



# The Hounslow Compact



London Borough  
of Hounslow

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# Foreword

As Chair of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), it gives me great pleasure to welcome you to The Hounslow Compact.

Over the next four years, in light of the government's national programme of cuts, a robust and solid partnership approach to meeting the borough's needs will be paramount. The Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) are an important partner in working to achieve this and the Hounslow Compact is key to defining this relationship.

The Hounslow Voluntary Sector Compact provides a clear action plan for the implementation of principles that will improve relations between sectors, including

- A framework for developing positive working relationships between LSP partners, when they are working in partnership with the voluntary sector.
- A commitment to the implementation of best practice funding principles, including a commitment to the implementation of at least three year funding for voluntary organisations and the continuation of grant funding where appropriate.
- A commitment to set in place clear processes for consulting and involving the voluntary and community sector, this commitment puts emphasis on both voluntary and statutory organisations to put in place processes that make best use of the resources available.

However the real strength of the Compact lies in the partnerships that will strengthen through the implementation of the action plan; developed through the review processes and attributing areas of work to various teams and organisations to ensure that the commitments held within the document are upheld.



**Councillor Jagdish Sharma**  
**Leader of the Council and Chair of Hounslow LSP**

# Introduction

Established in 1998, the Compact is an agreement between government and the voluntary and community sector in England. It recognises shared values, principles and commitments and sets out best practice guidelines for how both parties should work together in partnership.

It is acknowledged that establishment of best practice for partnership working will help with:

- Better co-ordination
- Efficient and effective service delivery
- Regular self improvement
- Increasing quality
- Increasing transparency
- Reduced complications

Although the Compact is not legally binding and is built on trust and mutual goodwill, its authority is derived from its endorsement by government and by the voluntary and community sector itself through its consultation process.

To reflect a refresh of the national document, the Hounslow Compact (based on an agreement between the local VCS and the LSP) has similarly been refreshed. The refresh process, co-ordinated by the Compact Champions Working Group, has been influenced considerably by collated information from consultation events, the Compact Champions web forum and the Compact Champions meetings themselves.

## Compact principles

The Hounslow Compact outlines compact principles between the local statutory sector and the local VCS that serve to offer guidance in working effectively towards best practice. The shared principles of The Hounslow Compact are:

### Respect

The local statutory sector and the VCS are accountable in different ways, but both need to act with transparency and integrity. Effective partnerships are built on mutual understanding and an appreciation of the differences between partners of the the Hounslow Compact.



### Honesty and transparency

It is only through open communication channels that strong partnerships can be built and maintained. Full and frank discussions should be the basis for coming to partnership agreements and resolving difficulties. Transparency should be maintained at all times to demonstrate accountability within the partnership.

### Independence

The independence of the local VCS is recognised and supported. This includes its right within the law to campaign, to comment on and to challenge local statutory sector policy (whatever funding or other relationship may exist with local statutory bodies) and to determine and manage its own affairs.

### Diversity

The local statutory sector and the VCS value a thriving civil society, which brings innovation and choice through a multitude of voices. The make up of the London Borough of Hounslow is mixed, with diverse communities that are supported by specialist VCS and groups that are key in service provision.

## Equality

Fairness for everyone, regardless of their background, is a fundamental goal, and local statutory sector and local VCS will work together to achieve this. The Hounslow Compact recognises the individuals and their protected characteristics.

## Citizen empowerment

By working together, the local statutory sector and the VCS can deliver change that is built around communities and people, meeting their needs and reflecting their choices and thus improving the quality of life for service users and empower them as citizens free to live in society within the law.

## 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. Volunteering in society indicates passion for a cause and can be viewed as an expression of an individual's citizenship and democracy.

## Common goals

It is important that VCS and statutory partners recognise their similarities in working towards shared outcomes. Working in partnership between sectors and establishing common goals can develop efficiencies in achieving these outcomes.

Both the local statutory sector and local VCS are committed to these principles.

## Implementation and monitoring

The Hounslow Compact outlines the fundamental commitments and values of the partnership that;

- Involve the local VCS in local policy development at local statutory level
- Involve the local VCS in the allocation of resources, as distributed by local statutory bodies
- Involve the local VCS in the advancement of equality

The Hounslow Compact will be implemented and monitored by the Hounslow VCS Partnership. The Hounslow VCS Partnership is made up of local statutory sector and VCS representatives who act as advocates of the Compact and oversee the implementation of the commitments contained within the document. The Hounslow VCS Partnership will also be responsible for leading on the refresh of the document every three years.

