation from elected members and trustees to staff and volunteers.

10 Shared Compact Principles for working together better

- a. Compact partners are equal and all partners agree to promote and support opportunities for all communities regardless of economic status, age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.
- b. The Compact brings mutual responsibility and benefit to partners.
- c. Partners are committed to equality of opportunity and social inclusion.
- d. The active involvement of partners is crucial for a successful Compact; this includes implementing agreed Compact actions and working towards its continued development.

- e. Partners recognise the vital contribution of the voluntary action and respect the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector's independence and right to campaign within the law.
- f. Partners understand that Public Sector organisations have statutory responsibilities and duties.
- g. Partners respect and value the culture, diversity and difference of groups and organisations that make up the Voluntary, Community and Faith, Public and other sectors.
- h. Partners appreciate there are a range of relationships and levels of engagement between Voluntary, Community and Faith groups and Public bodies.
- i. Mutual respect and trust are fundamental to an effective local Compact.
- j. Innovation is key to an effective, strong local Compact.

4 Shared Compact Undertakings

- a. Partners agree to work together with integrity, honesty, fairness, objectivity, accountability, consistency and transparency.
- b. Partners will demonstrate their commitment to equality of opportunity and social inclusion in the ongoing development and implementation of the Compact.
- c. Partners will work together to implement policies that promote best practice and make effective use of resources
- d. Partners are committed to working together co-operatively and resolving disagreements in a constructive way.

Implementing, Monitoring and Reviewing the Compact

The **Compact** for Cheshire West and Chester is a working document that reflects key issues and current priorities and will be regularly reviewed. An outcome focused Compact Action Plan will be developed by a Joint Compact Steering Group and will identify key actions to ensure the Compact is implemented and to achieve the aspirations of the Compact. The key achievements will be shared in a report at the annual compact Review Event.

Accountability and Joint Ownership of the Compact

The development and implementation of the Compact Action Plan will be overseen by the Cheshire West and Chester Joint Compact Steering Group, which will be made up of Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector and Public Sector partners, whose remit will be:

- a. to oversee the implementation of agreements, further development and involvement of other partners and sectors in the Compact process
- b. to provide feed back regularly to partners and their wider constituencies

- c. to prepare an Annual Compact Report setting out actions, achievement of outcomes and next steps for development, implementation and awareness raising
- d. where appropriate, the Joint Compact Steering Group will support the resolution of disagreements and disputes

This Joint Compact Steering Group will ensure that its discussion of actions and progression of the Compact routinely includes consideration of the resource implications for partners. An open Annual Compact Review will also be held for Voluntary, Community, Faith and Public Sector organisations to update and review progress made and consider further priorities for action.

The Compact and Resolving Disputes

The Compact for Cheshire West and Chester is based upon collaborative working and support for the 10 principles and 4 undertakings, which includes working cooperatively with partners.

As far as possible disputes should be resolved cooperatively through discussion between the parties involved. Should this step not resolve a dispute, parties should refer to the complaints procedures of the respective organisation or seek the involvement of a mutually acceptable third party to mediate.

If after mediation an agreement cannot be reached, any party involved in the dispute may refer the matter in writing to the Joint Compact Steering Group. In this case, the process to resolve the dispute will be dealt with by a Resolution Panel comprising a minimum of 3 members drawn from or (in the case of a conflict of interest) appointed by the Group's VCFS and Statutory Sector representatives alongside an independent chair. A copy of the dispute resolution procedure can be found in the appendices.

Funding, Commissioning and Procurement Code

1. Summary

This Code of Good Practice covers all stages and types of funding relationships between voluntary and community organisations and public bodies. This includes in kind as well as financial support.

2. Introduction

There is a growing trend for public bodies to move from grants to contractual arrangements and to put in place a mixture of grant support & commissioning underpinned by a sound local VCFS infrastructure. There are two ways in which a VCFS organisation can receive funding either grants or contracts which are very different arrangements. A grant is financial support given to an organisation which provides a service or activity in line with the organisations aims and objectives. A contract is a payment for services with agreed targets and outcomes.

The Compact is as important for a contract, as it is for a grant, due to the obligations a contract places on both parties and their working relationship. Consultation and involvement of VCFS partners in identifying service needs and producing tender specifications, where this does not create unfair competition, is one such way of achieving this, as is using compact compliance as an evaluation criteria or setting it as a contractual requirement where possible.

The Funding, Commissioning and Procurement Code reflects partners' commitment to strong and effective local relationships, processes and procedures around funding and procurement. The code includes references to issues such as full cost recovery, service delivery standards, and commissioning processes such as consortium bidding.

3. Shared Principles

Funding is part of an ongoing relationship, which needs to be based on mutual respect and understanding. Partners need to communicate openly in their relationship and to be honest about their aims even where these will differ. As partners in this relationship, VCFS organisations and public bodies will collaborate to achieve better use of financial and other resources and more effective services. This will bring greater benefits to service users and local residents.

4. Public Bodies' Undertakings

- a. Give 12 weeks notice of any policy changes which may have an impact on funding to the VCFS.
- b. Evaluate and review existing funding programmes and include the VCFS within this process. This will include looking at the devolvement of funding processes within the VCFS.
- c. Consult and involve the VCFS in funding programmes, timetable, design, monitoring and assessment processes e.g. VCFS representation on funding panels.
- d. Recognise the value of and need for support for partnership or consortium bidding, and splitting tenders for services where appropriate.
- e. Make details of funding opportunities widely available to VCFS organisations through a range of accessible media sources; provide applicants/bidders with access to relevant information.
- f. Have single points of contact for VCFS organisations, whether or not currently funded, seeking information or advice and ensure that appropriate practical help is available.
- g. Ensure funding, commissioning and procurement processes including application/ bidding / tendering, monitoring and conditions are
 - proportionate e.g. what is being asked of applicants is realistic and reasonable
 - accessible in terms of format, language, timing, timescale etc including electronically
 - consistent, co-ordinated and, where appropriate, standardised
 - timely i.e. notice of funding programmes, receipt of funding on time to agreed timescales for payments and, where possible, paid in advance
 - understandable
- h. Where possible and appropriate, develop funding arrangements for a minimum of 3 years
- i. Discuss risks in entering a funding relationship at the start e.g. in delivering a particular service and have an enabling approach to the VCFS being funded to deliver services for example:

* Assessment procedures that recognise the value of local investment and the additional value brought by the VCFS.

- j. Ensure opportunities for tendering / commissioning available to the VCFS by building opportunities to demonstrate added benefit using models such as Social Return on Investment and Social Accounting
- k. Ensure that funding processes are open, fair and rational and that consideration is given to the needs of black and minority ethnic organisations/groups, small community groups and informal volunteer led organisations.
- l. Recognise that it is legitimate:
- to include relevant elements of full overhead costs within grant applications
 - for VCFS organisations to make a surplus within a contractual agreement
 - to have a policy on reserves in line with the Charity Commission's requirements and good practice guidelines
- m. Have clear and timely assessment procedures and provide where appropriate written feedback on why a funding application, bid or tender has been unsuccessful.
- n. Ensure that monitoring, where appropriate, involves the achievement of quantitative outcomes.
- o. Maximise opportunities to:
- provide "in kind" support e.g. premises, equipment
 - support the VCFS in accessing VAT and rate relief
 - maintain a small grants programme
 - devolve to the VCFS sector and join up small grants programmes
- p. Where possible publish a list of successful applicants, bids or tenders e.g. annual reports, and websites.
- q. Respect the sector's independence and its right to campaign, irrespective of any funding relationship that may exist.

