

A COMPACT FOR TENDRING

AN AGREEMENT ON RELATIONS BETWEEN THE
STATUTORY AND VOLUNTARY SECTORS IN THE
TENDRING DISTRICT

JANUARY 2003

A PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE DEVELOPED BY:

Tendring
District Council



*Community Voluntary
Services Tendring*



Essex County Council

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1.0 COMPACT OVERVIEW

1.1 What is a Compact?

A Compact is a written document which sets out a formal framework through which statutory and voluntary sector organisations will work together to achieve common aims and aspirations for the ultimate benefit of local people.

A National Compact was agreed between the Government and the voluntary sector in November 1998, which highlighted the need for the formalisation and continuous development of working relationships at all levels to ensure that the combined resources of the sectors could be used most effectively and efficiently.

Compacts are not legally binding documents, rather their authority comes from the fact that they are developed, consulted upon and formally adopted by local stakeholders themselves. The Compact document will not be static, but will be monitored, developed and amended over time in order to reflect the changing needs and priorities of the local community. The success of a Compact is dependent upon the statutory and voluntary sectors making an equal commitment to maintaining principles of mutual respect, recognition, best practice and co-operation.

1.2 Defining the Partners

The statutory and voluntary sectors share many values and aspirations, and have distinct but nonetheless complementary roles in maintaining and enhancing quality of life for local communities. The voluntary sector is made up of a diverse range of independent, not for profit organisations, which enable individuals to play an increased role in public life, encourage inclusiveness and support the development of the local community at a grass roots level. The voluntary sector also makes a significant contribution to the local economy through the provision of services which, although essential in ensuring the well being of local people, are often beyond the resources of the statutory sector.

The development of a structured working arrangement between the statutory and voluntary sector in this District has become increasingly necessary as a result of the implementation of various Government initiatives which have a major impact upon the way in which services are planned and delivered locally, including the Modernising Local Government agenda, Best Value and the Community Planning.

1.3 A Compact for the Tendring District

Although good informal working relationships have been found to already exist between the statutory and voluntary sectors in this District, this position tends to be rooted in specific professional relationships which have built up between organisations and individuals over the course of time. The Compact will offer a systematic approach to partnership working between the sectors which guarantees equality of status and access to all stakeholders regardless of prior professional involvement.

Tendring Local Strategic Partnership is ultimately responsible for the achievement of a Compact for the Tendring District, with authority having been delegated to Tendring District Council and Tendring Community Voluntary Services to jointly co-ordinate the initial development process.

A Compact Conference was held in November 2001, which was attended by 120 representatives of statutory and voluntary sector organisations serving the Tendring District. A Compact Working Group, was formed in January 2002 to undertake the activities and research necessary to produce this Compact document.

2.0 **SHARED PRINCIPLES**

The Tendring Compact will be underpinned by the following principles:

- 2.1 Voluntary action is an essential component of democratic society;
- 2.2 An independent and diverse voluntary sector is fundamental to the well-being of the District community, particularly in respect of its efforts to promote, encourage and support community involvement and offer innovative solutions to local needs.
- 2.3 The statutory and voluntary sectors have distinct but complementary roles in respect of the development and delivery of policies and services;
- 2.4 There is added value in working in partnership to achieve common aims and objectives;
- 2.5 Meaningful consultation between the sectors builds relationships, improves policy development and enhances the design and delivery of services and programmes;
- 2.6 The statutory and voluntary sectors have different forms of accountability and are answerable to a range of stakeholders, but common to both is the need for integrity, objectivity, openness, honesty and leadership;
- 2.7 Voluntary organisations are entitled to campaign within the law to advance their aims;
- 2.8 Statutory organisations play a significant role, amongst other things, as funders of some voluntary and community organisations. Funding can be an important element of the relationship between the statutory and voluntary sectors;
- 2.9 Both sectors are committed to promoting and achieving equality of opportunity for all people, regardless of race, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation or religion;
- 2.10 Adherence to mutually agreed monitoring and evaluation mechanisms will be vital in maintaining the transparency and accountability of the Tendring Compact.

3.0 UNDERTAKINGS BY THE STATUTORY SECTOR

3.1 Independence

- 3.1.1 To recognise and support the independence of the voluntary sector, including its right within the law to campaign, lobby and determine and manage its own affairs, as well as to challenge and comment upon statutory policy, irrespective of any funding relationship that might exist;

3.2 Funding and Resources

- 3.2.1 To allocate resources against clear and consistent criteria, including value for money and relevance to service priorities;
- 3.2.2 To adopt funding policies which take into account the objectives of voluntary and community organisations and their need to operate efficiently and effectively, and to make timely payment of any grants agreed;
- 3.2.3 To have common, transparent arrangements for agreeing and evaluating objectives, performance indicators and associated targets;
- 3.2.4 To inform and consult the voluntary sector with regard to any changes to the funding position or future funding as early as possible and before the end of the current grant period;
- 3.2.5 To recognise the value of long term funding where appropriate, and where funds are available, to assist long term planning and stability;
- 3.2.6 To recognise the importance of providing an infrastructure to support the voluntary sector, and to promote its development in the Tendring District.