## Resolving issues with the Compact

The London Borough of Hounslow and the VCS are committed to complying with the Compact.

Although the Compact process is one of learning, development and dialogue – occasionally differences between organisations may occur which need to be resolved. Outlined below is the process to adopt should differences arise.

- 1 All Compact disputes should at first attempt to directly resolve themselves through amicable discussion between the parties involved
- 2 Should the issue cease to be resolved, a formal complaint should be lodged – which should be processed by the 'perpetrator's' standard internal complaints procedure
- 3 If this process still does not resolve the issue, then the case can be referred to the Compact Champions working group; who will assess the situation and make recommendations on actions which could be taken to remedy the issue
- 4 If the issue is still not resolved, the Compact Champions working group will signpost both parties to alternative dispute resolution sources

At a national level, the Compact Advocacy Programme helps organisations who have experienced either Compact breaches or public law wrongs. They can offer free advice if an organisation is experiencing issues with a public body.

[www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/advice-support/compact-advocacy/how-we-can-help](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/advice-support/compact-advocacy/how-we-can-help)

# Policy development

As a result of their specialist knowledge and understanding of the local community, VCS organisations play an important role in shaping public service delivery, tackling inequalities and contributing to the development of a sustainable local environment. The importance of the VCS in the development of a prosperous and cohesive community is increasingly recognised at both a local and national level. Local VCS influence is essential for shaping policy, especially where decisions at local level will have an impact on the sector. The expertise of the local VCS in addressing the needs of the community is invaluable and their knowledge is key in policy development.

Involving the local VCS in policy development is a continuous process right from the earliest stages. Methods range from informal engagement of small groups to local VCS wide consultation in existing formal structures including Partnership Boards, Integrated Management Boards and Provider Forums.

## 1 When to involve?

### Both sector commitments

- 1.1 Identify and involve the organisations and their service users, beneficiaries, members, volunteers and trustees who have an interest in the focus of the consultation for driving local policy at the earliest stages. Appreciate that there will be occasions in which consultation on policy development at a local level is not appropriate (e.g. in association with new legislation).

### Local statutory sector commitments

- 1.2 Provide clarity on the scope of all consultations; highlighting which points are negotiable and which are not.
- 1.3 Give as much time as possible for engagement activity of at least 12 weeks, unless legislative restrictions placed on local statutory sector bodies or other restrictions exist outside of statutory sector control.
- 1.4 Involve the VCS and their service users, beneficiaries, members, volunteers and trustees from the earliest possible stages of policy development, on all relevant issues likely to affect it.
- 1.5 Inform the VCS on the progress of policy development if views have been sought and if there is any scope to take further input for consultation.

- 1.6 To plan consultations well in advance of their execution; ensuring and assessing whether there is a need for the consultation exercise and ensuring the topic has not been consulted on before, where previous consultation data can be used.

### Local VCS commitments

- 1.7 To accept in some cases, that consultation time frames may be under 12 weeks if influencing factors are outside those of local statutory sector control.
- 1.8 To provide timely responses to questionnaires and surveys produced by statutory organisations, where the 12 week period of consultation is honoured by the local statutory sector.

## 2 Who to involve?

### Both sector commitments

- 2.1 Ensure that any barriers to involvement in engagement activities are identified and remedied to the best of ability.

### Local statutory sector commitments

- 2.2 Support the development of VCS infrastructure organisations, which enable VCS organisations to help people and communities more effectively.
- 2.3 Encourage and facilitate responses from a full range of VCS organisations are likely to have a view. Scale of consultation should be influenced by the size of the project.

### Local VCS commitments

- 2.4 Inform the membership that is being represented how their views have been utilised and the outcomes of consultations.

## 3 How to involve?

### Both sector commitments

- 3.1 Ensure that all individuals consulted are clearly made aware of how their views have been utilised as a result of their contribution. To provide clear reasoning behind decisions for any views not taken on board.
- 3.2 Not place unrealistic burdens or expectations on partner organisations.



