

CUMBRIA COMPACT

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Councillor EM Woodburn
LEAD OFFICER: Martin Jepson, Head of Legal and Democratic Services
REPORT AUTHOR: Martin Jepson

Summary and Recommendation:	Report asks Members to consider whether the Council should sign up to the Cumbria Compact. That the Council signs up to the Cumbria Compact.
------------------------------------	---

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Cumbria Compact is an agreement between the Third Sector and statutory organisations. It is a framework of principles and commitments and details how the sectors will improve their relationship and start to work better together. A national Compact was agreed in 1998 and local Compacts have followed.
- 1.2 Support to the Third Sector comes in the form of grants, service level agreements and commissioning of services. The aims of the Compact are to improve the quality of support to the Third Sector and the quality of services the Third Sector provides in Cumbria.

2.0 FURTHER DETAILS OF COMPACT

- 2.1 A copy of the Cumbria Compact is attached as Appendix A to this report. There are also a number of Codes of Practice planned. A volunteering Code of Practice is attached and shown as Appendix B to this report.

3.0 BENEFIT AND DISBENEFITS OF SIGNING UP TO THE COMPACT

3.1 Benefits

- (a) The Council can take the opportunity to influence the way in which Councils and the Third Sector work together;
- (b) Codes of Practice can be developed in ways which will benefit the way the Council works;
- (c) The Council can develop more harmonious relationships with the Third Sector;

Cumbria Compact Volunteering Code of Practice

Introduction

The Cumbria Compact

The Cumbria Compact is an agreement between the Third Sector and statutory organisations in Cumbria. It explains how they plan to work together, and contains a number of commitments.

The Cumbria Compact, including an up-to-date list of the statutory organisations that have 'signed up' to its commitments, can be downloaded from the Cumbria County Council website (<http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/communityinformation/voluntary/volsector.asp>).

There are a number of Codes of Practice linked to the Cumbria Compact. These aim to give more information about the commitments of the Cumbria Compact, and concentrate on the practical details of how the commitments can be turned into reality. The first Codes of Practice will be:

- Funding and Procurement
- Planning and Consultation
- Equality and Diversity
- Volunteers

Additional Codes of Practice may be developed in time.

The Volunteering Code of Practice

This Code of Practice sets out good practice for organisations working with volunteers.

It is recognised that volunteers are an essential component to many services that are currently delivered within Cumbria and that it is vital that they are both recognised for the contribution they make, and at the same time, are adequately supported in their roles.

Definition of Volunteering

Volunteering is an activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment, or someone (individuals or groups) other than, or in addition to, close relatives. (**Volunteering England**)

Scope and scale of Volunteering in Cumbria

There are volunteers in both the Statutory and Third Sectors. They undertake a wide variety of volunteer roles reflecting a range of time commitment, for example:

- Participating in environmental or conservation projects
- Running local community groups, such as Carer & Toddler groups
- Fundraising or providing other support (such as administration support) for a Third Sector Organisation (for example WRVS volunteer tea bar at local hospitals)
- Giving advice (for example, Citizens Advice Bureau advisers)
- Assisting or providing emergency services (for example, RNLI, Mountain Rescue, Special Constables and First Responders)
- Working with young people (for example, Scout and Guide leaders)
- Befriending
- Running a sports club
- Mentoring
- Leading or advising an organisation (for example as a village hall trustee or school governor)
- Providing professional expertise (for example volunteering through ProHelp)
-

This is not an exhaustive list but gives a good idea of the range and scope of volunteering activity.

The scale of volunteering is vast and as an example, Scouting volunteers in Cumbria contributed the equivalent of around £1.6 million per annum. A "Quality of Life Survey" undertaken by Cumbria County Council on 2006 revealed that 35% of those questioned had "given their time, without pay, to a charitable, religious or volunteer organisation" during the previous year.

Principles of Volunteering

There are four principles fundamental to volunteering:

Choice

Volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual, including the choice to stop volunteering without pressure or guilt.

Diversity

Volunteering should be open to all, no matter what their race, colour, nationality, religion, ethnic or national origins, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, financial resources or disability, whilst ensuring roles are appropriate and compatible with the skills of the volunteer. However, a specific role may have particular requirements, for example an enhanced level Criminal Records Bureau check may be required to enable a volunteer to work with vulnerable people.

