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FOREWORD

The Cornwall Compact 2010 is an agreement which sets out the principles which underlie the relationship for collaborative working between the public sector and the voluntary and community sector.

The refreshed version takes forward the original aspiration that both sectors can effectively deliver more, by working together and developing a greater understanding of each other, into a new decade. It builds on the 2009 national Compact refresh, which underpins the relationships between Government and civil society. At this time of great change it is vital that all the agencies in Cornwall are dedicated to public service and work together to meet new challenges.

The refreshed Cornwall Compact is a living document which will be regularly reviewed and amended as the relationship between the sectors evolves.

ADDENDUM

Cornwall Strategic Partnership (CSP) was the body responsible for drawing up and maintaining the Cornwall Compact. Since December 2010, the CSP has ceased to exist, and from May 2011 this role has been taken over by the Voluntary & Community Sector Commissioning Board (VCSCB). Therefore, reference to the CSP should be disregarded throughout the text and read as VCSCB.

THE REFRESHED COMPACT

The Cornwall Compact is the local version of the national agreement between the Government and the voluntary sector setting out how the two partners should work together for the greater good of society. It works by setting out key, shared principles for collaboration between the two sectors and includes openness, responsiveness, honesty, integrity, objectivity, leadership, consistency and equality.

Cornwall Voluntary Sector Forum has employed Keltie Seaber as Compact Development Officer to:

- Promote and embed Compact compliant ways of working
- Coordinate the mediation procedure if disputes about Compact issues arise.

Its Compact work to date includes:

- Coordinating the refresh of the Cornwall Compact in line with the National Compact refresh in December 2009. New organisations can sign up to the Compact on the website - www.cornwallvsf.org
- Successfully facilitating the mediation process to resolve a dispute for a small charitable organisation in the West of the county.
- Promoting the Compact at events, giving presentations and producing the Busy Person's and Compact Implementation guides, available on our website, to make the Compact more accessible.

THE CORNWALL COMPACT AT A GLANCE

This page is a summary of the Cornwall Compact 2010, and is intended for use as an induction tool for new personnel within the public and voluntary sectors, such as officers, members of staff and volunteers.

What is the Cornwall Compact?

The Cornwall Compact is the local version of the national agreement between Government and the voluntary sector that sets out how the two partners should work together for the greater good of society. The aim is to enable the public and voluntary sectors to ‘work in ways that are mutually beneficial and which contribute more fully and effectively to the wellbeing of communities in Cornwall’ (Cornwall Compact 2010, p.5).

The Key Undertakings

Public Sector Undertakings	Voluntary and Community Undertakings
Recognise the independence of the voluntary sector	Recognise constraints on the public sector
12 weeks consultation periods where possible	Ensure high standards of governance and conduct
Aim for longer term funding agreements, such as three years	Involve and inform users
Allow voluntary sector to charge for ‘full cost’ recovery	Be clear about who is represented and why
Be flexible on payments to ensure cash flow	Define exactly what services can be delivered and bid within a competitive market
Recognise costs of volunteering	Ensure exit strategy and risk management in place
Make provision for voluntary sector workforce development and training	Recognise learning needs of staff, volunteers and trustees
Support participation by disadvantaged groups	Ensure equality and diversity are embedded throughout work

What can the Cornwall Compact do for you?

The Compact framework is designed to:

- Improve relationships with better partnership working between organisations
- Help you find out what others are doing by information sharing
- Help make funding arrangements clear and fair to all
- Save money and time
- Promote inclusion and equality
- Encourage clear communication
- Help focus on better outcomes for individuals and communities
- Offer support and assistance if things go wrong between the sectors

Mediation

There is a three stage mediation process in the event of disputes. For more information on this, contact Cornwall Voluntary Sector Forum by email: compact@cornwallvsf.org or tel: 01872 241584.

INTRODUCTION

There is a long tradition of voluntary and community activity in Cornwall, together with excellent public services. Whilst there has been a considerable amount of joint working, it is important to establish a new approach to the partnerships which will enable more open and constructive relationships relevant to the current opportunities in Cornwall.

This Compact sets out the principles clarifying the relationship between the sectors. It has been drafted by both sectors following extensive consultation.

Whilst not legally binding, it is a general framework which will enhance relationships and its authority is derived from endorsement by the public sector and the voluntary and community sector (VCS) in Cornwall.

The Compact has been drafted utilising the structure of the Cornwall Strategic Partnership, the overarching partnership for Cornwall on which the voluntary, public and private sectors are represented, and its success will be monitored by that body.

It is an expression of the commitment of the sectors to work in partnership for the benefit of society and to support voluntary and community activity.

This Compact builds on the National Compact which has been approved by the government and the VCS nationally.

This document, however, whilst endorsing the issues in the National Compact, seeks to identify particular issues for Cornwall.

Aim of the Compact

In line with national policy, the Compact's aim is to establish a local framework within which the VCS and public sector can work together in ways which are mutually beneficial and which enable each sector to contribute more fully and effectively to the wellbeing of the communities in Cornwall.

Shared principles

- Voluntary action is an important component of our society. Volunteering makes a significant contribution to the wellbeing of the individual and the community
- An independent, robust and diverse VCS is fundamental to the well-being of society
- In the development and delivery of public policy and services, the public sector and VCS have distinct but complementary roles
- There is added value in working in partnership towards common aims and objectives
- Meaningful consultation builds relationships, improves policy development and enhances the design and delivery of services and programmes
- The public sector and VCS have different forms of accountability and are answerable to a different range of stakeholders, but common to both is the need for integrity, objectivity,

accountability, openness, honesty and leadership

- Voluntary and community organisations are entitled to campaign within the law in order to advance their aims, giving due consideration to the effects on other Compact partners
- The public sector plays a significant role as a funder of some voluntary and community organisations. Funding can be an important element of the relationship between the sectors. The VCS can provide access to additional sources of funding
- Both the public sector and the VCS acknowledge the importance of respecting diversity and promoting equality of opportunity for all people regardless of race, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation or religion

THE NATIONAL COMPACT AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CORNWALL COMPACT

The National Compact, launched in 1998, transformed the relationship between government and the third sector and contains pertinent issues, approved by government and the voluntary and community sector (VCS) nationally, which the Cornwall Compact endorses whilst additionally seeking to identify and address issues specific to Cornwall. The Cornwall Compact, published in June 2005 and utilising the structure of the Cornwall Strategic Partnership (CSP), was the first version of a living local document which was able to be amended as relationships between the sectors developed.

In December 2009, government produced the refreshed National Compact, which '*... sets out the core principles which the public sector and the third sector share and which are the foundations of their activity. It is a clear statement of the Government's continued commitment to working with the third sector, and will be a valuable tool in helping build strong and successful partnerships for years to come.*' (National Compact, 2009:3)

The shared, refreshed Compact principles, to which government and the third sector are committed, are respect, honesty, independence, diversity, equality, citizen empowerment and volunteering. By implementing the Cornwall Compact, partners

can achieve relationship equity, informed policy decisions by using the expert knowledge of those working directly with people in communities, value for money, the ability to identify and address discrimination and equality and a closer reflection of user needs, with consequent better programme funding.

The refreshed National Compact provides the framework which initiates Local Compact action and the refreshed Cornwall Compact has been updated in line with this, to ensure that productive relationships at all levels continue, independence is maintained whilst values continue to be shared and identified issues, specific to Cornwall, are updated and addressed.

Implementation of the Compact should ensure that government and third sector constituent organisations, incorporate:

- Compact undertakings into operational practices and procedures
- Compact principles into policies

The Compact is only useful and mutually beneficial, if actually utilised as a working document, put on the table and agreed as the way in which partnerships can work.

‘So read it, use it, benefit from it. Let’s ensure there’s as much progress in the next 10 years as in the last.’ (National Compact, 2009:4).