- 3.3 Promote mutual support and effective partnership working within and between the voluntary, public and private sectors.
- 3.4 Appreciate the various activities which enable effective engagement; including provision of information, consultation, involvement activity and partnerships.
- 3.5 Use engagement methods that are fit for purpose and transparent.
- 3.6 Clearly outline procedures of consultation and ensure that all individuals consulted are clearly made aware of how their views have been utilised as a result of their contribution.
- 3.7 Ensure that a transparent approach to engagement is employed.
- 3.8 Ensure that the VCS is involved in all relevant decision making opportunities.
- 3.9 Ensure that all individuals consulted are clearly made aware of how their views have been utilised as a result of their contribution.
- 3.10 Publicise consultation exercises widely and ensure they are accessible to the people they are intended to reach.
- 3.11 Effectively consult with service users, volunteers, carers and members to accurately present a picture of need in the borough. Effectively utilise the VCS in all relevant consultation and policy development activity.
- 3.12 Ensure that all research and information presented to the local statutory sector is accurate and credible. It must be shown to be sourced appropriately and whether any conflicting points in the response are indicated.
- 3.13 Work to effectively capture the needs and priorities of service users to ensure that collated information can be shared with statutory sector organisations to identify priorities.

**Local statutory sector commitments**

- 3.8 Ensure that the VCS is involved in all relevant decision making opportunities.
- 3.9 Ensure that all individuals consulted are clearly made aware of how their views have been utilised as a result of their contribution.

# Investing in outcomes

The local VCS operates with efficiency and resourcefulness in offering service provision and is well positioned in understanding the needs of the community.

The co-designing of public services is a commitment made by the government and with increasing levels of commissioning from the local statutory sector, it is important that the local VCS is involved in identifying how best to allocate resources and invest in outcomes for public service delivery. By working together and consulting appropriately, local providers can co-design services and programmes that are built to meet the needs of the London Borough of Hounslow and its individuals.

## 4 Planning

### Both sector commitments

- 4.1 Agree to achievable time frames that allow for sufficient engagement of all sectors looking to tender for commissioned services.
- 4.2 Establish appropriate specifications that meet the outcomes desired, taking into account legal restrictions, evaluation criteria and the nature of services.
- 4.3 Allocate sufficient resources to support engagement for planning of resource allocation, ensuring that opportunities are accessible.
- 4.4 Share information regarding external funding at the earliest possible opportunity to ensure that both sectors can work together to develop strategically valid and competitive bids to meet the needs of the borough.
- 4.5 Ensure there is clarity over where conflicts of interest lie in planning of allocating resources.
- 4.6 Avoid planning for resources where alternative provision has been allocated for the same work to limit duplication of investment.

### Local statutory sector commitments

- 4.7 Ensure that all funding opportunities, procedures and decisions are open, fair and transparent.
- 4.8 Ensure policy (procurement and corporate grants) is clear about circumstances when grants, service level agreements or commissioning of services are most appropriate.

- 4.9 Ensure that processes associated with funding (application, qualification, monitoring and reporting) are in proportion to the amount of funding.
- 4.10 Involve VCS in the determination of priorities.
- 4.11 Advocate that statutory bodies, private bodies and VCS that distribute public money, where beneficiaries are other VCS, do so within the spirit of The Hounslow Compact by making it a requirement for funding arrangements.

### Local VCS commitments

- 4.12 Involve users, beneficiaries, members, volunteers and trustees when designing or reviewing programmes and services.
- 4.13 Be clear about who it is representing, in what capacity and on what basis they are making that representation.
- 4.14 Understand and adapt to government policy agenda and legislation where this shapes outcomes for commissioned services when planning for bidding on such services.

## 5 Application and bidding process

### Local statutory sector commitments

- 5.1 Develop funding and commissioning opportunities that are publicised with sufficient time to warrant successful bid submissions. Appreciate that new consortia cannot form in the limited timeframe of the commissioning cycle from consultation to expressions of interest.
- 5.2 Use commissioning and procurement procedures that are accessible to the local VCS and ensure that these procedures are appropriately designed.
- 5.3 Be clear how bids will be assessed, indicating scoring systems and tender evaluations such as use of best value analysis.
- 5.4 Recognise the value of the VCS in the development of cross sector partnership bids for external funding sources.

