

# The Compact

Bedfordshire & Luton  
**Compact**  
working together | better together

**The Compact on Relations  
between the Public Sector  
and the Voluntary  
and Community Sector,  
for the Benefit of  
Communities and Citizens in  
Bedfordshire and Luton**

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#### Acknowledgements

The text in this document has been based on The Compact on Relations between the Government and the Third Sector in England (December 2009) and the revised Compact published by the Coalition Government (December 2010). Crown copyright.

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## Foreword

The relationship between public sector organisations and voluntary and community sector organisations in Bedfordshire and Luton has improved considerably since the Compact was launched in 2001. Partnerships between the voluntary and community sector and the public sector have flourished, and the voluntary and community sector, in all its diversity, now plays a vital role in strengthening communities, promoting opportunity, and delivering innovative and personalised public services.

This Compact brings together public sector organisations and voluntary and community sector organisations across the three unitary areas of Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Luton.

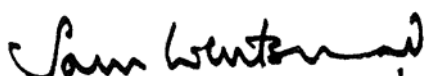
The voluntary and community sector is vast, diverse and vibrant. It makes huge differences to people's lives, and underpins the prospering communities that are so vital, both now and in the future.

Voluntary and community sector organisations have become not only an integral part of community life but a major partner to public sector organisations in the delivery of public services, working with people at a local level in ways that are suited to their needs.

This refreshed Compact, based on the 2009 National Compact, sets out the core principles that the public sector and voluntary and community sector share and that are the foundations of their activity. It is a clear statement of the public sector's continued commitment to working with the voluntary and community sector, and will be a valuable tool in helping build strong and successful partnerships for years to come.

The Compact is only useful when it is actually picked up and used; when it is put on the table and agreed as the way the partnership will work; when those involved understand what is in it and the benefits it can bring.

I strongly support the role of the voluntary and community sector and hope that more organisations in the County will sign up to the Compact.



**Sir Samuel Whitbread KCVO**  
**HM Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire**

### **A note on the term 'voluntary and community sector'**

*'Voluntary and community sector', 'third sector' and 'civil society' are just a few of the terms used to describe some or all of the organisations that are not for private profit and not part of government or a public sector organisation. There is no agreed or universal definition, and many groups prefer to define for themselves who and what they are. However, their defining characteristic is that they are value-led for public benefit.*

*Throughout this document the term 'voluntary and community sector' is used as a term to reflect the wide group of organisations potentially included in the Compact, including voluntary organisations, community groups, charities, faith groups, social enterprises, cooperatives and mutuals, both large and small. However, it is understood that each term comes with values attached, and that no term is acceptable to all.*

## Compact principles

The Compact outlines the relationship between the public sector and the voluntary and community sector, allowing them to work together more effectively to strengthen communities and improve people's lives.

The Compact is neither a set of rules nor a bureaucratic burden, but a way of working that can help deliver real outcomes and improvements for people and communities. A common set of principles has been created to help the public sector and the voluntary and community sector build relationships and work together effectively in partnership.

The shared principles of the Compact are:

- **Respect:** Differences between the public and voluntary and community sectors are mutually understood, acknowledged and respected.
- **Honesty:** Open communication, transparency and integrity.
- **Independence:** The independence of voluntary and community organisations in fulfilling their mission is recognised and supported. This includes their right within the law to campaign, to comment on and to challenge public sector policy (whatever funding or other relationship may exist with the public sector) and to determine and manage their own affairs.
- **Citizen empowerment:** Valuing a thriving civil society that is built around communities and people, meeting their needs and reflecting their choices.
- **Volunteering:** The energy and commitment of people giving their time for the public good contributes to a vibrant society, and should be recognised and appreciated.

The Compact's commitments put these shared principles into practice through:

- advancing equality and diversity
- involvement in policy development
- allocating resources.

## The Compact Commitments

# Advancing equality and diversity

Equality for everyone is a core value shared by the public and voluntary and community sectors. It is crucial that the public and voluntary and community sectors work well together to achieve equality and fairness for all.

