

## **Warrington Local Compact Resolution**

All organisations signing up to and adopting the Local Compact have agreed to work within the principles of the Compact. If problems or disputes occur, the Local Compact for Warrington will be used as a model of good practice. However, if this does not resolve the problem, parties can use the complaints procedure of the body involved, or ask a neutral partner to provide mediation. As a last resort parties can use the Compact Dispute Resolution process to achieve a result

The Local Compact for Warrington helps promote partnership working and if used correctly, helps reduce disputes. Disagreements can be useful in identifying important issues and by approaching them in a positive and mutually respectful way they can strengthen relationships.

As far as possible, disputes should be resolved by discussion between the parties involved. The proposed resolution process for the Compact is as follows:

### **Step 1**

Stakeholders or affected parties should seek to resolve the issue through an open discussion, identifying where they think the Compact has not been met, its impact, how to mitigate the impact and agree a way forward.

### **Step 2**

If Step 1 has not successfully resolved the issue it should be raised with Warrington Voluntary Action (WVA) or directly through the Third Sector Network Hub (by either a voluntary or statutory partner) who will follow it up with the relevant agencies, for a resolution. During this process recommendations and learning will be documented and shared with the relevant stakeholders for dissemination.

### **Step 3**

If the issue has not been satisfactorily resolved under Step 2 it will be deferred to a Compact Dispute Panel. The Panel will be coordinated through WVA, agreed by all affected parties and appropriate to the issue in question. As with Step 2 any learning from this process will then be shared with stakeholders.

### **Process**

We will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 5 working days, and aim to resolve the dispute within twenty working days. The Compact Dispute Panel will carry out an initial investigation. How this investigation below will happen is described below. In some cases the panel may ask to meet those representing one or both sides of the dispute.

The Compact Dispute Panel will then decide if a breach has taken place. Everybody involved will receive this decision in writing, alongside reasons for

the decision, within twenty five working days of the complaint being received. They may decide that they are unable to make a decision, due to the complexity or specialist nature of the case. In such circumstances the panel will advise on another course of action.

If the Compact Dispute Panel accepts that there has been a breach of the local compact it will:

- Provide advice on what may be done to comply with the Local Compact, including recommendations for policy or practice improvement.
- Highlight some of the options if any of those involved is not satisfied that this solves the problem.
- If the Compact Dispute Panel decides that a breach has not taken place, that matter should be dealt with by other means.

If the dispute is not resolved, you may decide to seek an independent view that will include the option of using the NCVO Compact Advocacy Programme or the Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution.

Compact Advocacy

[www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/compactadvocacy](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/compactadvocacy)

CEDR Solve

[www.cedr.com](http://www.cedr.com)

## **Guidelines for initial Investigation**

The Compact Dispute Panel will:

- declare any interest in any issue that arises
- separate hearsay from facts
- avoid making judgements or blame
- keep all investigations confidential
- check whether there have been any previous problems in dealings with the individual or organisation
- contact the complainant to:
  - clarify the complainant
  - clarify the outcome sought
  - explain the limitation of the outcomes available at this stage
- check whether the complainant needs support, for example interpretation and language services or access to induction loops etc
- make sure they understand the background to both parties and obtain relevant documents
- conduct dealings with both parties in as informal and relaxed way as possible
- record all information gathered, ensuring that everyone is happy with their understanding of the situation

The Compact Dispute Panel will contact all parties to advise them of the outcome