To read the National Compact in full visit www.thecompact.org.uk

“ *We have developed a good working relationship with Adult Care and Support (ACS) commissioners over the years and are working together to look at how we can provide support to more people at a reduced (but still affordable) rate that meets people’s needs.* ”

Amanda Masters, Mencap

PRINCIPLE UNDERTAKINGS

Public Sector	Voluntary and Community Sector
<p>1. Independence</p> <p>The public sector recognises the independence of the voluntary and community sector and its right to campaign within the law.</p>	<p>The voluntary and community sector recognise the constraints within which the public sector works and how this can affect working relationships.</p>
<p>2. Funding and accountability</p> <p>1. To develop in consultation with the voluntary and community sector a Code of Good Practice to address principles of funding for that sector from statutory organisations.</p> <p>2. This code will promote the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High standards of governance, conduct and accountability. • The allocation of resources against clear local and national priorities and consistent criteria, including value for money. • Funding policies which take account of the objectives of community and voluntary organisations and their need to operate efficiently and effectively. • Common, transparent arrangements for agreeing and evaluating objectives, performance indicators and their associated targets, facilitating prompt payment, recognising cash flow problems, reviewing financial support, negotiating on changes to the funding position, and informing voluntary and community organisations about future funding and priorities as early as possible. • The value of long-term, multi-year funding, where appropriate, to assist longer-term planning and stability. Funding decisions need to take account of the sustainability of each project and the long term impact on the community. 	<p>1. To maintain high standards of governance and conduct, and meet reporting and accountability obligations to their funders, members and users. Where applicable, to observe the accounting framework for charities.</p> <p>2. To develop quality standards appropriate to the organisation.</p> <p>3. To undertake relevant quality standard ‘health checks’ to demonstrate that they are both fit for purpose and fit for funding.</p> <p>4. To acknowledge that decisions about funding will have to recognise the budgeting constraints within which the public sector operates.</p> <div data-bbox="823 1025 1458 1581" style="background-color: #800040; color: white; padding: 10px; border-radius: 10px; margin-top: 20px;"> <p>“ <i>WILD have worked with children’s centres since the inception of SureStart about ten years ago. Our staff work closely with the centre staff so that young mums and their children can access all the services. We work with families who would probably not access the centres without having us as a pathway. And we’ve won the Queen’s Award for this work!</i> ”</p> <p><i>Jo Davies, Wild Young Parents Project</i></p> </div>
<p>3. Infrastructure & Support</p> <p>1. The public sector recognises the importance of infrastructure for the voluntary and community sector and supports its development as appropriate.</p> <p>2. There are opportunities for the public sector to share capacity with the voluntary and community sector, including venues, equipment, training and expertise.</p>	<p>1. To recognise the importance of an effective and representative voluntary and community sector infrastructure for Cornwall.</p> <p>2. To recognise there are opportunities for the voluntary and community sector to share capacity with the public sector, including venues, equipment, training and expertise.</p>

Public Sector	Voluntary and Community Sector
<p>4. Policy development and consultation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To appraise key policies and procedures, particularly at the developmental stage, so as to identify the implications for the voluntary and community sector. 2. Subject to considerations of urgency, sensitivity or confidentiality, to consult the voluntary and community sector on issues that are likely to affect it, particularly where the public sector is proposing new roles and responsibilities for the sector in, for example, the delivery of statutory services. Such consultation should be timely and allow reasonable timescales for response, taking into account the need of organisations to consult their users, beneficiaries and stakeholders. 3. To take account positively of the specific needs, interests and contributions of those parts of the voluntary and community sector which represent women, minority groups and the socially excluded. 4. To respect the confidentiality of information provided by the voluntary and community sector, within the constraints of the law and the proper performance of public duties, when given access to it on that basis. 5. To develop jointly with the voluntary and community sector a Code of Good Practice covering consultation, policy appraisal and implementation. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To ensure that users, volunteers, members and supporters are informed and consulted, as appropriate, about the development of activities and policies. 2. To respect the confidentiality of information given by the public sector as appropriate. 3. To agree to help draft a Code of Good Practice on consultation between the sectors. <div data-bbox="826 555 1455 1146" style="background-color: #800040; color: white; padding: 10px; border-radius: 10px; margin-top: 20px;"> <p>“ <i>Cornwall Healthy Living Centre is a multi-partnership project which aims to help improve health and wellbeing for local people in a holistic and proactive way. CHLC works in partnership with GPs, health professionals and voluntary and community organisations and groups to support individuals to encourage them to make a positive change in their lifestyle through our wellbeing schemes.</i> ”</p> <p><i>Dilys Down, Cornwall Healthy Living Centre</i></p> </div>
<p>5. Implementing the Compact and developing good working practices</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To promote effective working relationships, consistency of approach and good practice between the sectors, particularly where cross-organisational activities/issues are concerned. 2. To adhere to the principles of openness and transparency. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To promote effective working relationships with the public sector, other agencies and across the voluntary and community sector. 2. To involve users, wherever possible, in the development and management of activities and services. 3. To put in place policies for promoting best practice and equality of opportunity in activities, provision.
<p>6. Partnership working</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To improve effective partnership working across and between the voluntary and community sector and the public sector. 2. The public sector recognises the need for increased capacity within the voluntary and community sector in order for it to engage more effectively in partnership working. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To improve effective partnership working across and between the voluntary and community sector and the public sector whilst recognising the constraints within which many of the public sector agencies work.

Issues relating to Equality and Diversity

Although the principles and undertakings contained in the Compact apply across the VCS, particular consideration needs to be given to the specific needs, interests and contribution of the many diverse groups within Cornwall. A Code of Good Practice has been developed to take into account their perspective and concerns. This has been developed in conjunction with existing partnerships and networks.

Mediation procedure

This Compact sets out a general framework for enhancing the relationship between the sectors. Wherever possible, any disagreements over the framework should be resolved between the parties. If both parties agree that it would be helpful, mediation may be used to try and reach agreement utilising an appropriate independent agency supported by the Cornwall Strategic Partnership.

Monitoring and reviewing the Compact

The Compact will be monitored on an ongoing basis and reviewed regularly in conjunction with the Cornwall Strategic Partnership.

Taking the Compact forward

This agreement is a starting point, not a conclusion. Both sectors are committed to working together to develop its implementation.

Codes of Good Practice

Detailed aspects of the Compact have been developed in Codes of Good Practice covering the following:

- Policy Development & Consultation
- Commissioning, Funding & Procurement
- Learning & Skills
- Equality & Diversity
- Community Groups
- Volunteering
- Mediation

These will be developed in conjunction with existing partnerships and networks.

Any district-specific issues will be addressed within these codes.

Action Plan

A detailed action plan will guide the further development and ongoing implementation of the Compact.

CODES OF GOOD PRACTICE (REFRESHED MARCH 2010)

Introduction

The Codes of Good Practice support the Cornwall Compact, launched in June 2005 and refreshed in March 2010, in setting out the way in which the public sector and voluntary and community sector (VCS) in Cornwall intend to work together, providing in more detail the principles and undertakings relating to how policies for Cornwall are developed in partnership.

Together, the codes provide a general framework describing good practice aimed at enhancing the relationship between the public sector and VCS. Their authority is derived from their endorsement by organisations across the sectors.

There are seven Compact Codes which overlap with and complement each other:

- Policy Development & Consultation
- Commissioning, Funding & Procurement
- Learning & Skills
- Equality & Diversity
- Community Groups
- Volunteering
- Mediation

They are to be proactive documents, which will be subject to monitoring and regular review.

Adopting these codes

The public sector and VCS in Cornwall are expected to adopt these codes as recommended good practice in their work. The codes will inform the development and implementation of the Cornwall Compact and will be monitored and reviewed by Cornwall Strategic Partnership.

Detailed in each code are the key undertakings that both the public sector and VCS intend to work towards together, and the different ways in which they will do so.

It is acknowledged that different organisations and groups will be at different stages on the journey towards achieving these undertakings, which provide a checklist of good practice.

