



Consultation document on the proposed adoption of the refreshed national Compact for Wirral

Consultation will begin at 9am on Monday 12th July and will finish on Monday 11th October at 4.30pm.

This consultation document will be circulated as widely as possible within both the voluntary and community and the public sectors. It will be available on both the VCAW and the LSP websites:

www.vcawirral.org.uk

www.wirral-lsp.org

People who wish to respond can either:

- email comments to wirralcompact@vcawirral.org.uk
- In writing to the Wirral Compact Working Group, VCAW Wallasey, 220 Liscard Road, Wallasey, Wirral, CH44 5TN
OR
- telephone Karen Livesey on 0151 513 8259 who will register your call and comments

If you would like this document in another format then please contact Karen Livesey on 0151 513 8259



Background

The Compact was established in England in November 1998 and was inspired by the Deakin Commission report on the Future of the Voluntary Sector. It is an agreement that provides an overall framework for promoting effective partnership working between the Government and the third sector.

In March 2009, a formal request from the Minister for the Third Sector was sent to Sir Bert Massie CBE, the Commissioner for the Commission asking the Commission to take “what is best from the existing documents rather than start from scratch, and ensure that the new version takes into account recent developments in law, policy and practice.” In addition, it asked that the new Compact “takes account of the implications for Local Compacts, and the new local performance framework, Local Strategic Partnerships, Local Area Agreements and the Comprehensive Area Assessment.”

The refreshed Compact retains all the key points of the original but takes into account recent developments in law, policy and practice.

It is divided into three key areas covering:

- Involvement in policy development
- Allocating resources
- Advancing equality

It consists of 95 commitments: 62 for government and 33 for the third sector.

Previously, the original agreement was accompanied by five Codes of Practice. However, these Codes combined both overall principle and detail on implementation with no clear differentiation, which was often confusing and hard to monitor. The new structure in the Compact is based on an overall set of commitments and this will be backed up by a series of implementation guidance for specific sectors or types of relationship. Therefore, the Compact will set the overall “rules of engagement” between the public sector and third sector while the implementation guidance will give them specific pointers on how to make these a reality in particular situations.

This agreement reaffirms the Government’s and the third sector’s commitments to 12-week consultation and three-year funding. In addition, it recognises that volunteering is a defining characteristic of the third sector and this cross-cutting theme is acknowledged throughout the shared principles and commitments. The shared principles encompass: respect, honesty, independence, diversity, equality, citizen empowerment and volunteering.

Key changes reflected in the refreshed national Compact

Involvement in policy development

This section focuses more on the wide ranging process of involving the third sector in policy development rather than just on consultation exercises. It also includes references to the



Compact's consistency with other codes of practice and guidance in this area (for example, the Government Code of Practice on Consultation), as well as to the consulting organisations' obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. In addition, there are clearer commitments governing how people who represent and speak for the third sector should undertake this role.

Allocating resources

This section includes new commitments for Government to:

- Extend the scope of the Compact to ensure that prime and sub-contractors and all other public and private bodies work within Compact principles when distributing money.
- Engage early with third sector organisations in the design of services and programmes.
- Allow enough time for consortia and partnership bids.
- Apply Compact commitments when distributing EU funding.
- Make payments within 10 days of invoices being received.
- Consider how service users can be involved in monitoring and reporting.

Advancing equality

This section has an equality rather than a Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) focus, applying across all equality strands, and has been expanded to include:

- Equality impact assessment, which relates more closely to equality law.
- A renewed emphasis on support for equality infrastructure organisations.
- A clear commitment to "fair and equal access to funding".
- Clarification that "single group funding" can promote cohesion.

Responding to this Consultation

We would like to know if your organisations supports Wirral adopting the national refreshed Compact and the local Compact to be adhered to in all future partnership working arrangements between the sectors. You can respond using the pro-forma or via any of the methods mentioned on the front page.

If you have any questions relating to this consultation; please contact Karen Livesey on 0151 513 8259.