Mutual Benefit

Volunteers offer their contribution and skills unwaged but should benefit in other ways in return for their contribution. Benefits that volunteers should expect to gain include a sense of worthwhile achievement, useful skills, experience and contacts, sociability and fun, access to training and inclusion in the life of the organisation and the wider community.

Recognition

It is vital that the value of volunteers' contribution is recognised by all involved. There are various ways to demonstrate how an organisation values its volunteers:

- By providing a parking pass
- Putting on social events
- Giving certificates
- Providing references
- Involving them in decision-making
- Including items about their achievements in newsletters
- Opportunities to gather information for evidence based qualifications

Local volunteering infrastructure

Within Cumbria there exists a large number of organisations that work with volunteers, including specialist organisations for young people, such as Cumbria Youth Alliance, Millenium Volunteers and Cumbria Sport.

Many organisations recruit volunteers directly, whilst others use the network of Volunteer Centres (formerly bureaux). In addition to these Centres there are other brokerage services (for example ProHelp who place volunteers who have specific professional skills with appropriate third sector organisations)

The Volunteer Centres work together as Volunteer Centres Cumbria to meet the following strategic objectives defined by Volunteering England:

Brokerage

The volunteer centres hold information on volunteering opportunities. They provide potential volunteers with accessible support and advice in matching individual skills and interests to appropriate volunteering opportunities.

Marketing

Marketing and promotional activities aimed at stimulating and encouraging interest in voluntary and community activity. The volunteer centres will market and promote volunteering through local, regional and national events and campaigns.

Good practice development

Promoting and actively supporting good practice when working with volunteers.

Developing volunteering opportunities

Working creatively, in partnership with other agencies, to develop volunteering opportunities and stimulate volunteer participation.

Policy response and campaigning

Identify and lead on policy development concerning proposals or legislation that might have an impact on policy or campaign issues.

Strategic development of volunteering

Inform regional and national thinking; develop local strategies ensuring that volunteering has a place in local planning.

Commitments to support Volunteering

In supporting this Code, all organisations working with volunteers undertake to:

- Identify a named person within their organisations to be responsible for volunteer involvement, and co-ordinating support. Ensure this person receives full training and is adequately supported in their role.
- Ensure that each volunteer has appropriate support, supervision and training.
- Make sure that the contribution of volunteers is given adequate recognition and publicity.
- Ensure that no volunteers are unfairly disadvantaged on the grounds of race, religion, disability, etc
- Carry out Criminal Records Bureau checks if appropriate to a volunteers role.
- Ensure that volunteers are matched to suitable roles.
- Work together to create and maintain a modern and dynamic volunteering infrastructure.
- Encourage volunteers to claim for out-of-pocket expenses to ensure that volunteers who wish or need to claim expenses do not feel disadvantaged.
- Encourage the involvement of volunteers in ongoing decision-making and ensure their inclusion in internal communications.

In supporting this code, Third Sector organisations undertake to:

- Promote volunteering opportunities, ensuring that recruitment is achieved on the basis of equality of opportunity and that all volunteers are subsequently managed sensitively and appropriately.
- Ensure that the sector has appropriate resources and procedures to support and train volunteers and volunteer co-ordinators/managers.
- Encourage the use of full cost recovery in relevant bids, to enable and develop volunteering, and recognise the financial contribution.

In supporting this code, Statutory Sector organisations undertake to:

- Consult the sector so that development and implementation of legislation/regulation, guidance and policies take account of the ways they may affect volunteers and volunteering activities.
- Work to actively reduce barriers to volunteering resulting from regulation and policies.
- Recognise that it is legitimate for voluntary and community organisations to include the costs of enabling greater access to volunteering in relevant applications for funding. e.g. co-ordination costs, volunteer travel and training, equipment and or building adaptations.
- Work with the Third Sector to expand the public perception of volunteering by improving the profile, status and range of volunteer activity.
- Work to effectively tackle discrimination to ensure that volunteering is open to all.
- Support staff who wish to volunteer, for example, through employee volunteering schemes.
- Adopt policies to help ensure that specialist volunteering infrastructure can develop realistic sustainable long term funding.

Cumbria Compact Volunteering Code of Practice Appendix 1 -The Volunteer Charter

All signatories to the Code will observe and promote the Volunteer Charter.