5. VCFS's Undertakings

- a. Recognise that the receipt of public money carries responsibilities and the need to ensure sound and proportionate financial policies, procedures and controls e.g. reserves policy that meets compliance requirements.
- b. Have in place proportionate and effective monitoring arrangements.
- c. Provide written feedback to funders within the required time as to how the funding has been spent, where applicable and in line with the organisation's confidentiality policy.
- d. Follow good practice, proportionate to the size of organisation including:
 - effective governance and management processes
 - systems for planning and implementing work, monitoring and evaluating activities
 - quality standards
 - equal opportunities policy and procedures
 - volunteer and employment policies (if applicable)
 - training and development
 - mechanisms to ensure accountability and engagement with local stakeholders and residents
 - volunteer and user involvement in the development of service provision
- e. Have in place proportionate policies and procedures that meet good practice and, where necessary, legal requirements in areas such as Equality and Diversity, Disability Discrimination, Health and Safety, Data Protection, Child Protection and Adult Protection.
- f. Work collaboratively within and outside the sector and where appropriate share resources and bid jointly for funding.
- g. Agree terms of delivery with the funder at the outset of funding and be aware of the risks for which they are responsible.
- h. Prepare an exit strategy for the end of funding.
- i. Take full advantage of appropriate funding opportunities and cost reductions available such as rate relief, VAT relief, Gift Aid etc.
- j. Demonstrate effectiveness in the use of resources and take advantage of opportunities to engage in the development of policy, strategy and local initiatives

e.g. Local Area Agreements. This will enable the development of more responsive services and impact upon both funding and contractual arrangements.

- k. Work to improve the financial sustainability of the organisation.
- l. Be clear about which communities and / or organisations they represent when consulted about programme design for funding, commissioning or procurement.
- m. Acknowledge funders' support e.g. annual reports, publicity, information leaflets and reports.
- n. Recognise the link between the statutory sector and government priorities and the constraints placed on statutory sector funding.

NB. Appendix 2 contains a guidance note on late payments.

Consultation and Policy Appraisal Code

1. Summary

This Code of Good Practice sets out a framework to improve the way in which public bodies in Cheshire West and Chester consult and appraise their policies in relation to the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS). The Code sets out undertakings by public bodies and the VCFS which are intended to:

- a. Support voluntary and community organisations' contribution to the development and implementation of public bodies' policy.
- b. Ensure that public bodies take into account the impact of any proposals on the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector.

2. Introduction

For Voluntary, Community and Faith organisations, effective consultation presents an opportunity to bring their knowledge, experience and expertise to public sector policy on behalf of the people and interests they serve. This brings benefit to public bodies in terms of policies that are informed by the VCFS's understanding of local issues and need. Alongside public sector commitments for improvement, voluntary and community organisations are being asked to commit to having appropriate mechanisms to reflect the views of those they work with or represent.

This Code recognises that consultation is a vital part of the relationship between the two sectors. This does not remove the need for effective local involvement and participation which demonstrates effective joint working.

3. Effective Consultation

Both sectors' commitment to effective consultation reflects a shared recognition that it:

- a. Demonstrates public bodies' commitment to be open and accountable.
- b. Leads to more realistic and robust policy that better reflects people's needs and wishes.
- c. Helps to plan, prioritise and deliver better services.
- d. Can create a working partnership and mutual understanding with those consulted.
- e. Identifies problems quickly enabling matters to be put right before they escalate.

- f. Ensure that all communities, especially smaller and under represented groups, are heard and involved

4. Undertakings by Public Bodies

Public bodies are committed to establishing and maintaining best practice in effective consultation, policy appraisal and undertake to:

- a. Consult the sector on issues that are relevant to and likely to affect it, particularly where new roles and responsibilities are being proposed for the sector.
- b. Build consultation with the sector into relevant plans for policy development both on specific proposals, services, and more generally.
- c. Appraise new policies and procedures, particularly at the developmental stage, identifying as far as possible any implications for the sector.
- d. Consult early and, where possible, involve the sector at a sufficiently early stage of policy development (subject to considerations of urgency, sensitivity or confidentiality).
- e. Allow wherever possible 12 weeks (or if this is not possible a minimum of 8 weeks) for written consultations in order to accommodate the work cycles of management committees and to reach the local level of member organisations.
- f. Be sensitive on a case by case basis to any additional resource implications for the sector in disseminating consultations, and to use the most appropriate methods of consultation. Encourage responses from the sector, including timescales, making consultation materials available in accessible formats, and giving advance notice of, and publicising, consultations.
- g. Prepare consultation documents that are concise, clearly laid out and written in plain language that will be understood by the audience.
- h. Ensure that documents be made available in an accessible format which includes different languages, electronically, large print etc
- i. Take account of the specific needs, interests and contributions of those parts of the sector which represent community groups, minority groups and the socially excluded.
- j. Respect the confidentiality of information provided by the sector, within the constraints of the law and the proper performance of public duties, when given access to it on that basis.

- k. Analyse carefully the results of its consultation exercises and evaluate with a view to developing best practice.
- l. Always provide feedback on the results of consultation.

5. Undertakings by the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector

In responding to public sector consultations, voluntary and community organisations undertake to:

- a. Demonstrate how they represent their constituency, by stating who they are and what groups or causes they represent. Ensure they inform their constituents in forming their policies and positions, and in responding to the consultation itself.
- b. Utilise their local networks and infrastructure to encourage participation in public sector consultations and co-operating with each other through appropriate networks.
- c. Wherever possible to directly consult service users, volunteers, members and supporters; where this is not practical or appropriate, indicate that they are responding on the basis of their knowledge and experience of working with the groups concerned.
- d. Take account of the specific needs, interests and contributions of community groups, minority groups and the socially excluded.
- e. Ensure that the information they present to public bodies is accurate and that any research has been conducted in an objective, impartial and equitable manner.
- f. Respect confidentiality of public sector information, when given access to it.
- g. Have regard to the regulatory framework that governs their organisation/s when representing their constituents, for example, the Charity Commission guidance for charities on what they should and should not do in relation to their representational and campaigning work.
- h. Promote good practice among their members by issuing guidance on effective representation for voluntary and community organisations.
- i. Where appropriate, include consultation evaluation in their organisation's quality systems and be proactive in keeping informed about public sector partners' policy formation.
- j. Always give their constituency feedback on the outcome of consultation.

Volunteering Code

1. Summary

This Code sets out principles and commitments to support the continued development of volunteering opportunities within Cheshire West and Chester.

2. Introduction

Volunteering takes many forms with volunteers offering their time, skills and commitment in different settings through a wide range of activities within voluntary, community and public bodies. Volunteering brings benefit both to individuals and to the wider community.

Many voluntary and community groups are made up entirely of volunteers; some larger organisations may have both paid staff and volunteers. Volunteers operate at many different levels of responsibility; for example, volunteers in a charity may help to deliver a service whilst the organisation's voluntary trustees are legally responsible for managing the organisation's affairs. Public bodies often have volunteers helping them to deliver their services to the community in addition to paid staff.