### Local VCS commitments

- 5.5 Ensure all tender and bid submissions meet necessary requirements, as outlined in grant or tender criteria – ensuring 'need' is sufficiently evidenced and applications are suitably robust.

- 5.6 Understand associated documentation, ensuring that it correlates with the organisation's own overall mission and does not conflict with the organisation's constitution.
- 5.7 Develop and hold a clear understanding of full cost recovery when applying for resources, appreciating the principles behind costing core activities and overheads are necessary for operational effectiveness. Ensuring this is suitably demonstrated in bid submissions.
- 5.8 Have clear relationship structures between partnering organisations in a consortium, where each organisation fully understands its level of accountability.

## 6 Allocating funding

### Local statutory sector commitments

- 6.1 Work to support the VCS in its capacity building activities.
- 6.2 Encourage and support organisations in diversifying funding sources and where appropriate, explore the possibility of income-generating activities.
- 6.3 Recognise that full cost recovery in bid submissions is legitimate and supports VCS organisational stability.
- 6.4 Be consistent when developing monitoring mechanisms for funded and commissioned organisations, ensuring they are reflective of the amount awarded.
- 6.5 Be consistent across sectors when requesting cost breakdowns from organisations.
- 6.6 Where possible, commit to funding arrangements of at least three years, thus contributing to the further stability and strategic planning of the VCS.
- 6.7 Inform organisations that have applied for funding 12 weeks prior the expected start date of their success or failure in the selection process, justifying any departures from this time-scale.
- 6.8 Be clear on the risks of the project and agree delivery terms before a funding arrangement is made, ensuring that delivery terms and risks are proportional to the funding agreement.
- 6.9 Recognise that payments in advance of expenditure support the organisational stability of VCSs. Payments made in arrears should be justified, as should withheld payments.

- 6.10 Make payments within 21 working days of invoices being received, provided they are in line with the needs of effective service delivery.
- 6.11 Ensure the size and scale of an agreed funding arrangement reflects the project's objectives and attracts those organisations best placed to deliver required outcomes.

### Local VCS commitments

- 6.12 Explore external funding sources to ensure maximum organisational sustainability.
- 6.13 Be clear about payment terms. Where appropriate, be able to justify that payment in advance is beneficial for effective service delivery through increased security and stability of the VCS.

## 7 Monitoring and delivery

### Both sector commitments

- 7.1 Negotiate monitoring and reporting requirements, where possible, before an agreement is signed.
- 7.2 Recognise and appreciate that funding a relationship within a contractual framework between the local statutory sector (benefactors) and the local VCS (beneficiaries) is fundamentally a business relationship.
- 7.3 Advocate and develop continuous improvement, recognising the need to balance efficiency with quality service delivery.

### Local statutory sector commitments

- 7.4 Establish and maintain clear monitoring and reporting requirements that are proportionate to the value of the opportunity.
- 7.5 Discuss and agree how outcomes will be monitored before a contract or funding agreement is signed.
- 7.6 Be clear about what information is being requested, why and how it will be used.
- 7.7 Discuss and agree a timetable of actions with organisations that are having problems with delivery of their projects to improve performance before ending a funding relationship.



### Local VCS commitments

- 7.8 Meet all reporting and monitoring requirements associated with funding arrangements. Ensure that all relevant documentation is available and up to date.
- 7.9 Remain accountable for any services delivered.
- 7.10 Have appropriate governance arrangements in place to ensure projects are well managed; both practically and financially.
- 7.11 Be clear about the risks associated with delivering funded services.
- 7.12 Have clear and well managed monitoring procedures recognising that these are crucial for good management and service delivery practise and a requirement by awarding statutory bodies. Recognise that payments will not be released until sufficient monitoring procedures are employed.
- 7.13 Appreciate that monitoring mechanisms may vary dependant upon the value and nature of the funding arrangement.
- 7.14 Have appropriate governance arrangements in place, ensuring that everyone involved in the funding arrangement for delivery of public services or other allocated resource understands and agrees to delivery terms.

- 7.15 Recognise that adopting a Quality Assurance System and obtaining a Quality Mark can better demonstrate quality in an organisation, which is advantageous in securing funding and earning recognition.
- 7.16 Be open and transparent in reporting.
- 7.17 Accept that it is legitimate for statutory funding bodies to ask for public recognition of their allocation of resources.
- 7.18 Contribute positively to review of programmes and services to develop better provision for service users.
- 7.19 Recognise that any pre-determined outcomes and monitoring associated with funding arrangements need to be met and that failure to fulfil this can jeopardise payments.