This section of the Compact recognises the vital role that the voluntary and community sector plays in helping to create a more equal and fair society and sets out commitments that will help both sectors work together to achieve their equality goals and promote social and community cohesion.

The law protects people from discrimination on the basis of a number of different characteristics, specifically, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. These are referred to as 'protected characteristics'. People may also be discriminated against because of where they live, their social or economic background, employment status, caring responsibilities or by association with others who experience discrimination.

Both sectors recognise that groups which involve people with protected characteristics at community level may be small or informal, and that it is important to engage with these groups in a way that suits their working methods.

Promoting equality and diversity is a shared goal of the public and voluntary and community sectors. This should be recognised, understood and respected.

Good working relationships between the voluntary and community sector and the public sector will help to meet the needs of the people they serve or represent and reduce inequality. The Compact will play a key role in helping this relationship to work.

## Joint Commitments

### 1. Promoting equality and diversity

An important way in which both sectors can promote equality effectively is by working with each other on equality and diversity issues.

Both sectors undertake to work individually and together to:

- 1.1 Provide leadership in promoting equality and diversity, and ensure appropriate strategies are in place.
- 1.2 Take practical action to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and build community cohesion and civic participation.
- 1.3 Be clear on who is being represented and how their views have been gathered. Take into account the specific needs of under-represented or disadvantaged groups when designing and implementing strategies, policies, programmes and services.
- 1.4 Support Local Infrastructure Organisations that can promote the interests of people with protected characteristics.
- 1.5 Recognise, acknowledge and value the diverse range of volunteering within communities and remove barriers to volunteering by people with protected characteristics. Put in place measures to increase their involvement.
- 1.6 Ensure that all voluntary and community sector organisations have fair access to public sector funding programmes, while acknowledging that funding for organisations that serve people with only one protected characteristic can promote cohesion.
- 1.7 If a grant is withdrawn from an organisation serving people with a specific protected characteristic, provide evidence of the reason for the withdrawal and assess the need to reallocate the grant to another organisation serving the same group.
- 1.8 Offer information in alternative formats upon request, unless it is known in advance that a different format is required.

# **Involvement in policy development**

Voluntary and community sector organisations have expertise in many areas, often because they work directly with people and groups on the ground. This allows them to understand the needs of their service users and provide new and effective answers to problems.

Involving and consulting the voluntary and community sector can help the public sector develop policies that meet the needs of local people and communities.

Involving the voluntary and community sector in policy development is a continuous process from the earliest stages of policy development. It includes a range of methods – from informal engagement to full-scale public consultation and involvement in local partnerships.



## Public Sector Commitments

### 2 When to involve?

Involving the voluntary and community sector in policy development at the earliest stage possible will allow the public sector to get the most out of the process. This will lead to more effective policies and programmes being developed.

Public sector organisations undertake to:

- 2.1** Work in partnership with the voluntary and community sector from the earliest stages of policy development, on all relevant issues likely to affect it. This can include empowering voluntary and community sector organisations to start discussions within affected communities themselves.
- 2.2** Inform the voluntary and community sector of progress in developing policy.
- 2.3** Identify implications for the voluntary and community sector when assessing the impact of new strategies, policies, legislation and guidance.
- 2.4** Create opportunities for appropriate representation from the voluntary and community sector on local partnerships.

### 3. Who to involve?

Spending time and resources helping voluntary and community sector organisations make their voices heard helps ensure that their knowledge can contribute to policy development.

Public sector organisations undertake to:

- 3.1** Identify and remove barriers, such as language barriers, which may prevent voluntary and community sector organisations from contributing to policy development.
- 3.2** Encourage and facilitate responses from the full range of voluntary and community sector organisations that are likely to have a view.
- 3.3** Engage with and support the development of voluntary and community sector Local Infrastructure Organisations, which enable voluntary and community sector organisations and communities to be involved in policy development, through services such as capacity building, representation and other forms of support.
- 3.4** Identify where there are costs to voluntary and community sector organisations as a result of partnership work with the public sector and offer support on a clear and consistent basis. This can be especially important for Local Infrastructure Organisations that are helping to promote, organise or run consultations.