The Hidden Power Report (2001) calculated that over 70,000 people in Cheshire volunteered for at least 3 hours per week. This is equivalent to more than 5,000 full-time staff.

3. Shared Principles

Partners are committed to the 4 principles of volunteering that apply to their own sectors and in collaborative working:

- a. Choice: volunteering must be the result of a free choice by the volunteer i.e. without compulsion or coercion.
- b. Diversity: volunteering must be open to everyone – equal opportunities principles and practice are essential to supporting diversity.
- c. Reciprocity: volunteers' time is unpaid but must receive some benefit e.g. experience, skills development, sense of achievement and inclusion in the life of the organisation.
- d. Recognition: volunteers' contribution to the organisation, the community and wider social objectives must be publicly recognised.

4. Promoting Volunteering

Partners agree to take positive action to promote the status, image and benefits of volunteering and community involvement. These include skills development, confidence building and social interaction and opportunities to gain experience to support career development. Positive action includes monitoring and publicising the benefits and wider impact that volunteers bring to an organisation and to the local community including social capital, skills development and economic contributions.

5. Promoting Equality and Diversity

Partners agree to promote and support opportunities for all communities regardless of economic status, age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation or transgender. This involves organisation's taking steps to ensure equality and diversity practice is encouraged and supported.

6. Investing in Volunteering

Partners recognise that although volunteers give their time freely, they need resources with which to work, and need their volunteering activities not to leave them out of pocket. This area is also emphasised in the Funding and Procurement Code. Partners recognise that short term funding creates problems for attracting, motivating and supporting individual volunteers. Poor experiences of volunteering do not just affect the individual volunteer and the organisation, but detract from the wider public perception of volunteering.

7. Barriers to Volunteering

Partners are committed to a consistent approach to policies, procedures and practice that makes it easier for people to get involved in volunteering. This includes:-

- ensuring that volunteers receive out of pocket expenses;
- take into account benefits rules and how they are applied in practice;
- countering poor images of volunteering in the media;
- addressing social isolation and difficulties in obtaining information on volunteering; and
- providing an environment for volunteering that is sensitive to different cultural or community needs e.g. disability.

Partners will also assess the impact of a potential new policy, procedure or practice on volunteering.

8. The Volunteering Infrastructure

Partners will work together to strengthen the volunteering infrastructure across Cheshire West and Chester and to promote the benefits of volunteering to local individuals, VCFS groups and public sector organisations, through volunteer recruitment and brokerage, volunteer management, and training and support for good practice in volunteering development and retention.

Across Cheshire West and Chester, voluntary sector infrastructure organisations such as CVS' will continue to work to put in place a co-ordinated framework of volunteering services based upon the quality standards set by Volunteering England. These volunteering services will improve the capacity of local organisations to support a more diverse range of volunteers, including volunteers from under represented groups, and will support the development of volunteering opportunities beyond Cheshire West and Chester which will encourage more volunteers from other cultures.

9. Partnerships, Public Bodies and Community Participation

Volunteers play a vital part in local partnerships and supporting public bodies e.g. as lay members. Good practice guidelines need to be developed and implemented to ensure fair practice in volunteer management. It should be explicit what level of commitment is required on a voluntary basis and expenses should be reimbursed in a timely manner.

Where an organisation has significant opportunities for volunteer involvement, whether public or VCFS, its board or decision-making body should have a volunteer development policy and ideally volunteer representation.

10. Public Sector Undertakings

Public bodies will:

- a. Consult the VCFS so that proposed regulation, guidance and policies take account of the ways they may affect volunteers and volunteering activities
- b. Work, where practicable, to avoid creating barriers to volunteering resulting from existing legislation, regulation and policies, practices and procedures
- c. Recognise:
 - it is legitimate for voluntary and community organisations to include the costs of enabling greater access to volunteering in relevant applications for funding
 - the contribution and added value of volunteers in VCFS funding applications
- d. Recognise that organisations that make up volunteering infrastructure are independent voluntary sector bodies
- e. Help ensure that specialist volunteering infrastructure can develop realistic sustainable long term funding
- f. Encourage the development of employer supported volunteering schemes and policies amongst public sector organisations.

11. Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector Undertakings

VCFS Organisations will:

- a. Promote volunteering opportunities including looking at how volunteers are recruited to ensure equal opportunities for all.
- b. Include reasonable costs for reducing barriers to volunteering in relevant funding bids.
- c. Ensure that they have both the time and resources to manage, support and train volunteers.
- d. Encourage the involvement of and consultation with volunteers to contribute towards decision-making and include representation and participation in steering groups.
- e. Identify a named person (or persons) within their organisations to be responsible for volunteer involvement and management.
- f. Ensure that risk assessments have been carried out for all volunteer roles.

NB. Appendix 3 contains a good practice checklist for involving and managing volunteers.

Community Groups Code

1. Summary

This Code of Good Practice aims to promote a better understanding of the community sector, within the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector as a whole. By doing so, it will have a positive impact on the way all sectors across Cheshire West and Chester including public bodies relate to local community groups through their policies and practices.

2. Introduction

Particular consideration needs to be given to acknowledging and valuing the distinct and diverse needs, interests and contribution of community groups as their perspectives and concerns may differ from those of other voluntary organisations.

Community groups offer a way for public bodies to reach into communities and listen to their views and concerns. They make a substantial contribution to community cohesion, health and regeneration and are vital in transforming neighbourhoods and communities. The community sector ranges from small informal community groups to large multi-purpose community organisations, and is made up of personal relationships, groups, networks, traditions and patterns of behaviour among people who share:

- Geographical communities: e.g. physical neighbourhoods, community associations, and residents groups.
- Communities of interest: e.g. religion or belief groups, cultural & recreational groups, self-help / support groups or campaigning groups.
- Communities of identity e.g. LGBT, disability, BME, and Gypsy and Traveller groups.

Community groups play a vital role in their communities and often:

- Provide a voice to communities and help strengthen local democracy.
- Encourage a balance between self interest and active citizenship.
- Have an awareness of the needs of their communities.
- Provide the first link in breaking isolation of people who are socially excluded.
- Strengthen the feeling of community and unity through common issues, community based services, events, and festivals.
- Provide opportunities for local people to develop self help and peer group / neighbourhood support

3. Shared Principles

An important principle for this Code of Good Practice is that there is an inclusive approach, which recognises and acknowledges the difference between the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector.

This code aims to:

- Provide a basis for mutual trust and acceptance of the roles and responsibilities of public bodies and community groups.
- Acknowledge the diversity and contribution of the community sector, and promote understanding of the contribution of community groups as an important local resource in the community.
- Enhance relationships between the community sector and the voluntary sector as well as public bodies.
- Build upon existing Compact Codes to set out the policies, consultative arrangements and support that the community sector needs so it can continue to play an effective role in building successful local communities.
- Enable public, voluntary and community sectors to work together more effectively to address the needs of socially excluded communities and develop responses to local identified needs and aspirations

4. Joint Undertakings

Public bodies and the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sectors across Cheshire West and Chester are committed to developing and maintaining best practice and mutual respect in their relationship. To act in line with the Compact all partners undertake to do the following:

- a. Develop a partnership approach to promote and share best practice and celebrate success in community engagement, partnership working and capacity building.
- b. Consider how local agencies can make it easier for the resources needed to develop and maintain a community sector infrastructure at all levels to become available.
- c. Ensure equality of access to information, support and resources
- d. Support open access to community buildings such as village halls and other facilities and ensure are available for use by community groups.
- f. Promote community development based on the following definition:

“Community development is about building active and sustainable communities based on social justice and mutual respect. It is about changing power structures to remove the barriers that prevent people from participating in the issues that affect their lives. It promotes the active involvement of people through sharing power, skills, knowledge and expertise.” Working Statement from Community Development Exchange.

