



SUTTON COMPACT

**An agreement between the public sector and the
voluntary and community sector in Sutton**

Working Together, Achieving Together, Stronger Together

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DEFINITIONS

Voluntary and community organisations in Sutton are recognised as non-governmental not for profit organisations who are involved in any or all of the following:

- The provision of services
- Advocacy and self-help
- Campaigning
- Borough co-ordination and support
- Services to other voluntary organisations

Where this document refers to the public sector, it refers to the local organisations in Sutton that have signed up to the Compact, namely:

- Sutton Council
- Sutton Police Service
- Sutton Fire Service
- Sutton Clinical Commissioning Group

1. INTRODUCTION

WORKING TOGETHER ACHIEVING TOGETHER STRONGER TOGETHER

- 1.1 Compact is a partnership. There has been a Compact between the public sector and the voluntary and community sector in Sutton since 2003.
- 1.2 The renewed Sutton Compact is an agreement between the London Borough of Sutton, local Voluntary and Community Organisations (VCOs), the Metropolitan Police, Fire Service and the Clinical Commissioning Group (tbc). The Compact underpins the strong and effective partnerships, built on mutual trust and confidence, between the sectors that enables us to work together to support our local residents.
- 1.3 This document builds on the excellent partnerships that have long been established between the local voluntary and community sector and local public sector. The Compact outlines how all parties work together and offers a framework of principles and values to improve and develop how we will work together in the future. It is a mutual agreement, demonstrating our trust and confidence, between Sutton's voluntary and community sector, local authority, police, health and fire service.
- 1.4 The Compact aims to develop and sustain strong and vibrant partnerships between the partners by establishing principles and actions to which all parties are committed. Sutton's public sector is committed to supporting local VCOs and believes that a strong and independent sector is integral to the commitment to empower local residents to make decisions on behalf of their neighbourhoods. The public sector recognises the contribution made by volunteers who give their time freely to support projects working for the benefit of the local community. Local VCOs are uniquely placed to nurture and develop Sutton's volunteers.
- 1.5 The agreement aims to ensure that local public sector bodies and local VCOs work in partnership to achieve common goals and outcomes for the benefit of communities and citizens in Sutton. As partners we share a fundamental aim to serve and represent the interests of local people and communities. At this time of financial challenge it is even more important that local organisations work together to address the needs of Sutton's residents.
- 1.6 This document sets the context for the partnership between the public sector and VCOs in Sutton and there is an expectation that the relationship will continue to develop through ongoing communication between public sector staff, councillors and the VCOs. It is important to note that the Compact does not override any legal or statutory responsibilities.

Ten Compact Principles

1. Community involvement and voluntary action are essential to a democratic society and to the quality of life in Sutton.
2. The differences and diversity between the public sector and the voluntary and community sector should be respected and valued.
3. Each sector has its own set of responsibility and constraints. Common to all, is the need for integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
4. The independence of the voluntary and community sector should be respected and it should be recognised that it is entitled to campaign within the law in order to advance its aims.
5. To maximize the effectiveness of the voluntary and community sector, investment in its infrastructure is essential.
6. Organisations in each sector have the right to contribute to and, if necessary, challenge matters that affect them.
7. The voluntary and community sector will maintain high standards of governance and conduct, and comply with reporting and accountability obligations.
8. Both the public sector and the voluntary and community sector acknowledge the importance of promoting equality for all people.
9. Public sector partners recognise the role of infrastructure organisations in capacity building.
10. Public sector partners agree to acknowledge the principles of full cost recovery.

2. OUTCOMES

The document outlines our joint commitment to achieve the following specific outcomes:

- A strong, diverse and independent civil society
- Effective and transparent design and development of policies, programmes and public services
- Responsive and high-quality programmes and services
- Clear arrangements for managing changes to programmes and services
- An equal and fair society

3. COMMITMENTS FOR SUTTON'S PUBLIC SECTOR AND THE VCOs

3.1 A STRONG, DIVERSE AND INDEPENDENT CIVIL SOCIETY

Sutton's public sector recognises the value of the VCOs to the local community and that it is in the best interest of residents to support a strong, diverse and independent sector.