#### **4. How to involve?**

Voluntary and community sector organisations can provide stronger and better-informed responses if the consultation methods used are suited to the purpose and audience, and if enough time is given for people to respond. Either formal or informal consultation methods may be appropriate depending on the circumstances and on the type and size of the organisation.

Public sector organisations undertake to:

- 4.1** Avoid compromising or undermining the independence of voluntary and community sector organisations (whatever financial or other relationship may exist between them).
- 4.2** Give notice of forthcoming consultations so that organisations can plan ahead.
- 4.3** Publicise consultation exercises widely and make sure they are accessible to the people they are intended to reach.
- 4.4** Use a variety of different consultation methods suitable for the subject, audience, time and resources available.
- 4.5** Explain which matters are open to change as a result of the consultation and which are not.
- 4.6** Allow enough time for voluntary and community sector organisations to involve their service users, beneficiaries, members, volunteers and trustees in preparing responses.
- 4.7** Conduct twelve-week formal written consultations, with an explanation given for shorter time frames.
- 4.8** Build review and evaluation into all involvement and consultation processes.
- 4.9** Provide feedback to explain how respondents have influenced policy decisions, including where respondents' views have not been acted upon.

## Voluntary and Community Sector Commitments

### 5. Effective involvement

When the voluntary and community sector engages actively in policy development, it helps build the public sector's trust in the voluntary and community sector, establishing valuable links between the two sectors and encouraging the public sector to commit actively to listening to voluntary and community sector views.

Voluntary and community sector organisations undertake to:

- 5.1** Advise public sector organisations of, and provide access to, specific groups and/or clients, and encourage participation in public sector consultations (commensurate with available resources).
- 5.2** Involve an appropriate range of service users, beneficiaries, members, volunteers and trustees when preparing responses to consultations.
- 5.3** Be clear about whose views are being represented and what those views are. This includes explaining whether views have been gathered directly (and from what audience), or whether the response is based on the organisation's knowledge and experience of the issues.
- 5.4** Make sure all research and information that is presented is accurate and credible. Explain where the information comes from and if there is conflicting evidence.
- 5.5** Promote public sector consultations across the voluntary and community sector, where appropriate.
- 5.6** Accept that, in rare cases, consultations may need to take place in shorter time-frames than twelve weeks.
- 5.7** Provide feedback on the outcome to everyone involved in responding to the consultation.
- 5.8** Create clear and accountable roles and responsibilities for those who represent the sector on local partnerships.

# Allocating resources

Voluntary and community sector organisations, including those that receive no public funding, are often in a good position to understand what people want and how their needs can be met. By working together and co-designing programmes, the public sector and the voluntary and community sector can deliver policies and programmes that are built around communities and individuals, meeting their needs and reflecting their choices.

The Compact also provides a framework for public sector organisations to meet and manage spending priority decisions where voluntary and community sector organisations are involved and to ensure that the impact on beneficiaries, service users and volunteers is managed and minimised.

Deciding whether to restructure programmes or services and reduce or end funding is a difficult decision as there will be an impact on beneficiaries, service users and volunteers. Early engagement helps inform the decision-making process by assessing the likely impact, costs and risks involved in any decision to reduce funding. It can also help identify innovative approaches to achieving outcomes as well as alternative methods of delivery and potential savings.

This approach will enable organisations to make robust decisions that minimise long-term risk to beneficiaries, service users and volunteers. It will also help ensure that any efficiency savings gained in the short-term through funding reductions are not lost in the medium or long-term by the need to increase investment or funding to meet problems where reductions were first made.

## Public Sector Commitments

### 6. Planning

Voluntary and community sector organisations are often in a good position to understand people's needs and to provide innovative solutions to those needs. Involving voluntary and community sector organisations in designing new or restructured programmes and services, and focusing on results, can help public sector organisations provide the right resources, identify risks and solutions, and achieve better outcomes.