Mediation

Disagreements relating to this and other local Compact Codes of Good Practice will, where possible, be settled by the immediate parties involved. If an outcome satisfactory to both parties is not reached, the disagreement can be considered under the Cornwall Compact Mediation Procedure.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT (PARTICIPATION & CONSULTATION)

Definition of Policy Development

Policy development can be defined as setting out a specific approach to affect the behaviour of organisations and individuals.

Policy Development in Cornwall

This code reflects the current reality in Cornwall in which:

- Local policies are increasingly developed and services planned and commissioned by partnerships of organisations from across different sectors working together to achieve shared goals through the Local Strategic and other Partnerships
- Certain functions are being exchanged between the public sector and the Voluntary and community sector (VCS) and there is increased encouragement for local services to be delivered by or with the VCS, supported by Government capacity building funding
- There are strong future opportunities for joint working, such as through the Local Area Agreement

Who is this code for?

This code will apply to Cornwall Compact partners but has been developed with the intention

of actively encouraging its extension to other statutory, voluntary and community organisations and groups who will be invited to adopt the Compact and its associated codes of Good Practice.

The code has relevance for all statutory agencies operating in Cornwall, together with all voluntary organisations and community groups. It is intended to be of use to anyone planning, taking part in, or affected by policy development.

This includes staff and volunteers from across the VCS, officers and elected members within local authorities and other public bodies, and representatives on all partnerships - strategic, commissioning and service-delivery.

What does this code cover?

This code covers all aspects of the policy development cycle – from thinking strategically about what is needed, through developing, adopting and implementing policy aimed at meeting the need, to monitoring activity and evaluating the impact of the policy in order to inform its review.

For policy development to take place effectively in partnership, VCS and public sector participation and consultation is required at each stage of the cycle.

Shared Principles

- The VCS have a strong role to play in the development, design and delivery of public services
- Meaningful consultation builds

relationships, improves policy development and enhances the design and delivery of services and programmes

- Together voluntary and community organisations and statutory agencies are able more effectively to access the views of service users and local communities, including harder to reach groups
- Both sectors are committed to increasing their capacity to develop policies for Cornwall in partnership together

Overall Intentions and undertakings

- **Participation** To ensure that policy development in Cornwall integrates the knowledge, expertise and experience of the VCS and public sector in order to maximise the benefit to local people and communities, and visitors
- **Consultation** To use consultation as an effective means of integrating the views of the public sector, VCS and local people, communities and visitors into the development and review of policies and services for Cornwall and its communities

There is a need to:

1. Identify a need for policy to be developed or identify a need for changes to be made to existing policy.
2. Establish if existing documents are fit for purpose.
3. Research and gather evidence to support the implementation of any changes to

service and policy development.

4. Consult with all partners, stakeholders, service users, members of the public, local communities and anyone who may be affected by a change in service through policy development. Any engagement and consultation needs to be timely and dealt with in the most appropriate method, to fully engage with the target audience and seek effective and useful responses (*see below for further details*).
5. Impact assess the policy document taking into account equality and diversity, risk issues and service delivery to produce clear and concise documents.
6. It is essential that all policies are reviewed as an ongoing requirement, to ensure they are still relevant and fit for purpose.

Engagement and Consultation

Engagement is an important part of policy development and it is essential that consultation is undertaken with stakeholders who will be directly affected by any changes in policy. It is vital for local authorities to work closely with VCS organisations who will be able to source harder to reach groups, to ensure effective consultation takes place.

Public Sector Undertakings

- To understand the complex make up of the VCS, including infrastructure, funding arrangements, resource limitations and capacity issues

- Ensure appropriate and adequate VCS representation is established on local partnerships, forums, reference groups
- Increase VCS participation in statutory agency policy development processes, through inclusion on such bodies as local authority Policy Development and Scrutiny Committees and service stakeholder groups
- Develop consistent and robust policies and procedures for reimbursement of voluntary participation (*see Volunteering Code*)
- Encourage the VCS to work together, and recognise the role of VCS infrastructure organisations and consortium (Cornwall Infrastructure Partnership) in providing routes to participation and consultation
- Ensure that the VCS is clear about what they represent, what they can realistically consult on and with whom. Provide map routes of consultation, with VCS being clear of what their routes are
- Ensure harder to engage and hear groups are included, both in terms of VCS groups and also disparate groups across statutory agencies, such as staff working away from main offices
- Ensure the accessibility of participation and consultation meetings, events and venues, and that materials are available in a variety of formats and languages
- Take a timely approach, which involves the VCS at the planning stage and takes account of other policy development & consultation timetables and the potential

for shared processes and consultation exercises

- Allow sufficient time for participation and response, having regard to the National Compact's recommendation of a twelve-week minimum consultation period, but also taking into account statutory and other requirements which may require a shorter timescale

Voluntary Community Sector Undertakings

- Understand the complexity, responsibilities and requirements of statutory agencies, including organisational structure, decision-making processes, service delivery areas

Joint Undertakings

- Ensure that the method of participation or consultation is appropriate to the issue, including deciding whether it should be shared, integrated or delegated
- Provide notification in advance, in order to scope the level of interest and maximise opportunities for participation and response, and allow individuals, groups and organisations to plan it into their schedules and budgets
- Ensure there are adequate financial and other resources for what is being planned: venues, staff-time, databases, materials, trained facilitators and pooling resources where appropriate
- Be clear on why participation and consultation is taking place and what will be done with the results

- Be clear about who is being involved and consulted, and identify the range of groups that need or want to be
 - Explain the relevance to specific groups of their place in the scheme of things, its value to and impact on them, using case studies to illustrate
 - Share expertise, experience and examples of best practice
 - Create a two-way process, so that those involved feel listened to, rather than just being told
- contact
 - Monitor and evaluate the impact of participation and consultation on policy development and service delivery, including on the quality and effectiveness of policies developed and services provided

Evaluation

- Provide feedback via newsletters and websites
- Be open about the findings and the reason for decisions
- Publicise participation and consultation results as widely as possible, within both the VCS and public sector and other partner websites
- Pool the information obtained in order to inform future research
- Respect the confidentiality of information provided, within the constraints of the law and the proper performance of public duties, when given access to it on that basis
- Evaluate the effectiveness of participation and consultation, the level and quality of representation, response and participant satisfaction
- Develop mechanisms for participants and respondents to provide their comments, or ask questions, by providing a point of

COMMISSIONING, FUNDING & PROCUREMENT

Definition of commissioning, procurement and funding

For the purpose of this code, the term commissioning is defined as the securing of services that most appropriately address the needs and wishes of the individual service user making use of market intelligence and research, and planning accordingly. Procurement is defined as the specific activities within the commissioning cycle that focus on the process of acquiring goods, works and services from third parties. Funding is taken to mean money for a project, person, business etc, or the way in which that money is provided, eg via a grant or loan.

Commissioning, procurement and funding in Cornwall

Funding sources for much of the voluntary and community sector (VCS) in Cornwall comes via grant funding from bodies such as the Lottery, Lloyds TSB Foundation and grant making trusts. It also comes from the commissioning and procurement of services by local public sector bodies taking place under the European Directive of Procurement.

The funding and procurement reality in Cornwall is an increasing emphasis by funding bodies, especially Government, on partnership bids and targeted income streams. Two large partnership

projects are currently underway in Cornwall.

These are:

1. Cornwall Infrastructure Partnership's (CIP) current projects financed under the Government's Change Up programme. This funding is targeted at the VCS and is designed to help increase the capacity of voluntary sector organisations to deliver services to their client groups and to compete within the increasingly business orientated arena of contracting of service delivery.
2. Skills Funding Agency co-financed programme targeting the VCS. There are two strands to this project. Community Skills for Life works with training providers to ensure that basic skills training is delivered to people within rural communities. Capacity Building within the voluntary sector enables VCS workers and volunteers to access appropriate training.

The Local Area Agreement (LAA), Cornwall Procurement Strategy and other initiatives means that the working relationship, especially in relation to funding or income provision, between the VCS and public sectors, needs clarification and a basic set of ground rules.

Who is this code for?