5. Public Bodies Undertakings

Public bodies undertake to do the following:

- a. Acknowledge the community sector’s distinct needs and role, when developing policies or procedures or carrying out a regulatory role.
- b. Ensure when developing policies and delivering services that the importance of communities of people that share a common interest, identity or concern, as well as communities of geography and place are recognised.
- c. Work in partnership to create and maintain the conditions and support that help community groups to succeed.
- d. Ensure that procedures affecting community groups (e.g. outcomes, financial monitoring, consultation documents, demands on time) are in proportion to the size of the group, and the effects of new procedures are appropriately considered before they are finalised.
- e. Involve community groups with first-hand experience of particular problems when developing solutions and give the process appropriate resources.
- f. Acknowledge and value the work, knowledge and expertise of the community sector, including its important role in assisting local public bodies achieve their strategic aims and plans.
- g. Recognise the lobbying and campaigning role of these groups.
- h. Recognise the additional costs incurred by community groups working across cultures and communities e.g. time, information costs, translations etc. or of working with marginalised and excluded communities
- i. Take positive action to achieve fair treatment and equal access to public funding programmes and other in-kind resources for all community groups, including simplifying the delivery of grant schemes aimed at community groups and involve those groups in the administration and allocation of these grants and decision-making.

- j. Recognise the additional social benefits that community groups can provide when delivering services on behalf of public bodies.
- k. Recognise the value of and need for partnership or consortium bidding.
- l. Recognise the value of the contributions of volunteer time to projects, as equivalent to match funding.
- m. Recognise the importance of community ownership of assets, including land and property, as a basis for community enterprise and development at a local level.
- n. Encourage support for local voluntary sector infrastructure bodies and networks, which encompass an independent community sector.
- o. Recognise that resources are required to support capacity building, partnership working, community engagement, involvement and devolvement.
- p. Ensure that community needs, identified by communities themselves, are recognised and acknowledged.
- q. Ensure that public sector employees and representatives working with communities are adequately and effectively trained.
- r. Facilitate community groups whenever possible, to have access to relevant information and resources about their community.
- s. Recognise and acknowledge the unique contribution community groups make to Community Strategies, Local Strategic Partnerships, Local Area Agreements and Comprehensive Area Assessments.

6. Community Sector Undertakings

- a. Encourage quality partnership working, community involvement and representation.
- b. Be transparent and accountable to and for the group being represented.
- c. Where appropriate and where possible to feedback information and views to and from its members.
- d. Challenge all forms of discrimination, and work within an equal opportunities framework.

7. Voluntary Sector Undertakings

- a. Recognise and support the work of the community sector.
- b. Work in partnership with the community sector before responding to invitations for representation and partnership.
- c. Challenge timescales and mechanisms that prevent community groups getting involved.
- d. Recognise the access issues and practical support needs of community groups.
- e. Consult and actively involve community groups when evaluating and developing services.
- f. Encourage and support community members to undertake leadership roles in Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector networks and public sector partnerships.

Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Voluntary, Community and Faith Groups Code

1. Summary

This Code of Good Practice aims to continuously promote a better understanding of the BME voluntary and community sector, assist the development of relationships, improve collaboration between all partners across Cheshire West and Chester. By doing so, it will have a positive effect on the way that local public bodies and BME and faith voluntary and community sector groups inter-relate, work in partnership, develop policies, consult and engage and deliver services. Anticipating the imminent introduction of the Single Equality Bill, the Compact group will work to produce an Equality code which includes disability, religion and belief, sexual orientation and age, these groups are currently included in the Compact as communities of interest.

2. Introduction

Whilst there are not large numbers of visible minority communities within Cheshire West and Chester, the demographic make-up is extremely diverse with people from many different ethnic backgrounds resident, working, studying or visiting. The last Census shows some but not all of the BME communities, and does not exclude, the significant number of Gypsies and Irish travellers that are resident in the area and the growing numbers of migrant workers, primarily from Poland and other Eastern European countries. Some of these communities experience language and cultural barriers that may lead to social isolation and impact on engagement.

The BME voluntary and community sector works to tackle disadvantage, discrimination, exclusion and to empower communities by creating equality of access to services and increased economic well-being and quality of life. It advocates for community and BME individual need and the sector generally, by providing:

- Support
- Advice
- Assisted signposting
- Information
- Active involvement of people who are socially excluded people and / or hard to reach.
- Seek funding and contracts to secure the long term sustainability to maintain the work of the BME VCS sector

It is recognised however, despite their work with a diverse range of groups and communities, that some BME voluntary and community organisations may continue to be excluded from the traditional structures of the voluntary and community sector.

It is vital that there is a two way process and mechanisms for engagement between the local public bodies and BME voluntary and community sector to ensure a positive relationship that builds mutual trust and confidence. This code seeks to ensure that action is taken by all concerned to ensure that all the organisations and groups in the VCFS sector have an equal opportunity to be directly involved in partnerships, consultation and decision making with public bodies.

The promotion of equality and good relations provides a positive framework within which to take Compact working forward, seeking equality for all ethnic groups and the development of cohesive and inclusive communities.

3. Objectives

This code aims to:

- Promote and value the diversity and distinctive social, cultural and economic contribution of the BME voluntary and community sector.
- Promote a better understanding of the aims and objectives of BME voluntary and community groups across Cheshire West and Chester.
- Provide a basis for mutual trust and acceptance of the roles and responsibilities of Public bodies and the BME voluntary and community sector.
- Promote diversity by working in partnership to tackle social exclusion and promote a cohesive society.
- Seek to address local BME communities' needs around social inclusion, equality of opportunity, and access to services.
- Support positive work with under-represented communities to enable participation in local democratic processes and decision-making.
- Build strong local communities through the development of policies, consultation arrangements and support.

4. Shared Principles

Public bodies, the BME voluntary and community sector operating within Cheshire West and Chester and VCFS sector are committed to developing and maintaining best practice in their work to achieve equality and diversity for all, community engagement and form mutual respect in their relations with each other.

All undertake to:-

- a. Develop a partnership approach to inform and carry forward public bodies' strategy for achieving race equality, including promoting and sharing best practice and celebrating success.
- b. Work together in partnership to identify gaps in service provision and to assess and respond to the needs of BME communities, using an action planning approach
- c. Work together in partnership with other agencies to promote joint working initiatives that improve the policy and implementation outcomes for BME communities at national level particularly those programmes aimed at community regeneration and a more inclusive and cohesive society.
- d. Encourage, develop and support volunteering by and within BME communities in line with the Compact Codes of Good Practice on Volunteering and Community Groups.
- e. Support and encourage provision of accessible and usable information for those with English as a second language including interpretation and translation services.