Public sector organisations undertake to:

- 6.1** Plan new or restructured programmes and services with a focus on outcomes, providing scope for innovation wherever possible.
- 6.2** Work with voluntary and community sector organisations to understand public service reform and support the voluntary and community sector in responding to changes.
- 6.3** Begin planning programmes and services well in advance of the expected start date, based on consultation with the voluntary and community sector.
- 6.4** Ensure that those voluntary and community sector organisations that are likely to have a view on the programme or service are involved from the beginning.

### 7. Choosing finance and funding options

Choosing the most appropriate funding mechanism will help to secure the most appropriate organisation to deliver outcomes.

Public sector organisations undertake to:

- 7.1** Consider the most appropriate ways of funding and supporting organisations working with public sector organisations. These methods could include grants, contracts, loan finance, training, use of premises or other support. Where contracts are awarded through a procurement process, consider whether this should be through open tender or from a preferred supplier(s). A clear rationale should be provided for the method chosen.
- 7.2** Ensure that the size and scale of the funding arrangement reflects the programme's objectives and attracts those organisations best placed to deliver the required outcomes.
- 7.3** Ensure that prime and sub-contractors and all other public and private bodies distributing public money work within the Compact by making it a requirement of funding arrangements.
- 7.4** Apply the Compact when distributing European funding. Where conflicts arise with European regulations, discuss the potential effects and agree possible solutions together.

## **8. Application and bidding processes**

A well-managed application process that is proportionate to the desired objectives will encourage a diverse range of voluntary and community sector organisations to apply, including partnerships and consortia, helping to ensure that the most appropriate organisation is found for the role.

Public sector organisations undertake to:

### **8.1** Ensure that application documents:

- are publicised widely and through local recognised channels
- are proportionate to the nature of the risk and the amount of funding being allocated
- contain enough information to allow voluntary and community sector organisations to make informed decisions.

**8.2** Ensure that application and bidding processes across funding bodies are consistent with overarching Office of Government Commerce (OGC) guidance on public procurement.

**8.3** Recognise the importance of local knowledge and where an organisation has a proven track record of local delivery.

**8.4** Provide a period of at least six weeks for funding opportunities and at least four weeks for tendering opportunities, expressions of interest, applications or tenders, etc, to be prepared and submitted.

**8.5** Publish the criteria against which applications and bids will be assessed.

**8.6** Make decisions on the basis of value-for-money. This may include taking into account the wider community benefits at the award stage or when identifying procurement needs.

## **9. Understanding costs**

Funding bodies have an interest in ensuring that voluntary and community sector organisations can manage and administer their activities effectively. Support functions are vital to achieving this.

Public sector organisations undertake to:

**9.1** Recognise that it is appropriate to include relevant overhead and administrative costs in applications.

**9.2** Recognise that it is appropriate to include the costs associated with volunteering, such as managing volunteers and reimbursing expenses.

**9.3** Be consistent across sectors when requesting cost breakdowns from voluntary and community sector organisations.

**9.4** Recognise that voluntary and community sector organisations require adequate financial reserves to operate effectively in the interests of their beneficiaries.

## 10. Making decisions

Award criteria should be designed to allow the funder to select the provider that is best placed to achieve value for money.

Public sector organisations undertake to:

- 10.1 Implement three-year funding arrangements as a norm. If this is not feasible, or the best way to deliver best value, explain clearly why other arrangements are more appropriate.
- 10.2 Make funding decisions and inform voluntary and community sector organisations at least three months in advance of the expected start date or change in funding agreement. Any departure from that timescale should be justified and explained.
- 10.3 Provide constructive feedback to unsuccessful organisations.

## 11. Agreeing delivery terms

Agreeing terms in advance ensures a clear and shared understanding of respective responsibilities and allows the voluntary and community sector organisations involved to focus on delivery.