## 8 Terminating

### Local statutory sector commitments

- 8.1 Assess the impact on stakeholders before deciding to end a funding relationship or other allocated resource, giving 12 weeks written notice, dependant on the value of the allocated resource and provide a clear rationale for why the decision has been taken. Where applicable, use this time frame to allow funded organisations to make a challenge before a final decision is made.
- 8.2 Review programmes and services currently being delivered or that have ceased with relevant VCS organisations to develop better provision for service users.

### Local VCS commitments

- 8.3 Give notice as early as possible to funding statutory bodies, where changes in the organisation increase the risk of undermining service delivery for local statutory funded work.
- 8.4 Plan for end of a funding arrangement with a statutory body to reduce impact on an organisation's stakeholders with focus on long term stability.

# Advancing equality

The advancement of equality among all individuals is a core value of a democratic society, whether it is national, regional or local. For the London Borough of Hounslow, active efforts are being made in striving to preserve and progress equality. Changes in the local make up of the population of the London Borough of Hounslow, its service needs and changes in discrimination legislation mean that current efforts and practice around equality need to be reviewed regularly.

The following Compact commitments on advancing equality serve to offer guidance on preventing discrimination and promoting equality and inclusion for all where partnership activity exists between both the local statutory sector and the local VCS. The law protects individuals from discrimination on the basis of a number of different characteristics including race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, disability and gender reassignment. These are referred to in this document as 'protected characteristics'.

The histories and issues facing people who share these characteristics are complex and often unique. This diversity should be understood and respected.

## 9 Promoting equality and diversity

### Both sector commitments

- 9.1 Promote better understanding and awareness of the diversity and independence of people of all characteristics and the contributions they make in our community.
- 9.2 Ensure that the local VCS in its entirety, including those organisations that serve people of protected characteristics have equal opportunities to access statutory funding and influence policy development.
- 9.3 Identify and remove barriers that prevent volunteering by people with protected characteristics.
- 9.4 Be well informed on changes around equality legislation and the actions that are required to uphold equality, especially where a funding arrangement exists.

### Local statutory sector commitments

- 9.5 Where appropriate, work with organisations in the local VCS that represent vulnerable people with protected characteristics, to understand their specific needs and design appropriate services.
- 9.6 Following withdrawal of a strategic award to an organisation supporting service users of protected characteristics, assess the need to reallocate the award to another organisation serving the same group.
- 9.7 Work to support VCSs in accessing free CRB (Criminal Record Bureau) checks for volunteers and clarifying processes surrounding this.

### Local VCS commitments

- 9.8 Show committed leadership to promote equality and inclusion of volunteers that carry protected characteristics.

## 10 Representation

### Both sector commitments

- 10.1 Take practical action to encouraging people with protected characteristics to participate in consultation in either policy development or allocation of resources.
- 10.2 Work to include groups that involve people with protected characteristics at community level and support them with reasonable adjustments.

### Local statutory sector commitments

- 10.3 Recognise the funding of organisations that only serve users with a limited number of protected characteristics does not amount to exclusion and that such organisations are important to meeting the needs of the borough.

### Local VCS commitments

- 10.4 Be clear on who is being represented and how their views have been gathered. Representatives should be able to justify their suitability of speaking on behalf of the people with protected characteristics that they are representing.

# Glossary

## **Borough**

Refers to The London Borough of Hounslow.

## **Best practice**

Procedures that are deemed to produce the best outcomes when carrying out activities. These are subject to regular review for the purposes of producing optimal results and are recognised as desirable in partnership work between the local VCS and the local statutory sector. The Hounslow Compact has been developed using the National Compact and other local compacts as models, together with local consultation means to develop the compact commitments of best practice.

## **Best value analysis**

A process used by statutory sector bodies in their procurement of external providers. This analysis weighs benefits covering criteria such as social, economic and environmental impact of a provider's service against the costs of the service. Provider track record also contributes to the analysis in an overall assessment of the quality and value of the service against its costs.