UNDERTAKINGS FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR

- 3.1.1 Respect and uphold the independence of VCOs to deliver their mission, including their right to campaign, regardless of any relationship, financial or otherwise, which may exist.
- 3.1.2 Ensure that VCOs are supported and resourced in a transparent, reasonable and fair manner where they are helping the public sector fulfill its aims by delivering agreed positive outcomes. This includes capacity building and delivering value for money.
- 3.1.3 Ensure greater transparency by making data and information more accessible, helping VCOs to challenge existing provision of services, access new markets and hold the Council to account.
- 3.1.4 Ensure that volunteers do not pay to access Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.

UNDERTAKINGS FOR THE VCOs

- 3.1.5 When campaigning or advocating, ensure that robust evidence is provided, including information about the source and range of people and communities represented.

- 3.1.6 Ensure independence is upheld, focusing on the organisation's objectives, regardless of any relationship they have with public sector staff or councillors, financial or otherwise.
- 3.1.7 Provide feedback on the public sector's performance and act as a critical friend to the sector.

3.2 EFFECTIVE AND TRANSPARENT DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OF POLICIES, PROGRAMMES AND PUBLIC SERVICES

Sutton's public sector is committed to working in partnership to commission for outcomes. When reviewing and evaluating services, the public sector will focus on seeing things from a citizen or user-perspective; VCOs have a valuable role to play in supporting public services to achieve this at a strategic and operational level.

UNDERTAKINGS FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR

- 3.2.1 Ensure that social, environmental and economic value forms a standard part of designing, developing and delivering policies, programmes and services, and in particular consider how these would impact local efforts to inspire and encourage social action and to empower communities.
- 3.2.2 Work with VCOs from the earliest possible stage to co-produce policies, programmes, services and commissioning and give early notice of forthcoming consultations, where possible, allowing enough time for VCOs to involve their service users, carers, beneficiaries, members, volunteers and trustees in preparing responses. Where it is appropriate, and enables meaningful engagement, conduct 12 week formal written consultations, with clear explanations and rationale for shorter time-frames or a more informal approach.
- 3.2.3 Provide feedback to explain how respondents have influenced the design and development of policies, programmes and public services, including where respondents' views have not been acted upon.
- 3.2.4 Assess the implications for the sector of new policies, legislation and guidance, aiming to reduce the bureaucratic burden, particularly on small organisations.

UNDERTAKING FOR THE VCOs

- 3.2.5 Work with the public sector in the co-production of policies, programmes and services; and promote and respond to public sector consultations, where appropriate.
- 3.2.6 Seek the views of service users, carers, clients, beneficiaries, members, volunteers, and trustees when making representation and responding to consultations from the public sector. Be clear on who is being represented, in what capacity and on what basis that representation is being made.
- 3.2.7 When putting forward ideas, focus on evidence-based solutions, with clear proposals for positive outcomes.

- 3.2.8 Recognition of the constraints on the public sector through legislation and procurement rules.

3.3 RESPONSIVE AND HIGH-QUALITY PROGRAMMES AND SERVICES

The public sector is committed to delivering user-focused services that meet the needs of individuals and the local community at a price that all can afford. It also recognises the value of commissioning services that have the potential to provide benefits to localities beyond the individual service provided. Furthermore, the public sector recognises that there is value in commissioning services from a variety of suppliers of different types. A partnership approach to commissioning between the public sector and VCOs will enable this to happen.

UNDERTAKINGS FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR

- 3.3.1 Ensure that VCOs have the opportunities to deliver public services when the public sector commissions services, including a transparent and proportionate application and tendering processes with appropriate consideration of overheads such as training and volunteer involvement.
- 3.3.2 Consider a wide range of ways to fund or resource VCOs and ensure transparency by providing a clear rationale for all funding decisions. Work to remove barriers that may prevent VCOs accessing public sector funding, thereby enabling smaller organisations to become involved in delivering services where they are best placed to achieve the desired outcomes.
- 3.3.3 Commit to multi-year funding where appropriate and where it adds value for money. The funding term should reflect the time it will take to deliver the outcome. If multi-year funding is not considered to be the best way of delivering the objective, explain the reasons for the decision.
- 3.3.4 The public sector will ensure the timely payment of funds to VCOs.
- 3.3.5 Agree with VCOs how outcomes, including the social, environmental or economic value, will be monitored before a contract or funding agreement is made. Ensure that monitoring and reporting is relevant and proportionate to the nature and size of the opportunity and does not change unnecessarily over the course of the contract or grant. Be clear about what information is being asked for, and why and how it will be used.
- 3.3.6 Discuss and allocate risks to the organisation(s) best equipped to manage them. Where lead contractors are used ensure they adhere to the principles of this compact in allocating risk. Ensure delivery terms and risks are proportionate to the nature and value of the opportunity.