Public sector organisations undertake to:

- 11.1 Discuss and agree delivery terms before a funding agreement is signed and ensure this is done before the expected start date.
- 11.2 Discuss and allocate risks to the organisation(s) best equipped to manage them. Ensure that delivery terms and risks are proportionate to the nature and value of the resource allocation.
- 11.3 Agree a process for managing performance and responding to changing circumstances before signing a funding agreement.
- 11.4 For grants, agree how underspends will be managed.

## 12. Making payments

Payment terms which suit the type of service and the organisation involved will increase the likelihood of the desired outcomes being achieved.

Public sector organisations undertake to:

- 12.1 Be clear about how and when payments are to be claimed or invoiced and ensure relevant information is provided.
- 12.2 Make payments in advance of expenditure where there is a clear need and where this represents value for money. This may be particularly relevant for grants.
- 12.3 Make payments within the published timescales.

Allocating resources

### **13. Monitoring and reporting**

Appropriate monitoring reduces costs, time and resources for both sides, and means that time and effort can be focused on delivering results.

Public sector organisations undertake to:

- 13.1** Discuss and agree how outcomes will be measured before a funding agreement is signed.
- 13.2** Be clear about what information is being requested, why, and how it will be used.
- 13.3** Ensure that monitoring and reporting is proportionate to the nature and value of the opportunity. Focus on evidence that is meaningful to the beneficiaries of organisations, as well as to funders.
- 13.4** Consider how service users can be involved by getting their perspective of performance.
- 13.5** Aim to standardise monitoring and reporting arrangements.
- 13.6** Ensure that monitoring is consistently applied to organisations in all sectors.
- 13.7** If any programme or service is encountering problems, discuss and agree a timetable of actions to improve performance before making a decision to end a financial relationship.

### **14. Ending a financial relationship**

It is important to plan ahead for the end of funding, in order to reduce its negative impact on the people involved, the stability of the voluntary and community sector organisation and future partnerships.

Public sector organisations undertake to:

- 14.1** Assess the impact on beneficiaries, service users and volunteers before deciding to reduce or end funding.
- 14.2** Discuss potential implications as early as possible with voluntary and community sector organisations where there are restrictions on future resources.
- 14.3** Give a minimum of three months' notice in writing when ending a funding relationship or other support, and provide good reasons why the decision has been taken. Funding agreements with a shorter notice period should be justified and explained.
- 14.4** Give voluntary and community sector organisations an opportunity to respond to the ending of funding and consider the response before making a final decision.
- 14.5** Review programmes and services with relevant voluntary and community sector organisations to inform future practice.



## Voluntary and Community Sector Commitments

### 15. Contributing to planning

When voluntary and community sector organisations contribute to the planning and design of programmes and services, it helps ensure that they reflect the needs of beneficiaries.

Voluntary and community sector organisations undertake to:

- 15.1** Involve users, beneficiaries, members, volunteers and trustees when designing or reviewing programmes and services.
- 15.2** Provide timely feedback to contributors on information that is presented to public sector organisations and inform them what the outcomes are.
- 15.3** Be clear about who they are representing, in what capacity, and on what basis that representation is being made.

### 16. Making applications and bids

Voluntary and community sector organisations should ensure that they are eligible to apply for funding and should check that the objectives of the funding programme or service are in line with the organisation's mission before applying.

Voluntary and community sector organisations undertake to:

- 16.1** Be clear on their reasons for bidding or applying to deliver programmes or services.
- 16.2** Show that they understand how new funding will relate to their organisation's mission, impact on their organisation and service users, and contribute to their income mix.
- 16.3** Ensure they have a robust and clear understanding of the relevant overheads and associated costs to include when applying for resources.
- 16.4** Be clear which organisation is the accountable body in partnership or consortia working arrangements.
- 16.5** Apply Compact principles when sub-contracting to other voluntary and community sector organisations.

Allocating resources

## **17. Agreeing delivery terms**

Delivery and payment terms should be proportionate, in order to ensure that the programme or service can run smoothly and focus on maximising outcomes for beneficiaries.