## **Co-design**

To design with the views and input of different ideals and perspectives in an inclusive manner. As an example, the forming of commissioned services can involve a partnership approach between the local VCS and the local statutory sector, as well as other stakeholders by taking their input for the design process.

## **Community networks**

A network of community organisations that vary in their legal formation, from a loose network of organisations to a constituted consortium. Such networks can be representative of their member organisations and members are often complimentary in their service provision.

## **Commissioning**

The entire process of consulting, identifying, planning, procurement (buying), delivery and review of contracted services. A contracting authority that issues an advert for a tender invites other organisations to bid for the work in a competitive process. VCS organisations are largely concerned with commissioned public services (e.g. health and social care), as opposed to other commissioned tenders, such as infrastructure and utilities (e.g. road works, water works) and supply (e.g. IT equipment, food).



Commissioning and procurement of commissioned contracts is governed by the Procurement Contracts Regulation (2006). This regulation stems from the EU Directive on the Co-ordination of Procurement Procedures 2004.

## **Compact commitments**

The individual points in the Hounslow Compact that both the local statutory sector and the local VCS are expected to honour when striving for best practice.

## **Compact refresh**

The process of refreshing the original national Compact, launched in 1998 to meet best practice needs of today. The refresh of the original Compact produced 'The Compact', the current national document for VCS and statutory sector partnership working.

## **Consortium (pl. consortia)**

An association of two or more entities with the objective of participating in a common activity or the pooling of resources. The forming of consortia by small VCS organisations may be a route for such VCS organisations to compete and tender for commissioned services. In the context of the Hounslow Compact, such entities are VCS organisations, but may also include private sector organisations and statutory sector organisations. A consortium does not necessarily have to be formally constituted, although its entities may be asked to legally constitute prior to an award of a contract for commissioned services.

## **Consultation**

Taking the views of others in decision making processes. Consultations can occur on various issues such as policy development, planning of buildings/sites or commissioned services. Methods of consultation range from meetings, surveys, emails and web sites.

## **Engagement**

The process of involving people in decisions that affect them. This can mean involving communities in the planning, development and management of services. Or, it may be about tackling the problems of a neighbourhood, such as crime, drug misuse or lack of play facilities for children. Consultation, involvement, information provision and partnership work are all examples of contributors to engagement. The engagement period can be defined as the timeline from when open dialogue and opportunity for influencing the decision process begins, up to a set closing date.

## **External funding**

In the context of The Hounslow Compact, where funding is traditionally from statutory sector bodies, such as Hounslow Council or NHS Hounslow, external funding would include non-statutory funding. This can include lottery distributors and public appeals (such as the Big Lottery Fund, Comic Relief, BBC Children in Need); trusts and foundations; donations, payroll giving, gift aid and legacies; private companies and small businesses; trading and investments.

## **Full cost recovery (FCR)**

A method of cost allocation, which ensures appropriate portions of overheads and indirect staff/volunteer (management, finance, administration) time are allocated in the funding of projects and services. Unlike the funding of direct costs alone, FCR is a best practice approach for the purposes of VCS organisational sustainability.

## **Funding arrangement**

Funding within a contractual framework, which can include service level agreements and tenders from commissioning.

## **Government policy agenda**

These are documents that describe the findings of research and the direction the government is taking on a range of key national areas. Examples include 'Putting People First', the governing document for health and social care for adults and 'Every Child Matters', the governing document for safeguarding of children and young people, both of which include outcomes.

## **Grant**

Funding awarded to an organisation to undertake a specific project or service, in accordance to specific, pre-determined criteria. Organisations awarded a grant may be asked to monitor and demonstrate how it has been spent.

## **Outcomes**

Desired changes for the benefit of service users. These tend to be broad changes and are drawn largely from central government policy agenda for statutory commissioned services.

## **Quality Assurance System (QAS)**

A formal management system used to increase effectiveness and efficiency by setting out expectations that an organisation striving for quality should meet. QASs can be specific for different sectors and organisations, where popular 'off-the-shelf' systems are adopted.

## **Quality Mark**

A mark of attainment of a QAS standard. Quality Marks can be used on an organisation's literature for added credibility and included in funding applications to demonstrate organisational quality and robustness. The Quality Mark demonstrates achievement of a standard and is awarded upon successfully passing the minimum criteria by an external assessor.

