

# Compact

working together | better together

# The Rochford Compact

A Local Compact for Rochford and District  
Voluntary, Community & Statutory Organisations, working together

## Forward

The national Compact is a partnership agreement that was established in 1998 between the voluntary & community sector and government to improve their relationship for mutual advantage.

Local Compacts aim to do this locally between the voluntary & community sector and local statutory bodies (i.e. primarily District/Borough Councils, Primary Care Trusts and County Councils).

They are a written understanding between these parties, but they are **not**:

- a legally binding document or contract
- a service level agreement
- a funding guarantee

Success lies in commitment to the principles set out within this Compact and in using it as an instrument to drive change.

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## **Our Vision is to :**

Effect improvement in the relationship between the statutory and voluntary/community sectors, through mutual trust and understanding

## **Overview of The Rochford Compact**

The Rochford Compact is an agreement between local Voluntary and Community Sector organisations. Rochford, Rayleigh Association of Voluntary Service (RRAVS) will act as the sectors representative<sup>1</sup>, Rochford District Council, South East Essex Primary Care Trust and Essex County Council setting out how we will work together in a series of Codes of Practice to achieve this vision.

These Codes of Practice are the promises between all parties and the systems to help make sure that the agreement works. They cover the following areas :

- Funding Code
- Community Groups' Code
- Volunteering Code
- Consultation and Policy Code
- Black and Minority Ethnic Groups' Code
- Procurement Code

Both sectors agree to ensure that we do not discriminate against any voluntary or community group or individual on the basis of faith, race, gender, age, disability or sexual

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<sup>1</sup> RRAVS provides the main infrastructure within the Rochford District Council area to the Community and Voluntary sector including representing the sector as a whole in relevant meetings and partnerships..

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orientation, and will respect the voluntary nature of their work

This Compact will be delivered by an action plan setting out the detail around:

- what we are aiming to achieve
- the resources available
- the actions to deliver the objectives
- responsibilities and timescales
- the measures of success

## **Benefits of The Rochford Compact**

Commitment to this Compact will enable:

- improved understanding and building on the relationships across the whole of the statutory, voluntary and community sectors working across the district in partnership for positive outcomes for the district
- maximise our collective effort through working together and pooling knowledge, expertise and other resources

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## Funding Code

The statutory sector will :

- Encourage the voluntary and community sector to deliver services, where appropriate and practicable
- adopt the practice of written agreements which set out the objectives being funded in a SMART<sup>1</sup> way, the payment arrangements and the monitoring of conditions
- adopt processes that are non-discriminatory to small voluntary and community groups
- work towards offering multi-year funding, including day to day running costs where possible
- adopt open, transparent and timely funding processes
- develop a joint approach with the voluntary and community groups to monitor and evaluate the use of funding against agreed objectives - making sure these are proportionate to the levels of funding
- provide a clear explanation of the reasons when a bid is unsuccessful

The voluntary and community sector will :

- make appropriate use of the services provided by local infrastructure organisations such as RRAVS in respect of
  - funding information
  - completion and submission of applications
  - advising the outcome of funding bids promptly
- develop with the statutory agencies effective and proportionate systems for the management, control, and accountability of finances.

<sup>1</sup> **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**esourced, **T**imed

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## **Community Groups' Code**

To promote a better understanding of community groups, how they operate within the wider voluntary sector and the particular problems they may face in order to help create and maintain the conditions and support that will help them succeed :

The statutory sector will :

- actively support the development of voluntary and community groups, recognising their local knowledge, expertise and perspective
- support the work of infrastructure organisations, to identify unmet need and facilitate the development of services to meet this need
- be accountable and transparent with the community and voluntary sector

The voluntary and community sector infrastructure organisation will :

- make and maintain contact with as many voluntary and community sector organisations as feasible, to ensure that services provided cover as wide a range of activities as realistically possible
- encourage and facilitate collaborative working between organisations where appropriate

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## Volunteering Code

To encourage more people to become involved in the various forms of voluntary activity that are a vital part of active citizenship and offer them the necessary support :

The statutory sector will :

- recognise the four principles of volunteering :
  - **Choice** – volunteering is a choice, not a forced activity
  - **Reciprocal benefit** – volunteers should benefit from volunteering e.g. new skills, sense of achievement
  - **Diversity** – volunteering should be open, accessible and relevant to all
  - **Recognition** – the value of volunteering must be recognised and voluntary sector costs are properly enumerated

The voluntary and community sector will :

- actively promote and value volunteers and volunteering
- ensure that volunteers have access to support and training.
- ensure that volunteers are managed and supported with clear roles and 'CRB' checked where necessary
- ensure that volunteers are offered appropriate out-of-pocket expenses



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## **Consultation and Policy Code**

To establish effective consultation processes that give the opportunity for all partners to inform policies/strategies and delivery plans :

The statutory sector will :

- develop consultation arrangements with the voluntary and community sector when planning consultation events
- build consultation early into plans for statutory policy and strategy development, ideally allowing a minimum of 12 weeks for written consultation where possible
- ensure that all documents use simple, clear language and are provided in formats to meet the needs of residents of Rochford District
- Ensure consultation processes take into account the constraints upon, and resource implications for, voluntary and community organisations and use a range of consultation methods in order to be as inclusive as possible
- Where appropriate and necessary build the capacity of voluntary and community groups to engage in consultation processes
- share feedback on the results of consultation
- respect confidentiality of information provided and supplied

The voluntary and community sector will :

- Assist at the early stage in the development of consultation by the public sector

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- encourage participation in consultation both as an organisation and by its individual membership
  - respond to consultation initiatives in a constructive and inclusive way
  - share feedback on the results of consultation
  - respect confidentiality of information provided and supplied

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## **Minorities Code**

To ensure that groups and individuals from all sections of the community have the opportunity to play a full and active role in partnership working :

The statutory sector will :

- engage and ensure that groups are involved in development of policy and best practice
- implement and monitor equal opportunities policies

The voluntary and community sector will :

- work with statutory and other voluntary and community organisations to eradicate discriminatory practices and promote a fully inclusive culture

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## **Procurement Code**

To develop effective purchasing arrangements from the voluntary sector, for example, community transport service :

The statutory sector will :

- work with the voluntary and community sector to :
  - identify need
  - plan required service outcomes
  - develop of effective procurement strategies
  - purchase of services
  - delivery of services
- consider the community and voluntary sector when looking for services and keep the voluntary and community sector informed of procurement options and opportunities
- work to reduce barriers to entry through proportional and appropriate levels of contracting arrangements

The voluntary and community sector will :

- contribute specialist knowledge and experience and draw on its unique access to the wider community as a partner:
  - identify need
  - plan required service outcomes
  - develop of effective procurement strategies
  - purchase of services
  - delivery of services

- 
- work with the statutory sector to reduce barriers to entry through proportional and appropriate levels of contracting arrangements