5. Public Bodies Undertakings

- a. Value the work, knowledge, expertise and diversity of the BME voluntary and community sector, including its important role in supporting marginalised communities and helping public bodies to provide services to these and all communities.
- b. Recognise and support the independence of the BME sector and its right within law to challenge institutions, policy and practice, irrespective of any funding relationships that might exist, and to determine and manage its own affairs.
- c. Operate effective and transparent equal opportunities monitoring and evaluation systems that ensure BME voluntary and community organisations are treated fairly and with respect in all their interactions with public bodies.
- d. Review and monitor the equality impact of policies, procedures and services on BME communities to ensure equality of opportunity and promote customer

choice, including active involvement of BME groups and the VCFS sector generally in the Impact Assessment process at all stages of policy development, consultation and service delivery.

- e. Ensure public sector and partnership equality strategies and policies are effective and regularly reviewed and revised to ensure continuous improvement and responsiveness.
- f. Ensure that BME voluntary and community organisations have fair and equal access to funding programmes and commissioning opportunities, particularly those that impact significantly on BME communities.
- g. Provide support to BME organisations to develop capacity, prepare and deliver projects as part of funding and commissioning strategies.
- h. Ensure equality of access to culturally sensitive public services and ensure that BME groups are actively involved in service planning, delivering and shaping services, performance target setting and scrutiny processes.
- i. Recognise that BME voluntary and community sector organisations need to be sufficiently resourced to develop and deliver services, advocate for under-represented communities and individuals and actively engage in partnership working. Resources should include capacity building, access to training, support or contributions in kind, payment for supporting the public sector and other VCFS organisations with the delivery of strategies, services, performance indicators and outcomes.
- j. Actively engage and consult BME voluntary and community organisations (along with other organisations), in the development of community strategies, plans and partnerships.
- k. Support and encourage provision of accessible and usable information for those with English as a second language including interpretation and translation services.

6. BME Voluntary and Community Sector Undertakings

The BME voluntary and community sector recognises that active involvement in the processes and partnership working with public bodies within Cheshire West and Chester carries with it responsibilities. In order to meet these responsibilities this sector undertakes to:

- a. Play a full and active part within the wider voluntary and community sector including partnership and collaborative working and taking advantage of training, capacity building and infrastructure support opportunities

- b. Aim to establish a responsive structure with representatives that are accountable to local BME communities and which will enable effective communication and consultation in order to provide BME perspectives on key local, regional and national issues.
- c. Provide an effective voice for BME community concerns and any other issues to local public bodies, partnerships, and the wider community.
- d. Encourage consortium and partnership working among diverse ethnic, cultural and faith groups wherever applicable within the sector, sharing professional leadership, expertise and other practical skills.
- e. Encourage open and approachable organisations providing opportunities for voluntary and community action by a diverse range of individuals.
- f. Support and encourage provision of accessible and usable information for those with English as a second language including interpretation and translation services.

7. Voluntary Sector Undertakings

The voluntary sector, and in particular voluntary and community sector infrastructure bodies, undertakes to:

- a. Raise awareness about the need for recognition, partnership working, networking and engagement with BME voluntary and community sector groups
- b. Support the BME voluntary and community sector and its need for investment in infrastructure and mainstream support and resources to develop services for marginalised communities
- c. Challenge timescales, process and mechanisms that prevent BME voluntary and community groups getting involved and taking up leadership roles in VCFS networks and public sector partnerships.
- d. Support and encourage the provision of accessible and usable information for those with English as a second language including interpretation and translation services.

Resolution Procedure

1. Introduction

This document explains how organisations can raise concerns when they believe that a party has breached the agreed commitments and principles set out in the Compact agreement or any of its codes, or not acted in the spirit of Compact working.

The Procedure is intended to add positively to Cheshire West and Chester's Compact framework, and may cover a range of issues e.g. funding, consultation, work on partnership bodies, but should only be used when existing contact between parties has not resolved the issue. A *Resolution Procedure Form* is contained within this appendix for use at each stage of the procedure.

2. Scope

One of the core principles of this procedure is that whilst a dispute is in process partners should maintain a 'status quo' in their relationship e.g. the continuation of services, payments, joint working. The initiating of the Procedure will thereby avoid adding additional pressure to parties involved in the dispute. It is also required that whilst the Procedure is in operation, the parties will not have recourse to litigation. The Procedure may be between two or more parties e.g:

- between a public body and voluntary/community organisation
- between two voluntary/community groups
- between two public bodies

The Procedure does not cover disputes within organisations or consortia and cannot supersede specific legal and contractual arrangements made between parties, which will be covered by appropriate legal frameworks.

There also may be circumstances where the first course of action may be to use an organisation's complaints procedure e.g. in relation to the conduct of a specific individual.

The Procedure is voluntary and parties are expected to proceed in an open, transparent, and reasonable manner with respect for the confidentiality of those involved and the issues under consideration.

3. Three Stages of the Compact Resolution Procedure

Stage One: Direct Communication between Parties

In the first instance, the dispute must be set out in writing and passed to the other party. Parties should seek to resolve the issue between themselves through direct communication within 2 weeks. Both parties should agree to resolve the matter in a way that is mutually acceptable e.g. face-to-face, telephone. It is expected that representatives of each party will be authorised to act on behalf of their respective organisations. Parties must agree to respect each other's right to raise concerns, give time to hear them, and respond positively. When disputes are resolved at this stage the parties will agree a joint statement on the resolution, including a statement on any wider issues identified in the dispute. The statement will be passed to the Joint Compact Steering Group to enable learning points to be shared, whilst respecting the confidentiality of those involved.

Stage Two: Third Party Mediation

If agreement cannot be reached by direct communication within 2 weeks, parties may approach the Joint Compact Steering Group to seek mediation from a third party, while reserving the right at any time to take the dispute directly to Stage Three. An independent mediator acceptable to both partners will be appointed for the resolution, within one calendar month of the commencement of Stage Two. If this is successful, the parties to the dispute will agree a statement outlining the nature of the dispute and its resolution, prepared by the mediator, including any wider issues identified in the dispute.

Mediators may be drawn from a range of organisations with an emphasis given to the skills, experience and independence of the individual appointed. If the two parties cannot agree a mediator, the Joint Compact Steering Group may be asked to assist in identifying an individual, acceptable to both parties, e.g. a representative of a voluntary, community, statutory or private body. Mediators will be appointed to facilitate a resolution with due reference to avoiding conflicts of interest.

Stage Three: Joint Compact Steering Group

As a last resort, if agreement cannot be reached during Stages 1 and 2, any party involved in the dispute may refer the matter in writing to the Joint Compact Steering Group. In this case, the process to resolve the dispute will be dealt with by a Resolution Panel comprising a minimum of 3 members drawn from or (in the case of a conflict of interest) appointed by the Group's VCFS and Public bodies representatives alongside an independent chair. The Panel will operate in a fair, rational and impartial manner and its composition will reflect due reference to any potential conflicts of interest.

The Resolution Panel will meet to carry out the following tasks:

- a) identify the key issues of the dispute between the partners
- b) consider the dispute and make recommendations
- c) Write to both parties in the dispute within 6 weeks outlining the Panel's conclusions and recommendations on ways to resolve the problem.