This code will apply to Cornwall Compact partners but has been developed with the intention of actively encouraging its extension to other statutory, voluntary and community organisations

and groups who will be invited to adopt the Compact and its associated Codes of Good Practice.

The code has relevance for all statutory agencies operating in Cornwall, together with all voluntary organisations and community groups. It is intended to be of use to anyone involved in activities which involve a financial relationship between the sectors, such as service planning and development, commissioning, contract tendering and delivery, grant applications and project management.

This includes staff and volunteers from across the VCS, officers and elected members within local authorities and other public bodies, and representatives on all partnerships - strategic, commissioning and service delivery.

What does this code cover?

This Code of Good Practice is a framework for the financial relationship between the public sector and the VCS within Cornwall.

Though based on the national Code of Good Practice on funding and procurement, this local Code flags up the issues that are important to Cornwall, with its large VCS and many public sector bodies, all with different commissioning, procurement and funding procedures.

This code looks at how both the VCS and public sector can maximise the available funding, understand each other's funding, commissioning and procurement strategies and policies and work together towards a fair and equitable working relationship within the remit of funding and income for the VCS service providers in Cornwall.

Key principles

The following principles should apply at all stages of the financial relationship:

Simplicity – using clear language, no jargon, straightforward procedures and universally accessible formats.

- Clear, two-way communications between the sectors with a basic understanding about the differences in language and approaches to income generation and single points of contact on funding wherever possible. The language used should be appropriate for the audience
- Transparency and clarity. This means clear access to information about the aims of individual organisations in both sectors and their capacity to deliver services and support

Understanding – about the pressures and constraints on each sector.

- Fairness and respect for each other's sector
- Appreciation of the role of democratically elected members in setting priorities and representing their communities

Sustainability – to be a consideration in developing project ideas and making decisions about funding.

- Consideration of the longer-term sustainability of projects and

organisations as well as the wider issues of sustainability

- Acceptance of the move towards Full Cost Recovery and Multi-Year rolling funding and procurement programmes and the increasing amount of partnership working
- **Cornwall Focus** – a willingness to look beyond district boundaries and share expertise and learning across Cornwall, recognising the challenges posed by the county’s demography and geography.
- Compliance with all applicable EU and UK legislation and best practice guidance

Undertakings

The voluntary and community sector (VCS) undertakes to:

- Be clear about what it can achieve in relation to the objectives of public sector organisations. This would include being aware of the contractual and bidding procedures used by statutory agencies
- Focus on results and outcomes and demonstrate how it can achieve best value for the public sector. In particular, whether it can deliver savings in line with the objectives of statutory organisations
- Be able to show exactly what services it can deliver and be prepared to bid within a competitive market for contracts to deliver these services
- Operate in a business-like manner when

submitting reports and invoices to facilitate prompt payment

- Meet appropriate standards of business management by using VCS expertise on quality assurance
- Be aware of the risks associated with delivering programmes and services and decide at the beginning of any project what will happen at the end of the funding, by developing an exit strategy
- Be clear which organisation is the accountable body in partnership or consortia working arrangements
- Agree appropriate monitoring and reporting mechanisms and schedules and deliver against agreed targets and timescales
- Have in place appropriate governance arrangements, including all appropriate policies to ensure that public money is adequately safeguarded and accounted for
- Recognise that the public sector has firm equality and diversity standards that are required within both its own agencies and within those with which it has contractual arrangements, and make sure that diversity and equality issues are addressed within the whole of the VCS
- Give due recognition to the role and contribution of democratically elected bodies and their responsibility in funding community projects
- Recognise the constraints within the public sector in the process of approving funding decisions and processing payments

The public sector undertakes to:

- Recognise the importance of VCS networks in providing support and training to local organisations
- Endeavour to involve the VCS in developing processes and procedures focused on developing the right environment to allow a sustained approach for engagement with commissioners and funders in Cornwall. This will include explaining competitive tendering procedures to VCS organisations and providing support and possible training for VCS organisations to enable them to have an increased capacity to be able to bid for contracts
- Provide support and possible training for VCS organisations to enable them to have an increased capacity to be able to tender or be invited to tender for contracts
- Focus on results and outcomes and recognise that the VCS can add value to help the public sector meet government targets. This will include involving the VCS in delivering value for money solutions
- Be clear about what funding is available, what it is for and the criteria by which applications will be judged
- Recognise the importance of Full Cost Recovery to VCS organisations that rely on grants or contracts
- Develop a means, within the overall funding and procurement framework, whereby the VCS might have an opportunity to submit expressions of interest for work before having to engage in detailed work to develop bids
- Ensure that the procurement strategies in Cornwall has references to the VCS and its role within future procurement. This would be particularly in reference to the ability of the VCS to deliver value for money and enable the public sector to reach certain best practice targets
- Be clear about funding timescales and associated contracts and agree an exit strategy within the individual agreements
- Ensure that opportunities to tender for contracts and to work with the various funders and procurement bodies are publicised with adequate response times, subject to policies and procedures
- Be flexible, where possible, on payment terms, recognising cash flow differences between the sectors. Look at the potential for streamlining payment procedures to ensure prompt payment for VCS organisations
- Undertake to look at working towards three year rolling funding programmes that would create a sustainable environment for the voluntary sector organisations
- Be proportionate in the requirement for performance reporting and evaluation whilst recognising the need for transparent accountability for results and outcomes at all times
- Consider developing shared funding opportunities and processes and application procedures with other statutory agencies and funding providers

LEARNING & SKILLS

Definition of Learning and Skills

For the purpose of this code, the term learning is defined as the deliberate progression throughout the life of an individual, where the initial acquisition of knowledge and skills is reviewed and upgraded continuously, to meet challenges set by an ever changing society. It may involve an increase in understanding, skills, and knowledge, a positive change in values and the capacity to reflect. Effective learning leads to change, development and a desire to learn more.

A skill is defined as the ability to perform a task to a pre-defined standard of competence, acquired through formal and/or informal learning and through practice.

Learning and Skills in Cornwall

Cornwall is a large rural area consisting of many interlinking communities which have influenced the development of the learning and skills sector. A well dispersed infrastructure of primary and secondary schools reflects this spatial environment. Schools are complemented by the provision of adult focused community learning venues provided through both public sector and voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations.

Public sector college provision is well developed and reasonably well spread across the area. The emergence of the Combined Universities in Cornwall (CUC) has increased more locally available higher education provision and

provides strong progression links with other components of the learning and skills sector for the population to engage in lifelong learning. These are complemented by strong learning and skills partnerships, including information advice and guidance (IAG) providers, unions, employers, regeneration and economy advisors, government advisors and funders, whose aim is to ensure that Cornwall has a highly developed and effective learning and skills infrastructure.

Who is this code for?

This code will apply to Cornwall Compact partners but has been developed with the intention of actively encouraging its extension to other statutory, voluntary and community organisations and groups who will be invited to adopt the Compact and its associated Codes of Good Practice.

The code has relevance for all statutory agencies operating in Cornwall, together with all voluntary organisations and community groups. It is intended to be of use to anyone involved in activities which have a learning & skills relationship between the sectors.

This includes staff and volunteers from across the VCS, officers and elected members within local authorities and other public bodies, and representatives on all partnerships - strategic, commissioning and service-delivery.

What Does This Code Cover?

This Code of Good Practice sets out how both sectors will work together to support each other in seeking to realise a learning society in Cornwall

in which everyone has the opportunity to go as far as their talents and efforts will take them, taking advantage of learning opportunities and able to participate fully.

Aims

This involves pursuing together the following strategic aims.