3.3 Policy Development and Consultation

- 3.3.1 To ensure wherever possible that the voluntary sector is provided with the opportunity to be appropriately represented on public boards, agencies and working groups;
- 3.3.2 To appraise new policies and procedures from the developmental stage, so as to identify as far as possible the implications for the voluntary sector;
- 3.3.3 To consult the voluntary sector on issues that are likely to affect it, particularly where new roles, tasks and responsibilities are proposed for the sector;
- 3.3.4 To allow timely and reasonable consultation timescales, which take into account the need of voluntary sector groups to meaningfully consult their users, beneficiaries and stakeholders;
- 3.3.5 To use plain language and avoid jargon in consultation documents intended for voluntary sector scrutiny, and provide concise summaries of extended documents wherever possible;
- 3.3.6 To give due consideration to any feedback received from the voluntary sector as a result of consultation exercises, and provide appropriate feedback within a reasonable timescale;

- 3.3.7 To positively take account of the specific needs, interests and contributions of voluntary sector organisations;
- 3.3.8 To respect the confidentiality of information provided by the voluntary sector, within the constraints of the law and the proper performance of public duties.

3.4 Better Government

- 3.4.1 To promote effective working relationships, consistency of approach and good practice between the statutory and voluntary sectors, particularly where strategic issues are concerned;
- 3.4.2 To adhere to the principles of open government and good regulation by ensuring that, subject to issues of confidentiality, decisions and findings are made public and explained;
- 3.4.3 To promote the principles set out in this Compact amongst other bodies which serve the District;
- 3.4.4 To take account of the Codes of Practice which will be established to complement this Compact.

4.0 UNDERTAKINGS BY THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

4.1 Funding and Accountability

- 4.1.1 To recognise that the receipt of public funds carries a responsibility to the funding body and to the public that benefit from the services provided;
- 4.1.2 To maintain high standards of governance and conduct, meet appropriate reporting and accountability obligations and, where applicable, observe the accounting framework for charities;
- 4.1.3 To respect and be accountable to the law, and in the case of charities, to observe guidance from the Charity Commission, particularly with regard to political activities and campaigning;
- 4.1.4 To operate with good management practice and maintain a commitment to equal opportunities in relation to staff, volunteers and clients;
- 4.1.5 To develop systems for quality assurance and accountability as appropriate;
- 4.1.6 To endeavour to diversify its funding base and avoid reliance upon any single source of funding, and explore ways in which the resources within the sector can be shared and maximised.

4.2 Policy Development and Consultation

- 4.2.1 To maintain an independent and constructively critical perspective with regard to providing feedback on statutory sector services and planning processes;
- 4.2.2 To respond fully and meaningfully to statutory sector consultation, including representation at meetings wherever possible;
- 4.2.3 To ensure that users, volunteers, staff, members and supporters are informed and consulted, where appropriate, before presenting a case to the statutory sector or responding to consultation, and to accurately report those views;
- 4.2.4 To respect the confidentiality of statutory sector information, when offered on such a basis.

4.3 Good Practice

- 4.3.1 To promote effective working relationships and good practice with the statutory sector and amongst individual voluntary sector organisations;
- 4.3.2 To involve users and members, wherever possible, in the development and management of activities and services, with particular regard to groups which are recognised to be a priority for the Tendring District, such as young people, the elderly and socially excluded people;
- 4.3.3 To put in place policies for promoting best practice and equality of opportunity in activities, employment, involvement of volunteers and service provision;
- 4.3.4 To promote the principles set out in this Compact amongst other bodies serving the District.
- 4.3.5 To take account of the Codes of Practice established to complement this Compact.

5.0 TAKING THE COMPACT FORWARD - JOINT UNDERTAKINGS

The following commitments for joint action are made by the statutory and voluntary sectors, to enable the achievement of targets set through annual action plans:

- 5.1 To work together to ensure the widespread recognition, understanding, application and development of the Tendring Compact;
- 5.2 To develop and adhere to rigorous monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure that the Tendring Compact makes a tangible and positive impact upon joint working in this District;
- 5.3 To develop and adhere to Codes of Practice which set out the operational arrangements through which the commitments of the Compact can be realised in respect of the following headings: Funding, Consultation and Policy Appraisal, Black and Minority Ethnic Groups, Volunteering and Community Groups
- 5.4 To develop and undertake activities which facilitate and encourage improved understanding and co-operation and the sharing of best practice within the sectors.

TO SIGN UP TO THE COMPACT PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN THE FOLLOWING

NAME OF ORGANISATION-----

We confirm that on -----(date of committee meeting) We agreed to sign up to the Tendring Local Compact and it's principles.
We confirm we have read and understood the Compact undertakings required.

CHAIRMAN

NAME_____SIGNATURE_____DATE_____

CHIEF OFFICER/MANAGER/TRUSTEE

NAME_____SIGNATURE_____DATE_____

Please identify a Compact Champion for your organisation they will be the contact for us to update with any Compact News or Events

COMPACT CHAMPION

NAME(capitals) _____TELEPHONE_____

EMAIL_____

If you have any queries please contact Karen Tedder-Ward on 01255-425692

PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED SLIP TO

Community Voluntary Services Tendring - Local Compact
Imperial House, Rosemary Road
Clacton on Sea Essex CO15 1NZ