Where a dispute has been resolved to both parties satisfaction, a joint statement of the resolution will be passed to the Joint Compact Steering Group, including comments on wider issues identified. In the event of unsatisfactory resolution, e.g. the Panel's recommendations not being accepted by both parties, there are a range of external bodies that either or both parties may refer to including the Compact Commissioner, Local Government, Health or Parliamentary Ombudsmen and or the Charity Commission.

Learning points from disputes can play a vital part in helping to avoid future difficulties between partners. Where appropriate, the Joint Compact Steering Group will report on broad learning points and any wider issues identified without reference to individually named partners. These will be fed back into the ongoing Compact process including the Annual Compact Review. The Review will involve independent scrutiny of the Resolution Procedure over the previous 12 months.

Resolution Procedure: The Three Stages

Stage One: Direct Communication

- i. Dispute set out in writing and passed to other party
- ii. Resolved within 2 weeks
- iii. if resolved parties agree a joint statement on the resolution

If not resolved



Stage Two: Third Party Mediation

- i. parties agree to mediation by third party
- ii. dispute resolved within one calendar month
- iii. if resolved parties agree a joint statement prepared by the mediator

If not resolved



Stage Three: Joint Compact Steering Group

- i. either party refers matter in writing to Compact Review Group
- ii. dealt with by Resolution Panel drawn from/appointed by Group
- iii. Panel draws conclusions with recommendations within 6 weeks

If not resolved



- i. either or both parties takes dispute to external body

CONFIDENTIAL

'A Compact for Cheshire West and Chester' Compact Resolution Form
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This form should be completed with reference to the Compact Resolution Procedure and the 'Compact for Cheshire West and Chester'.

Initiation of Stage 1 of the Procedure

Name of organisation _____

Name of authorised representative _____

Signed _____ Date _____

Name of partner organisation to whom this form is being passed

Passed by hand/ post/ fax/ email on [Date]

Summary of issue for which resolution is being sought (use continuation sheet/s if necessary)

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Under Stage 1 of the Resolution Procedure direct communication will have taken place within 2 weeks of this form being passed to the partner organisation. It is also expected that an outcome, including [where appropriate] a written statement of the resolution of the matter, which should be passed - in confidence - to the Joint Compact Steering Group, c/o Chester Voluntary Action, 53 Northgate Street, Chester, CH1 2HQ. Actions for Stages 2 and 3 are set out in the full Resolution Procedure document.

Late Payments Guidance Note

1. Why is Late Payments an important subject?

Most VCFS organisations have limited income and will face major cash flow problems and pressure on their financial viability if a grant or contract payment is delayed. Typically a payment will be for an organisation's running costs or a salary that will need to be paid regardless of whether the public body has made its payment.

Late payments may also place VCFS organisations under pressure in terms of meeting legal requirements e.g. the need to issue staff redundancy notices where payment has not been received in sufficient time to guarantee that salary costs can be met.

2. What is this Guidance Note about?

This note is intended to provide guidance about late payments from public bodies to voluntary and community organisations whether through grants or contracts, and has been prepared to provide general guidance only.

It does not constitute legal advice and reliance ought not to be placed on it. The interpretation of the law of late payments is ultimately a matter for the courts and users should take their own advice where appropriate. No liability can be accepted by the authors.

3. When problems arise

The Compact framework requires the two sectors to show mutual respect and understanding in their dealings and to honour the commitments within the various Compact documents. Should a VCFS organisation be in the position of not having received a payment on time it is assumed, in the spirit of the Compact that it would take it up directly with the public body in the first instance. It is also assumed, again in the spirit of the Compact, that the public body would only have delayed payment in unavoidable circumstances and does all in its power to resolve the situation swiftly.

VCFS organisations that are incorporated i.e. are companies limited by guarantee, have the additional option of seeking redress through the Late Payments Act. This entitles an organisation which has been awaiting payment for more than 30 days at additional interest of payment base rate plus 8% to be added to the amount for every subsequent day that payment is delayed. Such an approach may ultimately involve a claim at the Small Claims Court or County Court and is therefore not a step that either party would want to be taken unless other steps had not resolved the matter.

VCFS organisations that are not incorporated may also, if all other steps fail might also find that this route may offer an additional option. However, it is a step not to be taken lightly and an organisation's management committee might wish first to seek legal advice to minimise risk and identify potential liabilities.

VCFS organisations may also have recourse to the Compact Resolution Procedure where it is felt that all reasonable steps have already been taken to resolve a situation.

The Late Payment Act cannot apply where there is a contractual agreement between a VCFS and Public body which sets out a remedy for late payments.

4. Can VCFS Groups do anything to avoid Late Payments

The process of negotiating a grant or contract should include explicit reference to payment terms including any remedies for late payments.

A VCFS group in receipt of a grant may be required to submit a monitoring form two or four times over the course of the year and to submit an annual form in the case of funding which runs for more than one year. It is important that these forms are submitted on time. A late return may delay the payment of the next instalment of the grant. If filling in the form presents difficulties assistance is available from the funding body, Chester Voluntary Action; EPNVCO or Voluntary Action Vale Royal.

VCFS groups that issue invoices to trigger payment for services provided should ensure that the invoice is dated and specifies the organisation's payment terms.

5. What is expected of Public Bodies?

Public bodies should make payments in accordance with the timetable set out in the grant or contract which should reflect commitments in the Funding and Procurement Code. What might appear to be small amount of funding for a public body can often be crucial for a VCFS body and a late payment can put it under considerable financial pressure.

If the public body has itself had a delay in receiving funding e.g. from central government, it should keep the VCFS organisation fully advised of the situation and make every effort to resolve the matter as soon as possible. Public bodies may also be in a position to use discretion and make payments whilst still awaiting receipt of their own funding.

Further information On Late Payments available from The Better Payment Practice Campaign www.payontime.co.uk

A Good Practice Checklist for the Management of Volunteers

1. Before recruiting volunteers, be clear about the role a volunteer will be asked to play in the organisation.
2. Plan your recruitment methods in line with good practice and safeguarding policies and decide on a selection procedure that is suitable for your organisation and encourages a diversity of volunteers.
3. Provide volunteers with an identifiable contact(s) in the organisation and a clear role description which identifies the needs of the organisation, including the level of commitment needed from volunteers.
4. Provide an initial induction and training programme.
5. Provide the volunteer with appropriate line management and processes that enable both the volunteer and organisation to review progress and deal with any difficulties that may arise.
6. Add volunteers to organisational charts, and encourage volunteers to participate in the organisation's wider decision-making process.
7. Monitor and acknowledge the contribution that volunteers make to the organisation, to the wider public, to funders and to other volunteers.
8. Ask the volunteer what they seek from their placement and share with them what you want. Be clear about benefits to the volunteer e.g. skills development. Remember that any opportunity should be by mutual consent.
9. Always offer to reimburse out-of-pocket expenses. These normally include travel, parking, refreshments etc. Where an opportunity placement is away from home, this might also include accommodation and subsistence.

