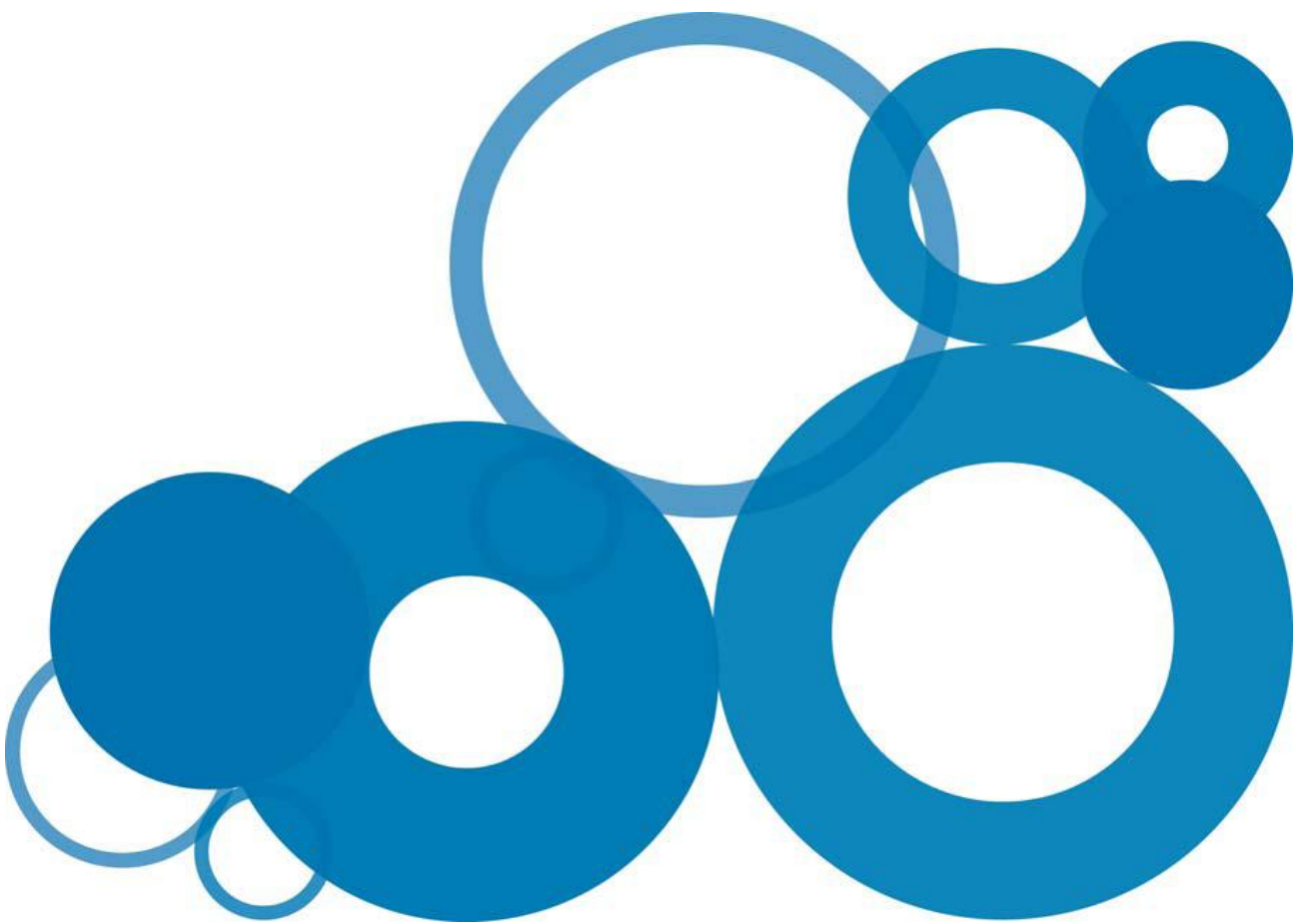


The Kirklees Compact

October 2012



1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Kirklees has a diverse Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS). It is made up of thousands of organisations that range from local neighbourhood groups to district-wide organisations and branches of national charities. These organisations are staffed and run by both un-paid volunteers and paid workers. Many of them are registered charities with boards of trustees, some are social enterprises or limited companies.

The sector continues to play a major role economically, socially, culturally and environmentally in Kirklees. Voluntary organisations work alongside and with the Public and Private sectors. We will, by working together, develop, deliver and evaluate services that continue to improve the wellbeing of communities in Kirklees.

1.2. Purpose

The Kirklees Compact defines the way we work together and provides a framework for effective working relationships between voluntary and community organisations, Kirklees Council and NHS Kirklees. Other public sector organisations are invited to sign up to the Kirklees Compact.

1.3. Introduction

Voluntary and public sector organisations face challenges and opportunities as public sector funding and services are reshaped by political and financial changes. Resources must be used to maximise the benefit to Kirklees communities

This document reaffirms a commitment to work together to improve Kirklees and the wellbeing of our communities. It is based on the national and local recognition of the sector being a key partner both in involving communities and delivering the improvements we all seek in Kirklees.

2. Our Shared Vision

“We will work in partnership to achieve common goals and outcomes that benefit the communities and people of Kirklees.”