- 3.3.7 Ensure that the widest possible range of organisations can be involved in the provision of services through appropriate funding and financing models, for example outcomes based payments and payment in advance of expenditure. Payment in advance of expenditure should be considered on a case by case basis where this represents value for money.

UNDERTAKINGS FOR THE VCOs

- 3.3.8 Ensure eligibility for funding before applying and be explicit about how the outcomes will be achieved.
- 3.3.9 Ensure robust governance arrangements so that organisations can best manage any risk associated with service delivery and financing models, including giving funders early notice of significant changes in circumstances.
- 3.3.10 Be open and transparent about reporting, recognising that monitoring, whether internal or external, is an aspect of good management practice.
- 3.3.11 Demonstrate the social, environmental or economic value of the programmes and services provided, where appropriate and proportionate to the size of contract.
- 3.3.12 Help facilitate feedback from users and communities to the public sector to help improve delivery of programmes and services.
- 3.3.13 Recognise that the public sector can legitimately expect VCOs to give public recognition of its funding.
- 3.3.14 Provide feedback on the effectiveness of the public sector and how successful it has been in delivering their objectives.

3.4 CLEAR ARRANGEMENTS FOR MANAGING CHANGES TO PROGRAMMES AND SERVICES

The public sector is committed to funding VCOs in a way that is transparent and accountable; any changes to programmes and services should be equally transparent and agreed by both the funder and provider.

UNDERTAKINGS FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR

- 3.4.1 If a programme or service is encountering problems, agree with the voluntary or community organisation a timetable of actions to improve performance before making a decision to end a financial relationship.
- 3.4.2 Assess the impact on beneficiaries, service users and volunteers before deciding to reduce or end funding. Assess the need to re-allocate funds to another organisation serving the same group.
- 3.4.3 Where there are restrictions or changes to future resources, discuss with VCOs the potential implications as early as possible, give organisations the opportunity to

respond, and consider the response fully, respecting sector expertise, before making a final decision. Any changes should be agreed by the funder and provider and the provider should be notified in writing.

- 3.4.4 To give a minimum of 3 months' notice in writing, or longer (best practice being 6 months) where this is feasible and appropriate, when changing or ending a funding relationship or other support, apart from in exceptional circumstances, and provide a clear rationale for why the decision has been taken.

UNDERTAKINGS FOR THE VCOs

- 3.4.5 Plan for the end of funding to reduce any potential negative impact on beneficiaries and the organisation, including any redundancy payments.
- 3.4.6 Contribute positively to reviews of programmes and funding practice.
- 3.4.7 Advise the public sector on the social, environmental or economic impact of funding changes, and on ways to minimise their effects on people in vulnerable situations.

3.5 AN EQUAL AND FAIR SOCIETY

For Sutton to be a community that everyone feels part of, it is essential for the public sector and VCOs to work together.

UNDERTAKINGS FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR

- 3.5.1 Work with VCOs that represent, support or provide services to people specifically protected by legislation and other under-represented and disadvantaged groups. Understand the specific needs of these groups by actively seeking the views of service users and clients. Take these views into account, including assessing impact, when designing and implementing policies, programmes and services.
- 3.5.2 Acknowledge that organisations representing specific disadvantaged or under-represented group(s) can help promote social and community cohesion and should have equal access to funding and the commissioning of services.
- 3.5.3 Take practical action to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality and to ensure a voice for under-represented and disadvantaged groups.

UNDERTAKINGS FOR THE VCOs

- 3.5.4 If receiving funding from the public sector, show how the value of the work can help that body deliver its public sector duties on promoting equality and tackling discrimination.
- 3.5.5 Work to promote and raise awareness of Sutton's needs at a regional, national and international level, where appropriate.

- 3.5.6 Take practical action, such as through funding bids, to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and build stronger communities.

For more information on the Sutton Compact please contact:

Sutton Centre for the Voluntary Sector
Granfers Community Centre
73-79 Oakhill Road
Sutton
SM1 3AA
020 8644 2867
enquiries@suttoncvs.org.uk

Or

Sutton Council
Civic Offices
Sutton
SM1 1EA
020 8770 5779
victoria.lawson@sutton.gov.uk