Volunteers' Rights

- To be given a clear description of their role as a volunteer and responsibilities within the organisation.
- To be given the name of someone in the organisation that will look after their interests whilst they volunteer, and who will offer them appropriate induction, training and support and regular supervision.
- To be assured that any information shared with the organisation is kept confidential and is in compliance with the data protection act.
- To be given the same protection under health and safety regulations and public liability as paid workers.
- To ensure that there are clear grievance procedures (examples available from Volunteering England).
- To be offered opportunities for training and skills development, appropriate for their role and tasks as a volunteer.
- Not to be exploited – volunteers should not:

Be used to replace paid workers

Have unfair demands made on their time

Be asked to do something which is against their principles or beliefs

- To be given the chance to play a part in decision making within the organisation.
- To be paid out-of-pocket expenses such as travel and lunch whilst doing voluntary work.
- To be able to take a break from or cease to volunteer.

Volunteers' Responsibilities

- To accept the organisation's aims and objectives and work within agreed policies and procedures.
- To do what is reasonably requested of them, to the best of their ability.
- To treat information obtained whilst volunteering in an appropriate confidential manner and adhere to the organisation's confidentiality policies.
- To recognise that they represent the organisation and therefore need to act in an appropriate manner at all times.
- To honour any commitment made, to the best of their abilities, notifying the organisation in good time should they be unable to keep that commitment e.g. for holidays.
- To be willing to undertake appropriate training as necessary for the voluntary work undertaken.
- To recognise the right of the organisation to expect quality of service from its volunteers.

Cumbria Compact – DRAFT Volunteering Code of Practice
August 2007

Appendix 1 – Volunteer Charter

- To share suggestions for changes in working practices with the Volunteer Organiser.

**Cumbria Compact
Volunteering Code of Practice
Appendix 2 - Contact Details**

Volunteer Centre (Carlisle)

Cumbria CVS

27 Spencer Street

Carlisle

CA1 1BE

Tel: 01228 512513

Email: enquiries@volunteeringcarlisle.org.uk

Website: www.volunteeringcarlisle.org.uk

Contact: Judith Holmshaw

Volunteer Centre (Eden)

16 Boroughgate

Appleby-in-Westmorland

Cumbria

CA16 6XB

Tel/Fax 017683 52411

Email: volunteer.edenvc@tiscali.co.uk

Contact: Alex Chalmers or Menna Lewis

Volunteer Centre (South Lakeland)

Stricklandgate House,

92 Stricklandgate,

Kendal

LA9 4PU

Tel: 01539 742636

Email: info@volunteersouthlakes.org

Website: www.volunteersouthlakes.org

Contact: Abbey Staveley

Volunteer Centre (Barrow)

Cumbria CVS

72-74 Scott Street

Barrow-in-Furness

Cumbria

LA14 1QE

Tel: 0-1229 823144

Email: lisaco@cumbriacvs.org.uk (will need updating)

Contact: Lisa Corcoran

Volunteer Centre (West)**Cumbria CVS**

12a Selby Terrace

Maryport

Cumbria

CA15 6NF

Tel: 01900 819191

Email: amandac@cumbriacvs.org.uk**Contact: Michelle McGibbon****Volunteering England**

Regents Wharf

8 All Saints Street

London

N1 9RL

Email: volunteering@volunteeringengland.orgWebsite: volunteering.org.uk

On-line information sheets available include:-

- Definitions for volunteering
- Health & Safety
- How to say thank you
- Monitoring and evaluating a volunteer programme
- National statistics on volunteering
- Problem solving procedures
- Screening and CRB checks
- Types of insurance policy which cover volunteers

Bibliography

The 21st Century Volunteer, A Report on the Changing Face of Volunteering in the 21st Century, commissioned by the Scout Association November 2005.

The Russell Commission on Youth Action and Engagement, consultation document, October 2004

Volunteering for All? Exploring the link between volunteering and Social Exclusion, Institute for Volunteering Research.

Active People Survey headline results for the North West Region (October 2005-06)

Community Engagement of the Church in Cumbria. The social contribution made by the Church in Cumbria with particular reference to the area served by Furness Local Strategic Partnership. Mr Ron Turner, Churches Together in Barrow 2004-05.