10. Ensure that Health and Safety standards are in place and applied equally to all employees and volunteers e.g. emergency contact details are kept for volunteers. Insurance policies should be extended to cover volunteers.
11. Provide opportunities for volunteers to acquire or develop new or existing skills, and assist volunteers who want to gain accreditation towards existing qualifications.
12. Volunteers should not be recruited to fill the place of paid staff. This could be seen as exploitation of the volunteer and the displacement of a paid member of staff's role.
13. Ensure that the work and contribution of the volunteer adds quality and value to the organisation's aims and objectives.
14. Ensure that Equal Opportunities and /or diversity policies are in place and applied equally to volunteers. Examine the organisation's ways of working for anything that may pose a barrier for some members.
15. Encourage and promote a diverse range of employees at all levels and support opportunities for all communities regardless of economic status, age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation or transgender. This will help volunteers of different ethnic groups, age, disabilities etc to feel welcome.
16. In order to attract volunteers from groups of people that the organisation has previously failed to reach, it may be helpful to approach those groups of people directly to establish what would make volunteering with the organisation more appealing to them.

APPENDIX 4

**Voluntary, Community, Faith Sector and Public Bodies signed up to
‘A COMPACT for the Cheshire West and Chester’ as at 1st April 2009
[Total 202]**

VCFS Sector Signatories

Action for Children (Lache)	Cheshire Support Group
Adoption Matters	Chester Aid to the Homeless
Afasic Local	Chester and District Committee for Deaf People
Age Concern Cheshire	Chester and District Mind
Age Concern Tarporley	Chester and Ellesmere Port Independent Advocacy
Alcoholics Anonymous	Chester Asian Council
Allostock Village Hall	Chester Cathedral
Alternative Futures	West Cheshire Citizens Advice Bureau
Alzheimer's Society	Chester Diabetes UK
Antrobus Friendship Club	Chester Esperanto Group
Arthritis Care (Northwich)	Chester and Clwyd Vegetarians & Vegans
Arthritis Care (Winsford)	Chester Bird Sanctuary
Ash-worth Time Bank	Chester Childbirth Appeal
Blacon Community Trust	Chester Civic Trust
Blacon Disability Group	Chester Performs
Breast Cancer Care	Cheshire West Credit Union
Bridge Foyer (Arena Housing Assoc)	Chester Crossroads
British Heart Foundation	Chester Heart Support Group
British Red Cross Society	Chester Humanists
British Red Cross (Northwich)	Chester Link
British Red Cross (Winsford)	Chester Lodgings and Support Providers [CLASP]
British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV)	Chester Mencap
CADSART	Chester Music Society
Canal Basin Community Forum	Chester Quaker Meeting
Cancer Research Campaign	Chester Sexual Violence Support Group
Care and Repair	Chester Society for Landscape History
Castle Park Arts Centre	Chester Summer Music Festival
Central Cheshire Mental Health	Chester Swimming Association
CHAPTER Chester Area Project for Training Employment & Retraining [West Cheshire] Ltd	Chester Terrapins Swimming Club
Cheeky Monkees	Chester Voluntary Action [inc Volunteer Centre Chester]
Cheshire Carer's Centre	Chester Women's Aid
Cheshire Equality Alliance –LGBTQ [inc Chester Icebreakers]	Chester Women's Hostel Association
Cheshire Community Action	Children's Adventure Farm Trust
Cheshire Community Voice	Christian Aid (Frodsham)
Cheshire Dance	Church of Christ, Saltney
Cheshire Deafness Support	City of Chester Swimming Club
Cheshire Development Education Centre	Community Partners Cheshire
Cheshire Domestic Abuse Partnership	Connect (Wincap)
Cheshire Dyslexia Association	Cystic Fibrosis Trust – Mid Cheshire
Cheshire, Halton and Warrington Race and Equality Centre	DIAL House (Chester)
Cheshire Landscape Trust	DICE
Cheshire Neighbours Credit Union	Eat Inns Friendship Group

Cheshire Pride	
<p>Ellesmere Port & Neston Association of Voluntary Community Organisations Ellesmere Port Live at Home Scheme Elizabeth Finn Care Elton Gardeners' Association Friends of Caldly Nature Park Friends of Edgar's Field Park Friends of Mulberry Friends of Stanley Palace Friends of Westminster Park Furniture Finders of Winsford Girl Guiding – Chester Grosvenor Grange Residents Association Greenbank Tenants and Residents Greenfields Children's Centre Greenfields Park Residents Association Groundwork Cheshire Holy Trinity Church, Blacon Hoole Baptist Church Hoole Lighthouse Centre Homestart Vale Royal Hospice of the Good Shepherd Huntington Senior Citizens Independent Advocacy (Central Cheshire) Kingsway Chapel Lache Park Ltd Learning Together Cheshire and Warrington LIVE! Malpas Recreation Trust Malpas Youth Project ME Association (South Cheshire) Mid-Cheshire Branch Diabetic Association Mid Cheshire Mencap Mollington, Backford & District Village Hall Moulton Old Friends Club Multiple Sclerosis Support centre NACRO National Autistic Society [Cheshire] National Childbirth Trust National Council of Women National Osteoporosis Society [Chester Branch] New Images Youth Centre Norley Village Hall Northgate Church and the Fountains Centre Northwich and District Mastectomy Group Northwich Carnival Committee Northwich Round Table Northwich Vale Royal and District Pensioners Neuromuscular Centre (Winsford) Nursery Road Recreation Group Older Peoples Network (Vale Royal) Options Pregnancy Crisis Service Over4all Residents' Association</p>	<p>Parkinson's Disease Society [Chester & District Branch] Pre-School Learning Alliance Queen Street Christian Centre Queensgate Allotments Association Rape Crisis RECORD Relate Rotary Club of Winsford RNIB North West RNLI [City of Chester Branch] Royal British Legion Royal British Legion (Davenham Branch) Salvation Army (Winsford) Salvation Army (Northwich) Samaritans (Northwich) Sandstone Trail Churches Shopmobility Information (Vale Royal) Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association (SSAFA) St John's Ambulance Young Carers' Project St Lawrence Church, Stoak St Luke's Hospice St Mark's Church Community Project Lache & Saltney St Michael's Church, Plas Newton St Vincent de Paul Society SURE Service Users Resource Survive Tarvin Civic Trust Tarvin Youth Club Tattenhall Music Society The Bren Project The Golden Age Club Delamere The Light Project The Raven Folk Club The Stroke Association Tots2teens Trailblazers Turning Point Vale Royal Amateur Operatic Society Vale Royal Carers Centre Vale Royal Disability Services Vale Royal Women's Aid Vale Royal Volunteer Support Vision Support Visyon Weaver Valley Initiative Weaver Vale Housing Trust Welcome Club Wesley Methodist Church West Cheshire Disabled Children's Team West Cheshire Multicultural Women's Group</p>

<p>Winsford Stroke Club Winsford MIND WRVS Thursday Club Youth Federation 69ers Youth Club</p>	<p>WEA [Chester Branch] WINCAP Winsford Amateur Boxing Club</p>
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Public Sector signatories

<p>Cheshire Constabulary Cheshire Fire Service Cheshire West and Chester Borough Council</p>	<p>Connexions Jobcentre Plus Western Cheshire Primary Care Trust East & Central Primary Care Trust</p>
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Contacts

For Further Information about the Compact:-

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Anne Lancaster, Third Sector Assembly
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Glossary