## **Procurement**

This is one part of the commissioning cycle and involves the buying of services following tender evaluation. Procurement in the London Borough of Hounslow Council is handled by the Central Procurement Unit, which oversees buying of the majority of commissioned tender submissions and ensures procurement is within the law and equally competitive. Other local authority establishments may have different procurement mechanisms.

## **Protected characteristics**

Likened to the definition of Protected Class as used in the United States of America, these are special characteristics carried by individuals which are recognised as equal. Such characteristics cannot be discriminated against and are protected by UK law. These include ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, belief, physical disability, mental disability, marital status and economic status.

# Glossary

## Reasonable adjustments

These are changes to help people work around any hindrances associated with their protected characteristics that can manifest. Such adjustments usually require little investment to implement and can include changes to the building or premises to make it accessible, changing the work style and/or providing equipment that makes the work easier. The Disability Discrimination Act requires employers to make reasonable adjustments. In the spirit of best practice, The Hounslow Compact advocates extending reasonable adjustments to volunteers for the advancement of equality.

## Service Level Agreements (SLA)

These are contractual terms that are attached to funding. They define the service they must provide and the level to which it is to be delivered. Such agreements set out responsibilities and priorities for the service that has been undertaken by the provider.

## Specification

A list of project outputs that have been agreed upon to meet outcomes.

## Stakeholder

An individual or group with an interest in the activities of an organisation. As an example, external stakeholders of a local VCS could be LBH Hounslow, NHS Hounslow, service users and other partner organisations. Internal stakeholders could be employed staff, volunteers and management committee members (trustees).

## Statutory sector

This is the collective name for all organisations that are public authority bodies. The Hounslow Compact concerns the London Borough of Hounslow, NHS Hounslow, Metropolitan Police: Hounslow Borough branch and other locally based public authorities in the borough that work in partnership with the local VCS.



## Tender

The same as bid, but its usage is associated with commissioning.

## Umbrella organisations

These are organisations that are representative of their members and enhance their profile, supporting them with resources and a collective identity.

## Voluntary and community sector (VCS)

This is the collective name for all organisations and groups, including charities and community associations. Such organisations and groups are non-profit driven, non-statutory, autonomous and are governed by unpaid individuals. Some types of social enterprises fall within the VCS, especially where their governing personnel are unpaid (serve on a voluntary basis) and their profiteering is for the organisation and its social aims as opposed to owners of the enterprise. VCS organisations are usually active on a local or community level, but are known to operate nationally and internationally. The Hounslow Compact concerns VCS organisations that work in partnership with the local statutory sector.

# Compact partners

**The London Borough of Hounslow**

**VCS Hounslow**

**The Local Strategic Partnership**

**Indian Gymkhana**

**Feltham Open Door**

**Hounslow Crossroads**

**Homestart Hounslow**

**No. 10 Project**

**Green Corridor**

**Volunteer Centre Hounslow**

**The Star Centre**

**West London Mental Health Trust**

**NHS Hounslow**

# Action plan

Theme	Aim	Objectives	Risks	Target	Leads
<b>Policy development</b>	4-12 week consultation period for policy/programme development based on potential impact of policy/programme  As a guide; 4 weeks; minimum impact – 12 weeks significant impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benchmarking exercise to determine target</li> <li>• Policy amendment</li> <li>• Timetable to be developed during business planning processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-adherence to guidance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benchmarking exercise complete</li> <li>• Targets developed for;               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Adherence to best practice</li> </ul>               Increase in strategic planning of consultation activity             </li> </ul>	<b>Commissioning Procurement Policy officers</b>
	12 week minimum engagement period for policy/programme development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benchmarking exercise to determine target</li> <li>• Policy amendment</li> <li>• Engagement strategy/best practice document</li> <li>• Timetable to be developed during business planning processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-adherence to guidance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benchmarking exercise complete</li> <li>• Targets developed for;               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Adherence to best practice</li> </ul>               Increase in strategic planning of consultation activity             </li> </ul>	<b>All</b>
	Stakeholder assessment by group as to whether consultations should be extended out to the VCS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular assessment of council 'consultation' pages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of commitment from Compact Champions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 80% of consultations to be passed by group</li> </ul>	<b>All</b>
	Develop the group so that it has a more representative make-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further publicity</li> <li>• Further links made with LSP organisations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representative make up, but low attendance</li> <li>• More difficulty associated with coming to agreement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compact champions representing all units with key VCS links and potential impact</li> <li>• Increased rep from VCS; aim to have reps from all 'thematic areas'</li> </ul>	<b>Hounslow VCS CPU</b>
	Identify any 'non-Compact' decisions; make recommendations as to how they can be remedied	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Championing Compact at unit level</li> <li>• Records of Compact 'non-compliances' kept</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of authority to remedy any Compact breaches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benchmarking activity surrounding non-Compact practices in teams</li> <li>• Target developed for non-compliance figure</li> </ul>	<b>All</b>