Useful Websites

www.volunteering.org.uk

www.investinginvolunteers.org.uk

www.russellcommission.org.uk

www.do-it.org.uk

www.timebank.org.uk

www.mv-online.gov.uk

www.statistics.gov.uk

www.charitycommission.gov.uk

Cumbria Compact

This Compact sets out how statutory and third sector organisations in Cumbria want to work together to improve services for local people. Its value comes from the commitment of organisations that sign up to work in partnership to deliver better services. This Cumbria Compact builds on the good work done by existing Compacts in Cumbria, in particular the North Cumbria Health Compact.

The Third Sector

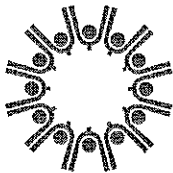
In this document, the term 'third sector' includes voluntary and community organisations, charities, social enterprises, cooperatives and mutual societies. Faith organisations that are involved in community work are also considered part of the third sector. The sector includes groups that are managed and run entirely by volunteers, and organisations that employ paid staff.

The Statutory Sector

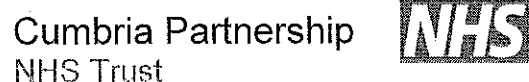
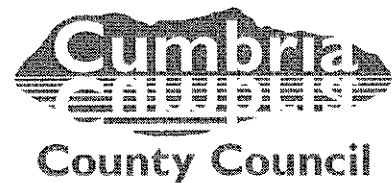
This generally means organisations created through acts of parliament. The law sets out what they do. The first statutory sector organisations to adopt the Cumbria Compact are:

- Cumbria County Council
- Cumbria Primary Care Trust
- Cumbria Partnership NHS Trust
- University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Trust

These organisations will encourage other statutory organisations in Cumbria to adopt the Compact.



Cumbria CVS
Working with the Third Sector for positive change



Shared Principles and Commitments

These are shared principles we have agreed. We have included key commitments for each of these principles. We will develop Codes of Practice with more detailed commitments on the topics listed in the section "Working Together in the Future".

Joint Working

Developing and improving services together in an equal partnership builds stronger relationships, cross-border learning and services that are more likely to meet people's needs.

- Partners will work to create a shared strategic vision for the delivery of services.
- When work is undertaken jointly, the risks of that work will be shared *fairly* between organisations. This means the majority of the risk will be taken by the organisation best able to bear it. These risks could include financial risk and the risks associated with non-delivery of the service.

Communication

Clear communication is essential to both effective partnership working and the delivery of high quality services.

- Information will be produced in clear language, and in appropriate formats (for example, in large print or on audio tape) as appropriate.
- Partners agree to share information and respect its confidentiality where appropriate.

Mutual respect

Strong and lasting relationships are built on honesty, openness and trust. Each sector has its own set of responsibilities and duties, and within this, each organisation is different and brings different knowledge and resources to the network. These resources include the commitment and contribution of volunteers. This diversity is a strength, and partners will respect and value it.

- Partners will acknowledge each other's contribution.
- Partners will work to develop a better understanding of the core aims, activities and responsibilities of other partners.

Independence

An independent and varied third sector is essential to the well-being of communities in Cumbria. It plays an important role in creating strong communities and building social capital. One of the third sector's main roles is to campaign and challenge policy.

- Campaigning and advocacy work carried out within the law will not affect any funding relationships that exist.

Planning, Consultation and Representation

The third sector can be one route to user and community views. If organisations are to be able to accurately reflect these views they need time to consult with those they represent.

- Partners will work together to draw up strategic plans.

- A minimum consultation period of 12 weeks will be given when a major service change is proposed, in line with the Cabinet Office Code of Practice on Consultation.

Funding and Responsibilities

Individual organisations are responsible for their actions and the services they provide. Where a statutory sector organisation funds a third sector organisation, the statutory sector organisation has a duty to ensure that this public money is spent appropriately. Many third sector groups are small organisations with limited reserves, and they can have serious cash flow problems when funding is delayed or paid in arrears.

- Funding will be paid in advance of spend (or in line with any specific contractual arrangements as may be agreed).
- Where monitoring requirements can be determined locally, these will be in proportion to the funding and the level of risk associated with the project.
- Partners support the principle of full cost recovery, and will work towards achieving this in practice.

Equality and Diversity

Partners have a duty to promote equality and diversity.

- Organisations will seek to ensure fair access to their services, employment opportunities and volunteer positions.

Quality Services

Organisations have different but complementary roles. All partners want to provide the highest quality services for their users.