Widen participation by:

- Raising demand and widening participation in learning within communities served by voluntary and community organisations (VCOs)
- Making special efforts to engage and meet the needs of disengaged or under-represented learners and socially excluded groups, including those with literacy and numeracy needs
- Extending choice and opportunities for progression at all levels of education and training
- Increasing knowledge for learners about what is possible and seeking to remove barriers so that they can achieve their aspirations

Develop the workforce (paid or unpaid) by:

- Raising demand for learning within the VCS, meeting the needs of individual staff, volunteers and trustees and VCOs as employers
- Supporting the development of skills in VCOs needed to enhance their organisational effectiveness, including as partners in public service delivery
- Increasing the understanding and capacity

of the public sector to work in partnership with the VCS

Improve the quality and responsiveness of provision by:

- Ensuring that the provision of learning, skills and related information, advice and guidance meets current needs and future priorities for all learners
- Improve the quality of formal and informal learning opportunities, tailored to the needs of individual learners
- Ensuring equality and diversity are embedded throughout all strategies and provision (*See also Equality and Diversity Code*)
- Ensure that learning, information, advice and guidance across both sectors is more joined up

Key principles

The voluntary and community sector (VCS) and Cornwall's public sector partners agree to work together guided by the following principles:

- Put the needs and interests of learners and potential learners first
- Focus on what we are trying to achieve rather than the process
- Foster openness, integrity, mutual respect, trust and understanding
- Behave in ways which promote equality, diversity and social inclusion (*See also Equality and Diversity Code*)
- Help each other achieve our individual and joint objectives
- Respect the distinctive aspects of the VCS

- and Cornwall's public sector partners
- Be accountable to each other for the undertakings set out below
- Take prompt action to deal with problems and conflicts
- Strive to learn from 'what works' and from each other, and embed this in more effective practice

Undertakings

Cornwall's public sector partners undertake to:

- Promote opportunities for wider involvement of the VCS in the planning and provision of Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and Jobcentre Plus funded learning, including information, advice and guidance, implementing the changeover to the Qualification Credit Framework (QCF) and the work of other public sector partners
- Encourage Cornwall's public sector partners' mainstream providers to adopt Compact principles and comply with this Code of Good Practice
- Include the VCS as a significant employment sector in workforce development planning and consultations on an equal footing with other sectors, noting the scale of the employed and volunteer workforce
- Ensure and support VCS involvement in strategic reviews, in shaping future learning and skills provision to meet needs within the voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) and the communities served
- Seek consistency in planning and delivery arrangements, while enabling (a) diversity of provision appropriate to learner needs, and (b) Cornwall's public sector partners to address local priorities
- Promote wider understanding amongst Cornwall's public sector partners and their mainstream providers of what VCOs can offer
- Support and encourage the development of a VCS Learning Forum to act as a channel for the public sector to enter into sustainable and effective provider contracts with the VCS
- Improve communications with the VCS, including through:
 - a lead contact within each of Cornwall's public sector partners for VCOs
 - greater clarity of communications and reduced use of jargon
 - better internal communications in relation to dealings with VCOs
- Observe recommendations contained in the Policy Development (Participation and Consultation) Code of Good Practice, including:
 - encouraging VCOs and local communities to engage in designing and developing learning practice
 - giving advance warning of consultations and promoting them widely
 - publishing clear and concise consultation documents

- being honest about where input is required from respondents
- providing adequate time for responses, ideally the 12 weeks minimum identified by the National Compact
- providing feedback on consultations
- making paper as well as electronic copies of consultation documents where appropriate
- Observe the undertakings contained in the Funding and Procurement Code of Good Practice
- Support and encourage the further development of the VCS to act as a channel for Cornwall's public sector partners and the VCS to enter into effective sector based provider contracts, eg The Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Learning Partnership and Learning Plus
- Make provision for sector-friendly funding, subject to national and regional and Treasury policy, for example by:
 - opening up access to mainstream funding blocks for more and different VCOs, including those which have not historically been supported by Cornwall's public sector partners
 - providing, where possible, project funding for innovative, cutting edge development ahead of mainstream provision
 - supporting VCS to encourage learners from disadvantaged groups and the involvement of these groups in the design and delivery of learning
- agreeing profile payments, where payments are made against an agreed profile of expenditure relating to activities and outputs, and end-year flexibility
- Ensure that prospective bidders and tenderers are well informed about requirements and processes involved in securing available public sector funding
- Ensure that administrative, assessment and contracting procedures are carried out transparently, objectively and in proportion to the sums of money involved
- Help build the capacity of VCOs who are active in, or wish to become more active in providing or widening access to learning and skills – in ways which support sustainable activities, acting independently or in collaboration
- Seek opportunities to ensure greater coherence across related funding programmes of other funding bodies
- Provide development funding, where appropriate and available to facilitate voluntary sector engagement, where this will lead to achievement of Cornwall's public sector partners objectives
- Make information readily available about funding for learning and skills

Cornwall's voluntary and community sector (VCS) undertakes to:

- Develop sector networking and influence to facilitate engagement with Cornwall's public sector and partners on learning and skills matters, in particular through the support of the VCS Learning Forum acting as the initial channel for provider relationships with the public sector
- Provide information channels for informing the VCS and improving awareness of Cornwall's public sector partners, including their objectives, priorities, funding arrangements and relevant processes
- Increase the ability and confidence of the VCS to engage productively with Cornwall's public sector partners and other partners on learning and skills
- Assist with consultations and responses
- Contribute to planning and discussions for learning and skills
- Promote collaboration within the sector, to:
 - effectively participate in design and delivery of learning and skills in Cornwall
 - research and articulate the needs of learners
 - inform plans for learning and skills provision
 - improve the quality and range of learning opportunities
 - promote what the VCS can offer

Together the sectors undertake to:

- Take positive steps to address the specific needs, interests and contributions of different groups
- Assemble further evidence of the added value that the VCS brings to the learning and skills agenda
- Build the capacity of the VCS to manage and share 'what works' and roll out successful projects in partnership – and the capacity of Cornwall's public sector partners to work effectively with the VCS
- Promote this Code of Good Practice, mutual understanding and the gains to be made

Success could be indicated by:

- evidence of greater trust and improved mutual awareness and understanding amongst VCS and public sector partners
- greater participation by the VCS in shaping learning and skills provision and raising demand for learning in communities and in the VCS
- successful implementation of joint initiatives
- Cornwall's public sector funded providers adopting the Compact and this Code of Good Practice

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

Definition of Diversity

Diversity goes beyond equality and the groups covered by anti-discrimination. It refers to 'difference' and is about recognising and valuing the differences and the individual contribution that people can make either at work or in the community. This code refers to the 'protected characteristics', which were formally the Six Equality Strands of age, disability, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion and belief. It is also important to consider in this code the new strand of 'socio-economic' that is likely to also be adopted in accordance with the forthcoming Equality Act.

Diversity in Cornwall

Cornwall is a vast rural area made up of isolated communities, where equality and diversity play an important role in all aspects of life.

The Compact recognises that Cornwall has a diverse population, and it is this diversity that adds value and depth, resulting in a varied social, cultural and economic community. Cornwall Compact Partners agree to recognise that equality is an issue for all and that not everyone starts from the same place. To allow the creation of a fairer society, partners must recognise and value the different needs of communities, value the people at the heart of communities and value the need for improving, promoting and practising equality and diversity across the County.

“ *An equal society protects and promotes equal, real freedom and opportunity to live in the way people value and would choose, so that everyone can flourish.*

An equal society recognises people's different needs, situations and goals, and removes the barriers that limit what people can do and be. ”

*Fairness and Freedom,
The Equalities Review 2007*

Who is this code for?

This code will apply to Cornwall Compact partners, but has been developed with the intention of actively encouraging its extension to other statutory, voluntary and community organisations and groups who will be invited to adopt the Compact and its associated Codes of Good Practice.

The code has relevance for all statutory agencies operating in Cornwall, together with all voluntary organisations and community groups. It aims to make a positive impact on the relationship between the statutory, community and voluntary sectors with respect to equality and diversity.

This includes staff and volunteers from across the voluntary and community sector (VCS), officers and elected members within local authorities and other public bodies, and representatives on all partnerships - strategic, commissioning and service-delivery.