Accountability	Means by which organisations and individuals report their actions and are answerable to others for what they have done.
Best Value	Selection process used by local government in which the evaluation of bids or tenders is based upon quality and price to determine the best value service in terms of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
Bidding	Competitive process of applying for grants usually in response to a call for applications, or to deliver a contract in response to an invitation to tender or bid.
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic voluntary and community organisations and groups. This is the preferred term of BME groups – although it is best used in full.
Breach	Used to describe a Compact undertaking that has not been followed (most likely through lack of awareness or misunderstanding than deliberate) and which can be remedied through compliance procedures.
Capacity building	Wide range of techniques, support and guidance given to community groups or individuals to build their ability, skills, knowledge, and confidence to engage, contribute to and deliver projects, funding programmes and initiatives which aim to improve local conditions and quality of life.
Commissioning	Process through which public sector bodies determine the need for public services, design and purchase these services, and finally evaluate them for future commissioning. This includes purchasing through both procurement and grant giving. It is an area which public bodies have been engaged in for a number of years. Models of commissioning vary.
Community Group	Group of people with a common cause, often neighbourhood-based but may focus on a single issue for campaigning or self-help. Community groups are likely to be small, local, informal, unfunded and volunteer-run rather than employing staff. The blanket term for these groups is the community sector, which forms by far the largest part of the voluntary sector.
Compact	Written agreement that improves relations between public bodies, agencies and departments and voluntary, community and faith groups, charities and social enterprises (sometimes also includes private sector partners) for mutual advantage. Compacts have undertakings on all sides, shared principles and values as well as mechanisms for delivery to make them work and can operate at national, regional and local levels i.e across unitary authority administrative area.

Compact Code	Sets out a good practice approach to a particular topic or issue of local importance to both sectors to make the Compact agreement operational.
Compact Champion	Individual in an organisation who promotes compact principles and advocates for the benefits of compact working for its organisation and others.
Compact Compliance	Compliance is about following and carrying out the undertakings and the processes i.e. disputes resolution set out in the Compact
Compact-Proofing	Process that checks that a draft policy paper or a document to be published complies with the Compact and makes meaningful references to it.
Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA)	The new government process to assess the performance and services of all the English councils helping them to focus on delivering improvements in services to local people.
Contract	Legally binding agreement for provision of goods and / or services for a fixed period of time. Usually awarded following some form of competitive bidding / tendering process where the set assessment criteria have been achieved i.e. quality, price, value for money, experience. A contract clearly defines the services and /or goods to be provided, the outputs / outcomes to be achieved and what the service commissioner / public body will pay the service provider or contractor for providing them.
Evaluation	To measure or assess success of how well a project, service or organisation has performed against what was planned, with the effectiveness of outcomes taking into account quality, user satisfaction etc.
Faith or Belief	Many faith or belief based groups run community services, carry out community development and represent community interests. They may also reflect ethnic diversity and culture. A significant number of these groups focus on worship and religious beliefs but not all. Other groups include belief systems including Humanism and Quakerism.
Full Cost Recovery (FCR)	Process of costing the direct cost of the service or project plus a relevant proportion of organisational overheads or indirect costs for delivering the project or service such as insurance, rent, management etc.
Funding Programme	Allocation of money for a defined purpose usually over a number of years to deliver a portfolio of projects and / or services in a planned and managed in a co-ordinated way.
Grant	Discretionary payment of varying value awarded in support of an organisation's aims and objectives. This may or may not include monitoring requirements.
Local Area Agreement	Statutory three year agreement between central government and key partners in a local area including the Council and LSP

(LAA)	(see below). LAA's identify how local priorities will be met by applying local solutions and how these will contribute to national priorities and indicators set by government. LAA's allow area based services to be delivered by bringing together partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors.
Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)	Principle local partnership of key partners from the public private and voluntary, community and faith sectors working together to develop ways to address local needs and concerns by shaping the strategic and policy framework to improve local quality of life and wellbeing. Responsible for producing the Sustainable Community strategy.
Mediation	Process of disputes resolution conducted through an independent third party skilled at arbitrating between organisations.
Monitoring	Regular process for checking performance through the collection and analysis of data and information on outputs, outcomes, and any issues arising from service delivery. Used to enable effective management, wider accountability, and future policy development / needs assessment.
Not for Profit	Reinvestment of any surplus finance or profit, after all costs have been met back, into the organisation, its services and ultimately its beneficiaries. Services provided will be of public benefit and based upon a value led approach to resolving a social or community need.
Outputs	End result or product from carrying out an activity, project or service by which the difference between the start and end can be measured i.e no of people benefiting , no of training weeks provided etc.
Outcomes	Measure of the longer term impact and benefits brought about as a result of the activity, project or service provided i.e increased life expectancy, reduced unemployment.
Partnership Working	Partners working together to achieve better outcomes, by pooling skills and other resources. To do this they need a shared vision of their goals, and a way of working together which realises this ambition.
Procurement	Acquisition of goods and services from a third party provider governed by legally binding contractual terms normally achieved through a competitive process and in line with value for money principles and contract regulations. Procurement may be one of the mechanisms a public body uses within a commissioning body.
Proportionality	Principle of proportionate, realistic requirements that do not put unnecessary and unreasonable burdens on organisations, especially those in the VCFS, such as excessive monitoring regimes for small amounts of money.
Public Service	A service that is performed for the public benefit (e.g.

	residents, local communities, tourists, communities of interest) on a not for profit basis where income or return on public investments put back into the cost of future service delivery. Underlying public service provision are the principles that these services should be available to all irrespective of income and equally should be accessible to all irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, disability, sex, and gender. For both social and political reasons, public services are usually subject to some form of regulation and are required to demonstrate value for money and public accountability.
Public (or Statutory) Sector	Bodies and organisations created through Acts of Parliament, where the law or statutes sets out what functions and services they deliver. These organisations locally include Western Cheshire Primary Care Trust, Cheshire Fire Service and Cheshire West and Chester Council.
Service Level Agreement (SLA)	Written agreement that often accompanies a funding offer setting out mutual understanding between the parties about the services to be delivered including timescale, specific requirements, outputs and outcomes for the amount of the award. May also be called a funding agreement.
Service Provider	An organisation that provides a direct service to the public.
Service Users	Individuals who use direct services.
Signposting	Directing or referring an enquiry to an organisation(s) best placed to respond and offer advice and information.
Social Return on Investment (SROI)	SROI is an approach to understanding and managing the impacts of a project, an organisation or a policy. It is based on stakeholders and puts financial values on the important impacts identified by stakeholders which do not have market values.
Tendering	Purchasing procedure by which prospective service providers submit a bid or expression of interest in response to an invitation to tender which includes a firm and unequivocal offer of the price and terms that on acceptance would form the basis of any subsequent contract. There will be a prescribed process for tendering and evaluation criteria set out which all tenderers / prospective service providers will need to comply with for their tender to be accepted and considered (see bidding above).
Value for Money	Based upon an assessment of economy, efficiency and effectiveness and used to identify the optimum combination of cost and quality to meet the service user's needs.

Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector	The Voluntary Community and Faith sector includes religious, faith or belief based organisations as well as organisations that only make profits to re-invest into their services or beneficiaries such as social enterprises, community businesses and credit unions. This sector has increasingly been referred to as the Third Sector.
Volunteer	Someone performing a service without payment (except expenses)
Whole Life Cost	Full cost to an organisation of a service or project for its life or duration including direct costs including the initial set up / purchase costs and all indirect costs.