- Organisations will take the views of service users and carers into account when planning services, and undertake appropriate monitoring and evaluation of services.
- Organisations will work towards appropriate quality standards.

Working within the Compact

If an organisation cannot do something that is set out in this Compact they will explain why, and how they plan to comply with this Compact in the future.

- Organisations will promote and raise awareness of the Compact.
- Organisations will ensure their staff, volunteers and members are aware of the Compact through appropriate publicity and training.

Solving Disagreements

Even in the best relationships, partners will disagree from time to time. Developing solutions acceptable to both parties can improve understanding and help build stronger relationships. It is important that there is an effective way to solve disagreements about using this Compact. By committing to this Compact, organisations are agreeing to try and solve disagreements in a constructive manner.

Disagreements will first be dealt with by approaching the organisation/sector concerned. Specific dispute resolution procedures will be included within some contracts. If necessary, the formal complaints procedure of the organisation concerned should be used.

If disagreements cannot be resolved in this way they should be reported to the Compact Group (see below), who will consider how to take the issue forward. This could include contacting the NCVO (National Council for Voluntary Organisations) Local Compact Advocacy Service, or other forms of mediation.

Working together in the future

We will establish a Compact Group to oversee the development of the Compact. This group will:

- Undertake an annual review of the Compact. This will include celebrating the success of the Compact and reviewing recorded breaches/disagreements.
- Ensure Codes of Practice are developed and adopted. These Codes will cover topics including:
 - Funding and Procurement
 - Planning and Consultation
 - Equality and Diversity
 - Volunteers
- Work to involve other partners in the Compact

Useful contacts

Carolyn Otley

Promoting Partnerships Officer

West Cumbria Council for Voluntary
Service
12a Selby Terrace
Maryport
Cumbria
CA15 6NF

(01900) 819191

carolyn@cumbriacvs.org.uk

Georgina Ternent

Programme Manager - Voluntary and
Parish Sector

Cumbria County Council
Penrith Library
St. Andrew's Churchyard
Penrith
CA11 7YA

(01768) 242365

georgina.ternent@cumbriacc.gov.uk

- (d) Signing up the Compact can assist a number of objectives in the Corporate Plan –
 - 1.3 - “We will lead Copeland’s transformational partnerships and support other strategic partnerships.”
 - 2.4 - “We will promote equal of opportunity throughout Copeland.”
 - 2.5 - “We will be an adaptable Council responding to the expectations and needs of the customer in the services they require.”
- 3.2 Disbenefits Arguments against
 - (a) The Council already works well with its Third Sector partners;
 - (b) The Council has a number of key priorities and involvement in the initiative may have an advance short term effect on capacity;
 - (c) The Council can develop its own partnering arrangements with the Third Sector.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 There are longer-term benefits – reputational, sound working practices, opportunity to influence – which outweighs concerns over short-term capacity and retaining the status quo. This report therefore recommends the Council signs up to the Cumbria Compact.

5. FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOURCES OF FINANCE)

- 5.1 Some Member and officer time will be involved in developing the Compact. However, such work does generally support a number of Corporate Plan objectives.

6. PROJECT AND RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 Developing the Compact is a project led by a County-wide Steering Group, of which this Council would be a member.

7. IMPACT ON CORPORATE PLAN

- 7.1 As above.

List of Appendices

Appendix A:	Cumbria Compact.
Appendix B:	Volunteering Code of Practice.
List of Background Documents:	Letter, Chair of Cumbria Compact Steering Group to Chief Executive.
List of Consultees:	Corporate Team, Portfolio Holder.

CHECKLIST FOR DEALING WITH KEY ISSUES

Please confirm against the issue if the key issues below have been addressed.
This can be by either a short narrative or quoting the

Impact on Crime and Disorder	Not directly applicable.
Impact on Sustainability	Not directly applicable.
Impact on Rural Proofing	Not directly applicable.
Health and Safety Implications	Not directly applicable.
Impact on Equality and Diversity Issues	Can help to improve the way the Council and its partners work.
Children and Young Persons Implications	Can help to improve the way the Council and its partners work.
Human Rights Act Implications	Can help to improve the way the Council and its partners work.
Comments of S.151 Finance Officer	No further comment to add – the main resource implication is that of staff time. It will need to be factored into work plans accordingly.
Comments of Monitoring Officer	Is report author.

Please say if this report will require the making of a key decision

No