Voluntary and community sector organisations undertake to:

- 17.1** Be clear about the required outcomes and benefits associated with delivering a programme.
- 17.2** Be clear about the risks associated with delivering programmes and services, and agree delivery terms before a funding agreement is signed.
- 17.3** Have appropriate programme management and governance arrangements in place and ensure that everyone involved understands and agrees to delivery terms.
- 17.4** Be clear about payment terms and, if appropriate, demonstrate why payment in advance is required.
- 17.5** Recognise that it is legitimate for funders to ask for public recognition of their funding.
- 17.6** Have appropriate systems in place to manage and account for finances.

## **18. Monitoring and reporting**

Managing funding effectively requires good monitoring. It promotes better working relationships with funders and ensures that performance is managed properly.

Voluntary and community sector organisations undertake to:

- 18.1** Negotiate monitoring and reporting requirements before a funding agreement is made.
- 18.2** Recognise that monitoring, both internally and externally, is an element of good management practice.
- 18.3** Ensure that systems are in place to deliver the reporting required.
- 18.4** Give prompt notice to funders of significant changes in management, or financial or other risks.
- 18.5** Be open and transparent in reporting.

## **19. When a financial relationship ends**

Contingency planning for the end of a contract or grant helps minimise the impact on beneficiaries. Planning in this way can help with long-term sustainability.

Voluntary and community sector organisations undertake to:

- 19.1** Plan for the end of funding to reduce any potential impact on beneficiaries and the organisation.
- 19.2** Contribute positively to reviews of programmes or services to inform future practice.

## Implementing the Compact

**20.1** By signing up to the Compact, public sector organisations and voluntary and community sector organisations agree to take responsibility for:

- Implementing the Compact.
- Operating in accordance with it, in their relations with each other.

**20.2** To implement the Compact effectively, the public sector and the voluntary and community sector will each take steps to ensure that their constituent organisations:

- Incorporate the principles of the Compact into their policies.
- Incorporate the undertakings given in the Compact into their operational practices and procedures.
- Widely publicise and make members, employees, volunteers and partners aware of the terms and spirit of the Compact and their commitment to it.

**20.3** The Compact Development Group, which oversees the operation of the Compact, will produce and publish a Joint Compact Action Plan. This will set out the agreed steps that will be taken during the year by the public sector and the voluntary and community sector in the implementation of the Compact.

**20.4** There will also be a review of what has been achieved against the previous year's Joint Compact Action Plan.

## **Resolving differences**

- 21.1** Compact signatories within the public sector and the voluntary and community sector are committed to complying with the Compact. When partners fail to comply with the Compact, those involved should explain why.
- 21.2** Disagreements over meeting the Compact commitments should be resolved, amicably and informally, between partners through open dialogue and negotiation before they escalate.
- 21.3** The Compact principles form the basis of the relationship. Where issues are not covered in the commitments, compromise and discussion should be based on these principles.
- 21.4** When things go wrong (as they sometimes do) there should be an open admission of the fact and an honest discussion to resolve the situation. The Compact is there to help build effective partnerships, and this includes navigating difficult times. Ignoring it would both be unacceptable and unhelpful. The Compact should be at the heart of dispute resolution as a constructive tool towards better partnerships.
- 21.5** For further advice on how to resolve disagreements, please contact the Compact Secretariat.