Objectives

Working together we will aim to:

- challenge and resolve all unlawful discrimination

In order to engage effectively a number of key issues need to be addressed. These include a joint commitment to:

- include equality and diversity as a key requirement in new policy development and develop effective methods to engage with all groups
- recognise the need to support participation by disadvantaged groups in service development
- recognise the significant role to be played by all within the voluntary, community and public sectors working in partnership towards achieving equality and diversity
- support and resource the VCS to reflect its role in addressing public service provision across Cornwall and allow it to operate, develop and contribute on an equal footing with other partners, particularly the statutory sector and the mainstream VCS
- recognise the specific contribution and needs of the various sectors, particularly at a local level, and how this impacts on funding, capacity and sustainability

Specialist diversity organisations, departments & individuals

This code recognises the valuable contribution that organisations, departments and individuals offer in meeting the needs of the community.

Undertakings

Framework of partnership

The partners to this code are committed to establishing and maintaining best practice in their relationship, recognising and valuing the distinctive skills, expertise and experience that everyone possesses.

This includes encouraging and developing volunteering in line with the Volunteering Code of Good Practice and an undertaking to implement an effective framework of engagement for the diverse community of Cornwall.

The partners recognise that the receipt of public funds carries with it responsibilities for its effective use.

In order to develop the framework the partners undertake to:

- Work in partnership to promote equality and diversity, tackle social exclusion and promote civil society
- Recognise and support independence of individuals and communities and their right within law to challenge institutions, policy and practice, irrespective of any funding relationship that might exist, and to determine and manage their own affairs
- Operate effective and transparent equal opportunity monitoring and evaluation systems that ensure everyone is treated with respect in all their interactions.
- Encourage relevant and sensitive engagement and consultation, to take

full account of individual needs and requirements such as accessibility, religious days and catering (*see also the Code of Good Practice for Policy Development: Participation and Consultation*)

- Operate fair and equal access, by groups, to funding programmes, particularly those that impact significantly on the ‘protected characteristics’
- Share changes to local, regional and national structures and key equality and diversity issues
- Review the relevance of training in accordance with diversity, individual and organisational needs and value for money. Partners and organisations should be encouraged to access each other’s skills, knowledge and experience when developing training
- Ensure appropriate governance arrangements, adopt appropriate quality standards and apply best practice in management and delivery within organisations
- Evaluate policies, procedures and practices to ensure promotion of Equality Impact Assessments to aid elimination of discrimination

Developing Capacity

Capacity building at all levels

All parties should take proactive measures to further develop the sector’s involvement. Capacity

building activity should focus on the divergent needs of individuals, groups and partnerships. All parties should be robust and clear about the purpose of capacity building, at whom the activity is aimed and what methods will be used to evaluate its impact.

Training and support

To continue and develop relationships with a multi-agency approach in relation to equality and diversity.

It should be recognised that support may be required around delivering the following:

- Structured schemes of training in monitoring and evaluation, financial reporting and budgeting
- Mentoring
- Project support officers

An important strategy for developing capacity, is shared training initiatives and secondment schemes between the statutory, and the VCS, enabling all parties to gain an insight and develop understanding of the issues around equality and diversity.

Inclusive policy consultation, participation and representation

The activities and knowledge of the VCS can provide statutory agencies with experience and skills of vital importance in the effective development and delivery of services. Consideration needs to be given to the most appropriate way to engage with under-represented and hard to reach groups and communities. Consultations and engagement

activity should consider meeting needs and offer financial support for expenses incurred for being part of the consultation process, such as financing meetings and offering payment for attendance. *(See also the Code of Good Practice for Policy Development: Participation and Consultation and the Code of Good Practice for Community Groups).*

Volunteering and mentoring

The opportunities created through volunteering should be utilised and the benefits to individuals should be recognised. Benefits include:

- Individuals are motivated and empowered, and volunteering builds confidence, self esteem and self awareness
- Building civic pride and involvement
- Enhancing public service delivery by providing staff with more awareness, skills, knowledge and assists in developing new skills
- Giving a sense of achievement and satisfaction
- Helping to build community capacity.
- Effective route to enable people back into work

(See also the Code of Good Practice on Volunteering)

Funding and other support

Why fund?

The VCS requires fair funding and long term funding stability to:

- Establish a level playing field with the VCS
- Be part of a sustainable infrastructure at

local, regional and national level

- Represent and support individuals and the wider community
- Fill the gaps in services to individuals and the wider community
- Help deliver services to the community
- Play a meaningful role in building a fair and just society

(See also the Funding and Procurement Code of Good Practice)

COMMUNITY GROUPS

Definition of Community Group

Though there is no single, universal definition, community groups are usually membership-based, member-led groups focused on a neighbourhood, village or community of interest. They tend to be informal in structure, be based on self help and mutual support, and have limited income. They represent the interests of residents and community members, and they can provide informal and independent services.

Community Groups in Cornwall

Cornwall has a population of around 500,000 (census 2001) and there are a large number of community groups providing invaluable and diverse services to the local community at grass-root level. Community Groups contribute positively and significantly to both the local community and to the Cornish economy.

Although there are many Government initiatives, including Local Area Agreements, Local Strategic Partnerships, which emphasise the need to work with community groups and there are also local initiatives such Market and Coastal Towns Initiatives, Transition Towns, Community and Voluntary Sector Networks (including Inter-Links, LINK and other local forums) and the new Community Networks establish by Cornwall Council. The imbalance of power between the public sector and the community often discourages voluntary and community sector (VCS) to fully engage and participate fully.

The rural nature of Cornwall can be a challenge for local community groups. Funding and sustainability remain the most difficult things for them to achieve, with their survival being threatened without them.

This is the Code for Cornwall, based on the National Code, which flags up the issues that are important to local community groups. Whilst the national code relates specifically to the community sector, the Cornwall Compact needs to refer to both the Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS), whilst appreciating and recognising that sometimes community groups need an additional voice as they are often working in isolation, and are under-represented and unsupported.

Purpose of this code

This Code of Good Practice aims to encourage the public sector and the VCS to work closely together to support community groups in Cornwall, in order to build their capacity to support and represent the interests of local people and to become more involved in policy making, planning and delivering of local service.

Who is this code for?

This Code will apply to Cornwall Compact partners but has been developed with the intention of actively encouraging its extension to other statutory, voluntary and community organisations and groups who will be invited to adopt the Compact and its associated Codes of Good Practice.

The code has relevance for all statutory agencies operating in Cornwall, together with all voluntary

organisations and community groups. It is intended to be of use to anyone who is a member of a community group or wishes to engage constructively with such groups.

This includes staff and volunteers from across the VCS, officers and elected members within local authorities and other public bodies, and representatives on all partnerships - strategic, commissioning and service-delivery

Key Principles

- Recognise and value the positive contributions that community groups make to their local community across Cornwall, and that this is different to that made by the wider voluntary sector
- Develop an understanding of and maintain respect for each other's sector
- Encourage joined-up and partnership approaches to consultation with community groups. Ensure that there is easily accessible information, financial and other support made available to encourage more people to participate and enough time for them to respond (*See also the Code of Good Practice for Policy Development*)
- Use clear language, without complex terminology and jargon, to encourage two-way communication and greater participation in service planning and delivery. Community groups should always be invited to, and actively participate in, any local policy or service delivery initiatives. Collectively this will help to enable them to identify barriers

and find solutions to bring about change.

