



**REPORT OF THE TEMPORARY GROUP MANAGER  
SAFER AND ENGAGED COMMUNITIES**

**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL AND THE COMMUNITY &  
VOLUNTARY SECTOR – THE NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COMPACT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to agree a replacement for the “Nottinghamshire County Compact” a document that sets out how Nottinghamshire County Council and Voluntary & Community Sector Organisations will work together for the benefit of the communities and citizens of the County.

**Information and Advice**

2. In 1998 the first “Compact” was produced by Government detailing a set of guiding principles for working effectively with the community & voluntary sector. A Nottinghamshire version of the Compact was agreed the following year.
3. In 2008 Nottinghamshire County Council alongside major public sector organisations in the County signed up to the “**Nottinghamshire County - COMPACT – All together better**” - this Compact was agreed as part of the Nottinghamshire Partnership.
4. In September 2010 the Coalition Government renewed the Compact between Government and the Community & Voluntary Sector, encouraging local areas to follow the principles and refresh local Compacts.
5. In September 2011 The Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP, Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government, produced a Best Value Statutory Guidance document which set out some reasonable expectations of the way local authorities should work with voluntary & community sector groups.
6. In November 2011 the Grant Aid Members Reference Group received a short paper on the ways the County Council was working collaboratively with the Community & Voluntary Sector – much of the practical engagement we are engaged with embraces the principles of the compact & statutory guidance.
7. In September 2012 through the Voluntary Sector Liaison Group we consulted VCS representatives about the status and role of the Compact. This consultation was prompted by two things, firstly that we had established through the Local Government Association that 97% of Local Authorities had a “live” Compact and that our Compact was

under the auspices of the now dissolved Nottinghamshire Partnership, in effect we had no arrangement in place.

8. The feedback from VCS colleagues was that there would be no appetite for a major piece of wide consultation to produce another document. They also advised us that a small sub group of the VCS network had already produced some short guidance on shared principles around good practice which could be shaped to become a new Compact – Appendix 1.

### **Other Options Considered**

9. None

### **Reason(s) for Recommendation(s)**

10. Currently we have no Compact and having a set of recorded principles would help us to be in line with government policy.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

11. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

### **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

12. That Members:

Endorse the document at Appendix 1 and agree to adopt the approach and principles it contains. This document will in effect be Nottinghamshire County Councils Compact with the Community and Voluntary Sector.

**Chris Walker**  
**Temporary Group Manager, Safer and Engaged Communities**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

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## **Constitutional Comments**

There are no constitutional issues.

## **Financial Comments**

There are no financial implications

## **Background Papers**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Nottinghamshire County Compact – All together better - 2008

The Compact – HM Government – 2010

Best Value Statutory Guidance – 2011

## **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

ALL

# Nottinghamshire COMPACT

This document sets out a framework to guide the relationships between Nottinghamshire County Council and the Voluntary & Community organisations of the County. It has been developed jointly by the County Council and the Voluntary & Community Sector.

## Our Shared Values & Principles

We propose that these shared values and principles should be used to guide and underpin the long-term development of our working relationships within Nottinghamshire:

- By working in partnership towards common aims and objectives we will add value to services in Nottinghamshire.
- Joint working demands integrity and a willingness to communicate in accountable, open and honest ways
- The County Council and the voluntary and community sector have distinct but valuable and complementary roles, in the development and delivery of public policy and services
- Differences of opinion will arise, but we are committed to resolving them in a constructive and respectful manner
- The independence of the voluntary and community sector is crucial to the development, delivery and scrutiny of quality services
- Voluntary and community organisations are entitled, regardless of funding sources, to act as advocates in challenging and seeking changes in public policy
- We need to be active in ensuring that minority ethnic and other disadvantaged groups are included in our consultation and policy development processes so that their views are heard and their concerns acted upon

## How we will work together

Nottinghamshire County Council	VCS
➤ Recognise and support the independence of the sector, the quality of its service provision and its role in advocating for communities and individuals	➤ Maintain high standards of governance and service delivery to meet their obligations to funders and users within the framework of the law

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Operate commissioning and funding processes (including de-commissioning or grant withdrawal) which recognise the sector's need to operate efficiently and effectively</li> <li>➤ Recognise that liaison and consultation need time and money. The VCS cannot undertake these activities at the expense of service provision. A clear protocol on consultation arrangements must be agreed and liaison and consultation must be paid for</li> <li>➤ Recognise the complexity of the sector and the broad range of views and groups representatives have to reflect. Pay to support proper representative processes and use the channels that are created</li> <li>➤ Recognise that small, local groups have an important voice. Support the VCS in channelling that voice so that it is heard particularly by supporting the infrastructure leadership role</li> <li>➤ Allocate resources against clear and consistent criteria in an open and fair process. Use the VCS quality standards in agreed monitoring processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Participate in liaison and review meetings to ensure that users, volunteers, members and supporters are informed and consulted, as appropriate, about activities and policy positions.</li> <li>➤ Select and support representatives. However, a representative must say when he/she is speaking for him/herself or their organisation or on behalf of a wider network. Furthermore, the representative should report back to his/her organisation or network and other relevant interested organisations</li> <li>➤ Help and encourage joint working between small and excluded organisations</li> <li>➤ Develop quality standards appropriate to the sector, and put in place the leadership and policies for promoting best practice and equality of opportunity in activities, employment, involvement of volunteers and service provision</li> </ul>
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## Effective Dispute Resolution

Despite best intentions, disputes arise and sometimes threaten important relationships.

Wherever possible, disputes and disagreements should be resolved amicably. The process of resolving disputes amicably between local partners is an important part of strengthening on-going relationships between the sectors.

Prevention is better than cure – if there are concerns around funding or relationships with the County Council it should be addressed before it becomes a problem.

The organisation/s concerned should discuss the issue with the County Council and try to resolve the issue amicably between them.

We agree to keep it professional and to involve outside help if needed.