

Shared commitments by organisations adopting the local compact

The Local Compact for Warrington has been developed between partners through mutual understanding, co-operation and commitment.

It operates within the regulatory and statutory framework which includes legal, financial and contractual obligations. It follows government guidance, national policies and models of best practice and also ensures that other relevant guidance is taken into account, including tackling disadvantage and discrimination.

All partners supporting the Local Compact process will undertake to monitor, evaluate and review it. In addition, a kite mark has been developed for organisations who have signed up to the Local Compact in recognition of their promotion and adherence to the Compact way of working.

Partners will share good practice, and whenever possible, promote the adoption of the Local Compact for Warrington by ensuring that individuals within organisations are aware of the Local Compact and the benefits that such a commitment can bring.

The agreement between the public sector and the third sector includes the following:

Consultation and Partnership

Partners work together to continually promote the Local Compact and to ensure that agreements are reached which take into account the obligations and constraints that can affect the organisations involved. It aims to foster and promote good working relationships and best practice, and to involve partners at the earliest possible stage of any development. Furthermore, partnership extends to joint implantation and monitoring of operational activities and review of the Compact.

All consultation is in accordance with relevant strategies and all parties aim to adopt models of best practice. Consultation methods are reviewed regularly by the Third Sector Policy Group and efforts are made to develop new and creative formats.

By engaging in effective and meaningful consultation the third sector is able to support the delivery of services to residents in Warrington.

The public sector:

- Endeavours to work within agreed methods and time-scales when undertaking consultation and partnership work with the third sector.
- Ensures individuals/groups are involved in the consultation process as early as possible.
- Ensures reasonable resources/expenses are agreed before the consultation process starts. (This includes physical assistance and individual requirements).

The third sector:

- Supports the efforts of public bodies to consult effectively and work in partnership by working with service users, volunteers and staff to ensure they are involved.
- Ensures that public funding is used according to contractual and other agreements with the public sector.
- Clearly evidences the success of work undertaken and maintains adequate records of expenditure and operational activities to enable accurate monitoring.

Promoting Equality and Diversity

To promote fair and equal treatment for everyone, value diversity and ensure social inclusion.

- Equality – equality of opportunity regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, socio-economic status, age, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies and cultural differences.
- Diversity – understanding that each individual is unique and recognising our individual differences. The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect.
- Recognise that minority groups, including faith groups and black and minority ethnic voluntary organisations contribute to social inclusion.

Funding and Accountability

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 be honest about their aims, even where these differ.

Funding should support the infrastructure of the sectors and all funding should take account of the full cost of providing the service. Funding may be long term strategic or core funding, usually within a formal agreement which may be a grant or contract, whilst funding to provide a specific service under a formal agreement, needs to define outcomes, activity, quality, price and value for money.

By funders agreeing to a joint approach to funding where it adds value, and the use of similar and simple application forms and feedback requirements, greater consistency and co-operation between funders can be achieved.

To commit to an effective funding framework, all organisations must commit to the following principles:

Funding the third sector should be a way of adding value by:

- Identifying new needs and better ways of meeting existing needs.
- Building bridges between the public sector and communities.
- Fostering, supporting and empowering service users, volunteers and communities.
- Supporting and developing community cohesion.
- Promoting equality and diversity, reducing poverty and homelessness.

Good regulation and effective use of public money and the need to protect, and account for public money:

- Public money needs to be administered and used appropriately.
- Volunteer and user/carer involvement in the development of service provision should be encouraged.
- Wherever possible, funding should be paid in advance, and all payments made promptly on agreed dates. Equally, groups need to report on spending promptly, and be prepared to return any under spend.
- Appropriate sharing of risk should be undertaken by both sectors.
- Feedback and monitoring:
- There should be a clear and agreed system for reporting the achieved outcomes of the third sector and where possible there should be a joint approach to monitoring and evaluation.

The public sector will:

- Support third sector groups and organisations where the aims of those organisations correspond with priorities of the public bodies.
- Negotiate agreements which specify the amount and kind of support together with the timetable of provision and the level of service required.
- May provide support that could include funding, support for capacity building and other assistance in kind.
- Work towards achieving the realistic cost of providing a service in accordance with Government expectations.
- Respect and understand the third sector's independence and its right to campaign, irrespective of any funding relationship that may exist, ensuring that any future funding arrangements are not affected.
- Wherever possible, subject to budget constraints, respond to the need for greater financial stability, sustainability and longer term planning.

- Wherever possible, engage in early dialogue and ensure appropriate changes and variations to funding arrangements are notified 12 weeks in advance, to enable groups to make alternative arrangements.
- Work with third sector organisations to prepare an appropriate exit strategy for all funding streams.
- Funding may be long term strategic or core funding, usually within a formal agreement which may be a grant or contract.
- Provide funding for a specific service under a formal agreement, which needs to define outcomes, activity, quality, price and value for money.
- Publicise information about the availability of funding as widely as possible.
- Provide accessible information in everyday language about criteria for funding including application processes, a named contact, the funding available and timescales.
- Provide clear and objective application processes and give feedback to applicants.
- Where tender processes are employed, help with commissioning, tendering and completion of application forms ensuring recognition of the added value of the third sector.

The third sector will:

- Ensure that public funding is used according to contractual and other agreements.
- Provide high quality services that are complementary or additional to public services.
- Encourage integrated working and pool resources with other organisations where appropriate.
- Use clear and effective employment policies, management arrangements/
- Procedures and financial controls including compliance with the Charities Commission accounting framework and other guidance where appropriate.
- Establish robust systems for work programming, monitoring and evaluation, quality assurance and performance measures, together with mechanisms to ensure accountability to service users.
- Meet specific and relevant statutory and legislative requirements such as Health & Safety, Safeguarding, Data Protection and Confidentiality, etc.
- Provide services that are inclusive.
- Take full advantage of funding opportunities and cost reductions available to them such as rate relief, VAT relief, Gift Aid, etc.
- The third sector will respect the statutory requirements, limitations and financial restraints on public bodies and will fully acknowledge and publicise funding received.