- Appreciation of the role community groups play in providing support to individuals and communities at neighbourhood level, and their role in building a better and more sustainable community. This is extremely important in Cornwall due to issues of rurality and potential isolation
- All umbrella and infrastructure organisations that support, engage and work with the community sector in Cornwall will use an open, honest and inclusive approach in order to help build the capacity for community sector organisations

Undertakings

The public sector and the VCS in Cornwall jointly undertake to:

- Ensure that those organisations in receipt of specific funding for capacity building initiatives support the needs of community groups
- Develop better communication between the public sector and the VCS to ensure better understanding of each other's roles, and to enable them to work more closely together. This will lead to the promotion and sharing of good practice and will help to nurture support for community groups
- Support the development of community groups, for example by effective signposting at first point of contact, cross-sector networks, websites and directories

- Work in partnership to build mutual trust and understanding in order to improve relationships between the sectors
 - From the outset, ensure cross sector participation and balance in service development and delivery at local and national levels
 - Consult with the community sector and not speak for it, in particular those community groups targeting the hard to reach and seldom heard communities, including black and minority ethnic groups, Travellers, people with mental health problems and disabled people (*See also the Code of Good Practice for Equality and Diversity*)
 - Challenge and address barriers to community sector involvement, and provide assistance, financial and other support to enable community groups to participate in service planning and delivery
 - Be open about the different interests within the sectors and about potential conflicts of interest and actively seek solutions to resolve them
 - Encourage and enable community group members to take on leadership roles through volunteering and active citizenship
- do this is via networks and umbrella and infrastructure organisations which operate in Cornwall
- Recognise the importance of VCS Networks like Cornwall Inter-Link in providing better access to information, support, networking opportunities, training and capacity building for community groups particularly at the local level
 - Take account of the needs of the sectors in policy and service development and in developing local strategies and delivery by liaising with community groups, community networks, local strategic partnerships and Market and Coastal Towns Initiatives (MCTIs) at the earliest opportunity (*See also the Code of Good Practice for Policy Development*)
 - Endeavour to develop better communication between all sectors by introducing the Cornwall Compact to any organisations working with community groups. This can be used as a tool for the development of cross- sector partnership working
 - Actively support the development of community groups through effective signposting in order to provide easy access to information for community groups, such as promoting greater use of community facilities and resources, training opportunities, new regulation on community groups and funding opportunities
 - Support the development of community

The public sector in Cornwall undertakes to:

- Recognise that participation, rather than consultation, is the way forward in engaging with community groups and recognise that the most efficient way to

groups by involving them in initiatives that affect their groups such as Cornwall Compact and Cornwall Strategic Partnerships and Local Area Agreements, Statement of Community Involvement, Community Engagement Strategy, Community Networks, Transition Towns and MCTIs

- Listen and respond to the needs of community groups and give feedback where appropriate
- Support community groups' development with recognition that by linking them into appropriate community networks and initiatives, as well as strategic partnerships will enhance their growth and development

information to and from the community, for example, through Cornwall Strategic Partnership, MCTIs and Cornwall Inter-Link

- Encourage joined working with other statutory and VCS organisations in order to share resources and good practice and seeking funding sources
- Recognise the roles, responsibilities and constraints of democratically elected representatives

Voluntary & community sector groups in Cornwall undertake to:

- Operate in a business-like manner to monitor and evaluate their own spending and performance
- Encourage partnership working between public and voluntary and community sectors and involve the local community wherever possible
- Endeavour to network and develop joined-up partnerships
- Adopt a honest and open approach when highlighting the interests of the community they speak for and be an advocate for the community and support its interests
- Link with existing networks and voluntary organisations in order to channel

VOLUNTEERING

Definition of volunteering

For the purpose of this code, volunteering is defined as an activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or individuals or groups within the community. The principle of non payment of volunteers is central to this code.

Volunteering is a powerful force for change in a number of areas, for those who volunteer, for individuals being supported, for the wider community and for service delivery improvements. Volunteers offer support, expertise and innovation to any organisation, enhancing impact and adding value. This co-production is vital and can involve local people in the design, development and delivery of services. Volunteering also has a huge economic value estimated to be in-excess of £380 million (VSF report - 'Valuing the Voluntary Sector', 2008).

Volunteering in Cornwall

People volunteer for a variety of reasons and the activity is popular in Cornwall which currently has the highest level of any equivalent local authority area in the country.

Volunteering is an important expression of citizenship, and with the development of the Local Area Agreement and other government initiatives such as the Duty to Involve encouraging voluntary and community participation in local decision-making and service delivery, there is an even greater demand for a professional and robust

infrastructure to support volunteering. The 'Place Survey' now provides evidence on the levels of volunteering in Cornwall.

Who is this code for?

This code will apply to Cornwall Compact partners but has been developed with the intention of actively encouraging its extension to all statutory, voluntary and community organisations and groups who are encouraged adopt the Compact and its associated Codes of Good Practice.

This code has relevance for all statutory agencies operating in Cornwall, together with all voluntary organisations and community groups. It is intended to be of use to anyone involved in volunteering, whether they are volunteers themselves, organisations that use volunteers or those that commission activities that should provide a route way to engage local people in voluntary action.

This includes staff and volunteers from across the Voluntary and community sector (VCS), officers and elected members within local authorities and other public bodies, and representatives on all partnerships - strategic, commissioning and service-delivery.

What does this code cover?

This Code of Good Practice sets out how both sectors will work together to support and promote volunteering and voluntary action, including undertakings aimed at influencing behaviour to tackle barriers to volunteering. It sets out:

- Shared principles of volunteering
- Undertakings from both sectors

- The public sector in Cornwall's commitment to respect the independence of the voluntary sector
- Systems to help make sure that the agreement works

It is acknowledged that different organisations and groups will be at different stages on the journey towards achieving these undertakings, which provide a checklist of good practice.

Principles of volunteering

This code recognises five principles fundamental to volunteering:

- **Choice** - Volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual
- **Diversity** - Volunteering should be open to all, no matter what their background, race, colour, nationality, religion, or national origins, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation or disability. This links to the Equality and Diversity Code
- **Mutual Benefit** - Volunteers offer their contributions and skills unwaged but should benefit in other ways in return for their contribution
- **Recognition** - Explicit recognition that valuing the contribution of volunteers is fundamental to a fair relationship between volunteers, voluntary and community organisations and the public sector in Cornwall
- **Supported** - Host organisation that utilise volunteers should support, develop and motivate them in a professional and inclusive manner

Joint undertakings

The public sector in Cornwall and the whole of the VCS agree to work together to:

- Expand the public perception of volunteering by improving the profile, status and range of volunteer activity, enabling sustainable volunteering and community activity

Overcoming barriers to volunteering

There can be significant barriers that stop people from volunteering. The public sector and the VCS will challenge barriers to volunteering through their policy and practice.

Undertakings

The public sector and the VCS in Cornwall will:

- Adopt clear policies regarding the payment of volunteer expenses (*See also Policy Development code and Funding and Procurement code*)
- Recognise that volunteering is freely given but not cost free. Resources for infrastructure support, development and promotion for volunteers will incur costs
- Work to effectively tackle discrimination to ensure that volunteering is open to all
- Work to deliver good quality volunteering opportunities within their work

The public sector in Cornwall will:

Work to actively reduce barriers to volunteering resulting from existing legislation regulation and policies, and involve the VCS in new proposals related to volunteering (*See also Policy*

Development code).

Recognise that it is legitimate for voluntary and community organisations in Cornwall to include the costs of volunteer support in relevant applications for funding (*See also Funding and Procurement code*).

The VCS in Cornwall will:

- Challenge volunteer-involving organisations to offer appropriate opportunities for volunteers that are diverse and inclusive and remove any unfair discrimination within the opportunities offered (*See also Equality and Diversity code*)
- Ensure equal opportunities to volunteer
- Include reasonable costs for reducing barriers to volunteering in relevant funding bids (*See also Funding and Procurement code*)
- Increase the number of people volunteering.
- Develop good quality volunteering opportunities that are open to all

Valuing Volunteer contributions

The public sector and the VCS in Cornwall will develop policies that ensure that volunteer time is recognised as a significant contribution (*See also Policy Development code*). Volunteers contribute to the economic output of Cornwall.

They bring added value through diversity, increase local accountability, assist in service improvement and help to build strong cohesive communities.