We will work towards:

- a. A strong, diverse and independent civil society
- b. Effective and transparent decision making processes in relation to policies, programmes and services
- c. Delivery of responsive and high-quality programmes and services
- d. An equal and fair society

2.1. Key Principles

The partnership agrees to act in accordance with the following principles:

- **Openness**
We will act with integrity, accountability, fairness, openness and honesty with each other.
- **Mutual Respect**
We will respect and be respected. We will be valued equally, recognising the unique contributions, resources and constraints each brings to the partnership.
- **Partnership**
We will work towards common aims, evidence based best practice and contribute according to areas of expertise and ability.
- **Leadership & Governance**
We will ensure that we provide clear open strong leadership and ensure the governance arrangements of our organisations are representative and inclusive.
- **Diversity**
The diversity of the voluntary and community sector will be acknowledged and respected. The public sector will work with organisations in a way that is appropriate to their size and role within Kirklees.
- **Equality**
Our partnership recognises the differing needs and abilities in our community. We will work to ensure that everyone is able to realise their potential and benefit from the cultural, social and economic vitality of Kirklees.
- **Involvement**
We will continue to involve communities as a partnership approach to support our shared vision of the future.

2.2. Key Commitments

Partners make the following commitments:

Statutory Partners will:

- Be respectful and uphold the independence of VCS organisations.
- Be proactive in the support of the sector to deliver the aims of the VCS Strategy.
- Involve VCS organisations in developing and delivering services to the communities of Kirklees.
- Wherever possible allocate resources within timescales that encourage VCS organisations to plan for changes. This will include longer term contracts and agreements wherever possible.
- Communicate decisions to change any contract amount significantly at the earliest possible opportunity to allow for redundancy processes, consultation and support to beneficiaries to make other arrangements.
- Ensure both grant and procurement processes are clear, proportionate and fair.

VCS Organisations will :

- Provide clear information about needs, evidence of impact and their activities, showing how they make a difference (in proportion to the size of organisation and financial amount involved).
- Provide clear information about those who have been consulted or involved in decision making.
- Work together to improve partnership working, service delivery and the wellbeing of Kirklees communities.
- Apply good practice to the financial management of any public funds
- Engage with local politicians to ensure they are informed about the organisation, its aims and its beneficiaries

3. Communication and Representation

The implementation of the Compact will be the responsibility of a small Compact Steering Group. It will report annually to the Kirklees Partnership's Safer Stronger Communities (SSC) Board on the use, impact and areas for improvement.

For the compact to work communication and involvement needs to be simple and straightforward.

3.1. Compact champions

Each public sector organisation signing up to the compact will nominate a Compact Champion. Kirklees Third Sector Leaders will nominate a Compact Champion on behalf of local voluntary, community and third sector organisations.

These Champions will be publicised on partnership websites including Third Sector Leaders and the Community Conversations websites. Unless otherwise stated the Compact Champions will be the Chair of the Third Sector Leaders Group and the Assistant Director for Communities and Leisure will be the champion for Kirklees Council. A Health Compact Champion will be identified when structures are in place.

3.2. Compact Overview

Compact Steering Group made up of members from statutory partners and VCS, including representatives from:

- Kirklees Council's Communities and Leisure Service
- Third Sector Leaders Group
- NHS

The Compact Steering group will meet at least twice a year to review the Kirklees Compact documents. The Compact Steering Group can amend the documents and present them for signing by Compact Champions

3.3. Wider Involvement

There will be cross sector involvement in planning, reviewing and evaluating projects and services. This will be done in a number of ways that reflect the need and level required. For example, sounding boards made up of knowledgeable and experienced people from all sectors will come together to consider an issue, service or project. Third Sector Leaders Kirklees will promote these opportunities, be involved in planning them and receive reports and findings.

3.4. Communication and Media

Communication channels, which already exist, will be used and **developed** to minimise duplication and maximise efficiency for sharing information.

4. Disputes and challenges

Public and voluntary sector organisations can ‘challenge’ a process if they believe the terms of Compact have not been followed.

This will only be used to consider cases where the behaviour of partners is claimed to be in breach of the Compact. If an organisation is unhappy about a decision made, but not the process, then the normal grievance / complaint processes should be used.

This is how it will work:

- a. Partner organisation will initially discuss concerns with the organisation they feel have not followed the Kirklees Compact. They will use this document to identify clearly where they believe this to be the case, presenting evidence. The partners will aim to come to an agreement. The Compact Champion for each partner will be informed once an agreement is reached, and may be consulted for advice during this process.
- b. When an understanding or resolution cannot be reached the Compact Steering Group will be asked to review the process and outcomes under challenge. They will nominate at least two people to consider the situation and make recommendations to both parties. The aim will be to resolve this dispute and to improve future processes.
- c. If a resolution cannot be reached at this point the challenging organisation may, if appropriate, take the concern to the national structures such as the LA Ombudsman.

The annual report to the Kirklees Partnership’s Safer Stronger Communities (SSC) Board will summarise any challenges made and resultant action taken.

Any review of a process and the outcomes will be limited to learning how we can make improvements. The conciliation process should not be used to challenge decisions, but to raise concerns about processes and relationships.