## Glossary

<b>Commissioning</b>	The cycle of assessing the needs of people in an area, designing and then securing an appropriate service.
<b>Consortium (Consortia)</b>	An association of organisations, formed for a particular purpose. Often one organisation within the consortium will act as the lead, or accountable body, on behalf of other members of the consortium for the purpose of funding agreements.
<b>Consultation</b>	The process of seeking and listening to views on a particular subject. This includes asking for information/advice on future proposals and testing the impact of decisions already taken.
<b>Data Protection Act</b>	‘The Data Protection Act gives individuals the right to know what information is held about them. It provides a framework to ensure that personal information is handled properly.’ Visit <a href="http://www.ico.gov.uk">www.ico.gov.uk</a> for in-depth information.
<b>Freedom of Information Act</b>	‘The Freedom of Information Act gives you the right to obtain information held by public authorities unless there are good reasons to keep it confidential.’ Visit <a href="http://www.ico.gov.uk">www.ico.gov.uk</a> for in-depth information.
<b>Funding Agreement</b>	An umbrella term that encompasses the various types of agreements that can be in place between voluntary and community, and public sector organisations, such as a grant, service level agreement, partnership agreement or contract.
<b>Local Infrastructure Organisations</b>	These are sometimes known as Local Development Agencies, umbrella or intermediary organisations and include Councils for Voluntary Service, Rural Community Councils and Volunteer Development Agencies. They provide a range of infrastructure functions and services, including information, advice and guidance, development support, co-ordination, representation and promotion to local voluntary organisations and community groups.
<b>Outcome</b>	The changes, benefits, learning or other effects that result from what the project or organisation makes, offers or provides.
<b>Partnership</b>	Organisations which work together to achieve a shared and clear set of objectives. There is a clear understanding of the contribution of each organisation, which takes into account their differences, and there is equal respect for the role and experience of all partners. A successful partnership depends on sharing information and decision-making.
<b>Procurement</b>	Procurement is the specific aspect of the commissioning cycle that focuses on the process of buying services, from initial advertising through to appropriate contract arrangements.

<b>Public Sector Organisations</b>	Organisations created through Acts of Parliament whose functions are set by the law. Local authorities, including parish and town councils, are democratically elected and must answer to the voters and central government. They have legal responsibilities for the social well-being, economic development, environment and health of the people they serve. Health, police, and fire and rescue authorities are not directly elected and answer to the Secretary of State.
<b>Service Users</b>	The people who benefit from or use a service. They may also be called customers, clients, consumers, beneficiaries or recipients.
<b>Sustainability</b>	The ability to keep delivering services. This requires secure funding in order to allow effective management and planning.
<b>Sustainable Community Strategy</b>	A document setting out the shared vision and priorities for a local area, which promotes or improves the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area and describes how people who live and work there want it to change over time. Their preparation requires close partnership working and continual community involvement.
<b>Trustees</b>	The group of people responsible for the control and management of a charity, which includes members of a charitable association's management committee and directors of charitable companies. Trustees have specific statutory duties, set out in the Charities Act 1993.
<b>Value for Money</b>	<p>The National Audit Office assesses value for money as the reporting on the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of public spending:</p> <p><b>economy:</b> minimising the cost of resources used or required – spending less</p> <p><b>efficiency:</b> the relationship between the output from goods or services and the resources to produce them – spending well</p> <p><b>effectiveness:</b> the relationship between the intended and actual results of public spending – spending wisely</p>
<b>Voluntary and Community Sector</b>	<p>'Third sector', 'voluntary and community sector' and 'civil society' are just a few of the terms used to describe some or all of the organisations that are not for private profit and not part of government or a public sector organisation. There is no agreed or universal definition, and many groups prefer to define for themselves who and what they are. However, their defining characteristic is that they are value-led for public benefit.</p> <p>The term 'voluntary and community sector' is used to describe voluntary organisations, community groups, charities, faith groups, social enterprises, cooperatives and mutuals, both large and small. This term is used throughout the document to reflect the wide group of organisations potentially included in the Compact. However, it is understood that each term comes with values attached, and that no term is acceptable to all.</p>

**Volunteering**

The commitment of time and energy by individuals for the benefit of society, the community or the environment. Volunteering is undertaken freely and by choice, without concern for financial gain; yet it is also a reciprocal relationship in which the volunteer also benefits (for example, a sense of worthwhile achievement, gaining or using skills, experience, contacts, meeting other people and friends, and involvement in the organisation).

## Contact details and further information

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Please direct any requests for translation, interpretation or audio-tape versions of this document to the Compact Secretariat. All requests will be dealt with on an individual basis.