Joint undertakings

In supporting this code the public sector and the VCS in Cornwall will:

- Recognise how volunteering can contribute to achieving Cornish local government policy objectives
- Acknowledge that volunteering can help tackle social exclusion
- Involve volunteers when developing new policies and ideas
- Develop employee volunteering
- Publicly recognise voluntary contributions
- Celebrate the contribution that volunteers make to the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of Cornwall

The Volunteering Experience

The relationship volunteers have with a volunteer-involving organisation is distinct from that of an employee. Volunteers are entitled to clarity about their roles and responsibilities, induction, managerial supervision and support, and relevant training and development opportunities. They are also subject to the same obligation to abide by and be subject to the organisation's agreements, policies and procedures, including health and safety requirements and training, Criminal Record Bureau checks.

Undertakings

The public sector in Cornwall and the Cornish VCS will:

- Work together to encourage clarity, consensus and consistency about the

appropriate roles for volunteers

- Acknowledge the distinctiveness of volunteering. Both parties recognise that voluntary activity should never be a substitute for paid work
- Encourage volunteer-involving organisations to ensure that they have both the time and the resources to support and train volunteers
- Encourage the involvement of volunteers in ongoing decision making and include them in internal communications (*See also Community Groups code*)

Volunteering infrastructure

Cornwall's volunteering infrastructure has a unique role in supporting volunteers and the organisations where they volunteer, as well as delivering volunteering initiatives and programmes.

Undertakings

The public sector undertakes to:

- Recognise the volunteering infrastructure as independent voluntary sector bodies
- Adopt policies to help ensure that specialist volunteering infrastructure can develop realistic long term funding
- Work with the volunteering infrastructure in Cornwall to coordinate approaches for the recruitment and development of volunteers
- Focus on the joint commissioning of the volunteering infrastructure

The VCS in Cornwall will:

- Work with the public sector to create and maintain a dynamic volunteering infrastructure
- The volunteering infrastructure in Cornwall will continue to focus on:
 1. **Brokerage** - stimulating and encouraging interest in voluntary and community activity, and market and promote volunteering.
 2. **Advising, training and developing** those that manage volunteers within their project or service.
 3. **Good practice development** - promoting and supporting good practice in working with volunteers to all volunteer-involving organisations.
 4. **Developing Volunteering Opportunities** - working in partnership with other statutory, VCS and private agencies, and community groups, to develop imaginative and inclusive opportunities for volunteering (*See also the Equality and Diversity code*).
 5. **Policy Response and Campaigning** – taking a lead role in ensuring that the considerations and opportunities of volunteering are taken into account within local policies development and service delivery (*See also Policy Development code*).
 6. **Strategic Development of Volunteering** – taking responsibility for the support and development of local infrastructure, good practice developments and networks, and developing policy that facilitates volunteering.

MEDIATION

Introduction

Cornwall Compact, launched June 2005 and refreshed in March 2010, with its seven associated Codes of Good Practice, establishes a local framework within which the public sector and Voluntary and community sector (VCS) can work more effectively together for the benefit of communities in Cornwall.

In exploring and learning new ways of working together, it is inevitable that from time to time disagreements will arise which need to be positively resolved. Where possible, such disagreements should be settled by the immediate parties involved.

The Mediation procedure is for Compact issues only and does not alter the complaints procedures of individual organisations. The procedure is intended to provide a framework to facilitate discussion between partners and aims to move them towards a mutually acceptable conclusion. This process should help to develop understanding and awareness between the sectors.

MEDIATION PROCEDURE

Stage 1

If an organisation is concerned that another organisation has breached the Compact they should initially seek to **resolve the difference directly**, by contacting the person they believe has breached it, clearly stating which Compact commitment has been breached. Organisational complaints procedures may come into operation at this point.

If an outcome satisfactory to both parties is not reached:

Stage 2

A mediation panel will hear both sides to ascertain whether it is a Compact Issue. If it is, the panel will attempt to mediate an agreement between the parties. The panel will be drawn from the membership of Cornwall Strategic Partnership (CSP), with external support if appropriate, comprised of five people: two from the public sector and two from the VCS, with an independent chair selected by the Chair and Vice Chair of the CSP.

If agreement cannot be reached in this way:

Stage 3

The panel can signpost to relevant mediation services*

The mediation panel will make a record of the issue and outcome for the purposes of monitoring the effectiveness of the Compact and the Mediation Procedure.

- Ombudsman for Health:
<http://www.ombudsman.org.uk>
(free service)
- Ombudsman for Local Government:
<http://www.lgo.org.uk> (free service)
- Compact Mediation Service:
<http://www.cedrsolve.com/compact> (fee charged)

The Voluntary Sector Forum will take on the co-ordination of the mediation process as part of

their brokerage and advocacy role and will work with organisations to help with and facilitate, stages 1 to 3 detailed above. They will:

- encourage collaboration
- provide practical help and support for those involved in Compact related disputes
- seek to facilitate the resolution of disputes quickly, positively and constructively
- offer advocacy or informal mediation, as appropriate

Using the above processes to help resolve a Compact complaint will not limit or restrict the right to seek other remedies provided for in law.

APPENDIX 1: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Accessibility Able to be reached or used by anyone

Big A single lottery distributor – Big, created by the merging of what was previously the New Opportunities Fund and the Community Fund. Intended to regenerate and revitalise communities, it provides funding for charities and the voluntary sector, health, education and the environment. It has also taken on the Millennium Commission's ability to fund large scale regenerative projects

Capacity Building Developmental work which strengthens the ability of organisations and/or sectors, to build their structures, systems, people and skills.

Commissioning Term used to describe the cycle of activity involved in the securing of services that most appropriately address the needs and wishes of the individual services user, making use of market intelligence and research and planning accordingly

Civil Society Refers to un-coerced, collective action around shared interests, purposes and values

Community groups Membership-based, member-led groups focused on a neighbourhood, village or community of interest, which tend to be informal in structure, be based on self help and mutual support, and have limited income.

Connexions An information, advice and guidance service for 13-19 year olds covering a range of issues including careers, health, relationships, housing, education and money delivered locally by Connexions Cornwall and Devon.

Consultation Formal procedure for gathering views in order to assess opinion (on a particular issue, proposal, policy, service provided etc) – a process of discussion between those proposing an action and those likely to be affected by it

**Contract/
contracting** Where one party is prepared to pay another party for the supply of goods or services, however simple or complex

Contract Bidding Procedures	These relate to the formalised bid and tendering procedures used by the customer for acquiring goods and services from third parties	Work-Based Learning	One of the main strands of LSC programme funding which supports the accredited training of people in employment
Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Learning Partnership	A partnership with a specific remit for promoting lifelong learning, whose role is to encourage provider collaboration and develop initiatives where learning can assist generation.	Widening participation	A process where education and training providers successfully adapt their programmes and ways of working to meet the learning needs and aspirations of individuals and groups whose experiences or circumstances inhibit participation. It involves: attracting and engaging learners; identifying appropriate programmes; appropriate support for learners during their programmes; and securing achievement. (Source: LSC Widening Participation Strategy)
Co-production	The joint design, development and delivery of services between providers and members of the local community (volunteers)	Workforce development	Activities which increase the capacity of individuals to participate effectively in the workforce, thereby improving their productivity and employability. (Source: In Demand: Adult Skills for the 21st Century, Cabinet Office, 2001)
VCS Learning Consortium	A group of voluntary and community sector organisations, working together to develop and enhance the training opportunities for the sector and the local community.		
Voluntary & community organisation (VCO)	Generic term for organisations within the voluntary and community sector		
Voluntary and community sector (VCS)	The wide and varied range of voluntary organisations and community groups which make up the 'third sector'- that is, are not part of the public or private sector.		

APPENDIX 2: CONTRIBUTORS

Refresh Steering Group 2010

Anthony Ball	Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Primary Healthcare Trust
Sara Carthew	Devon & Cornwall Constabulary
Sarah-Jane Davies	Cornwall Council
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Ian Jones	Volunteer Cornwall
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Kim Mundy	Cornwall Council
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Polly Talmage	Truro & Penwith Colleges

For a regularly updated list of public sector and VCS organisations that have signed up to the Cornwall Compact, see http://cornwallvsf.org/cornwall_compact

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