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Aim</i>	<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Risks</i>	<i>Target</i>	<i>Leads</i>
<b>Investing in Outcomes</b>	Work to ensure that prime and sub-contractors do so within the spirit of the Hounslow Compact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amendment of procurement policy, SLAs, contracts and grant agreements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inability to influence sub-contractor working practises</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful amendment of relevant policies</li> </ul>	<b>Procurement Contracts team Legal team</b>
	Develop clarity in how bids will be assessed; clearly outline scoring systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of 'best practice' guidance for use by council officers awarding grants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of commitment from Grants Officers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledgement and implementation of guidance</li> </ul>	<b>Procurement Grants Officers</b>
	Explore means by which social impact can be effectively assessed such as use of best value analysis or social return on investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of tool to measure social impact</li> <li>• Exploration of investment in SROI; potential funders etc</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of resources</li> <li>• Lack of effectiveness of tools employed</li> </ul>		<b>CPU Hounslow VCS</b>
	When under statutory sector control, ensure a 12 week notice period is adhered to should a funding relationship end or should restrictions take place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of benchmarking system</li> <li>• Development of 'best practice' guidance</li> </ul>	<p>Occurring should there be;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A reduction/cut in funding from central government</li> <li>• Ending of contract</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognised adherence to guidance</li> </ul>	<b>Procurement Commissioners Grants Officers</b>
<b>Advancing equality</b>	Work to ensure that all VCS organisations have equal access to access statutory funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work to amend financial assessment regulation which works against smaller organisations working in consortia – currently evaluated separately against whole contract value</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of influence to achieve changes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dialogue established with appropriate teams</li> <li>• Work initiated into establishment of alternative options</li> </ul>	<b>Procurement Finance</b>
	Identify and remove barriers that prevent volunteering by people of protected characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of agreed set of demographic data to be required as standard part of any monitoring arrangements</li> <li>• Development of borough-wide volunteering strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient monitoring practices</li> <li>• Lack of commitment to strategy development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring arrangements established</li> <li>• Volunteering strategy developed</li> </ul>	

# Year one action plan

Theme	Aim	Objectives	Risks	Target	Leads
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Identifying the 'hard to reach'</li> <li>– Identifying and addressing involvement barriers</li> </ul>			
	Work to support VCS organisations accessing free CRB checks and clarifying and de-mystifying the process surrounding this	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education and capacity building surrounding CRB checks and 'amended' vetting and barring scheme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constantly changing guidance political direction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidance developed</li> </ul>	<b>Hounslow VCS CPU</b>

## Performance monitoring

In addition to implementation of the action plan, a suite of performance indicators have been developed to measure the impact of the document. Benchmarking work will take place once sign-off is complete.

This will assess:

- Number of Compact Champions
  - VCS
  - LBH
  - Other statutory
- Number of 'Compact Successes' (positive implementation of commitments)
- Number of 'Compact non-compliances' (lack of implementation of commitments)
- Number of actions contested in the spirit of Hounslow Compact;
  - VCS
  - LBH
  - Other statutory

## Perceptions data

In order to measure the outcomes associated with the implementation of the Compact, and therefore the impact that the document has achieved in a qualitative manner, a number of perceptions will be measured amongst Compact Champions and the wider third and statutory sectors. This will take the form of an annual survey – to coincide with the annual refresh of the document.

### Example questions

Have you heard of the Hounslow Compact?

Do you feel it is relevant to your workstream?

What do you think are the benefits of the document?

What are the impacts you have seen achieved by the Compact?

What do you think have been the limitations of the document?

How could this area of work be improved?



Produced in partnership with the  
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