

**Compact Champions – 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb '10 12:30-13:30**

**Committee Room 3, Civic Centre, Hounslow**

**AGENDA**

- Update of Compact Refresh process**
- Update of group members with regards to the last sessions task; to identify key areas of work within their teams/**
- Quick table consultation of the DRAFT 'refresh' compact**
- Compact successes - how the it can be better used for statutory sector / VCS engagement**
- Format of future meetings**
- AOB**

**Compact Champion Meeting – 22/02/10**

## Summary

- A brief background to the Compact and the role of Compact Champions was provided by the chair. A number of 'Compact Successes' from other counties were highlighted (See Appendix 'A').

Just as a reminder; 'The Compact outlines a code of practise for partnership working between public bodies and the third sector. Recognising shared values, it aims to improve the relationship between those parties involved for mutual advantage and link directly to the national Compact. '

- The review process was outlined to the group and timescales applied. The reviewed document is due to be launched at the end of April at the AGM of CVS Hounslow. If there proves to be 'purdah' issues associated with this (as enquired by one group member), a draft document will be presented to the third sector by the CVS during this event. Clarification surrounding this issue is currently awaited from the Legal Department.
- A draft document was circulated for comment by the Chair. It was stressed that this document ultimately required "buy in" from all partners involved and therefore the 'achievability' of the points made needed to be highlighted.
- Initial points were raised surrounding the prioritisation of 'part B' services, the timing in which third sector organisations received payments and regular lack of prescribed timeframes. The Chair asked if these points could be annotated by those who raised them in the formal consultation response.
- It became apparent that there were distinctions between 'achievable' and 'aspirational' points within the document. Some points are currently employed, whereas some (although favourable) are currently not part of council process. These 'aspirational' points, it was decided, will form the basis of the work programme surrounding the council document.
- The format of future meeting was discussed; it was highlighted that meetings will be kept to a minimum and that use of the online discussion forum promoted. Regular e-mail updates to the Compact Champions will be disseminated. <http://www.cvshounslow.org.uk/hounslows-local-compact>
- 'The point of the group will be to develop new workstreams and services which utilise the values of partners. It will bring to the table excluded or hard to reach groups who will help to benefit workstreams in the future and will highlight any problems which have arisen associated with Compact non-compliance; developing means by which to combat them'

## Appendix A

### Compact successes - how the document can be used to improve the relationship between the third sector and statutory bodies

#### Case study: Bournemouth

The Compact feeds into the wider principles of developing the right services at community level, and not losing those services through focusing entirely on 'efficiency' or 'smart contracting'. The Compact has helped people from the council to understand how the local voluntary sector can support a whole range services – linking, for example, housing, advocacy, individual care, employment – and that better services for local people will result.

#### Case study: Nottingham

In Nottingham, a working group was set up to develop a local Compact. Rather than adopt a Compact template or develop an all-encompassing document, the group decided *'to look at issues that people were most annoyed about in the sector and what was working well so we didn't need to look at it'*. The issue the group focused on was funding, and the outcome is that local procurement practices are now much more 'Compact compliant'. As one interviewee said:

*'If you asked a lot of people in the council about the Compact, they might not have heard of it, but they are really passionate about procurement and making sure it doesn't disadvantage third sector groups'*.

#### Case study: Devon

When the Devon Compact Hub was set up, members were mindful that the Devon Compact needed to be practically useful and relevant to the day-to-day working lives of people in the public and third sectors. Members set out to identify 'quick wins' – actions that would galvanise support for the Compact and get momentum going. Issues that were addressed early on included the public sector paying third sector organisations in advance instead of in arrears and changing to longer contracts. Once people had seen that the Compact could make a difference, they were more willing to use it to tackle more problematic issues.

#### Case study: Bournemouth

The Bournemouth Third Sector Partnership Group has encouraged commissioners to attend meetings of the group and to hear directly about concerns from the third sector. The group has also set up 'meet and greet' events, where public commissioners and third sector representatives could meet informally, and specific training for the third and public sector on procurement processes. The outcome from this work is that the council is now working towards new contracting processes that are common to all departments and are based on Compact principles. The council has also taken on the role of mediator between third sector organisations and commissioners. This approach has helped to address fears that TSOs will lose funding if they challenge poor practices.