

A Compact

Between Glamorgan Voluntary Services

and

The Vale of Glamorgan Council

2017-2021



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This fourth edition of the compact builds on the considerable partnership working taking place between Glamorgan Voluntary Services and the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

The compact recognises the enormous contribution made to local communities, and the community as a whole, through voluntary action. It sets out clear definitions of the responsibilities and expectations of the Council and the voluntary sector in working together.

The compact provides a framework for ongoing collaboration, within the broader context of community planning. It is an agreement built on the principles of integrity, trust and mutual respect.

This revised compact builds on the core principles established in previous versions and seeks to develop further opportunities across a range of areas to support strong communities in the Vale of Glamorgan. This version of the Compact has been produced to provide a framework for the Council and Glamorgan Voluntary Services to work within. The previous versions have included Cardiff & Vale University Health Board as a partner organisation. There have been significant developments between that organisation and the voluntary sector (with supporting governance arrangements), in addition to the establishment of the Public Services Board in the intervening period and this Compact now focuses on taking forward the relationship between Council and voluntary sector.

Signed.....
For The Vale of Glamorgan Council

Signed
For Glamorgan Voluntary Services

1. Aims & Objectives of the Compact

The aim of the Compact is to provide a local framework within which the voluntary sector and council can work together in ways which are mutually beneficial, enabling each to contribute fully and effectively to delivering well-being for communities in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Based around four themes, the compact has a number of objectives:

<p>Communication, Consultation & Participation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To encourage the development and maintenance of a range of mechanisms for effective and transparent communication on issues of shared interest
<p>Partnership Working</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To encourage good practice in participation, consultation and decision making To maximise the role of Glamorgan Voluntary Services (GVS) in maintaining and developing the interface between the Council and other public and private sector organisations in the Vale of Glamorgan To encourage the development of appropriate mechanisms for reviewing statutory and voluntary services together with opportunities to become involved in review programmes in line with national and local priorities
<p>Funding & Resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop and maintain mechanisms for making the best use of the available funding and resources for the voluntary sector and Council by working transparently and creatively together and with others
<p>Volunteering</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To encourage voluntary action and volunteering initiatives that demonstrate a potential to add value to existing services and meet unmet needs

These objectives are underpinned by commitments made in this compact by the Council and the Voluntary sector. Each theme is delivered by specific actions contained within an annually reviewed work plan and overseen by the Voluntary Sector Joint Liaison Committee.

In delivering these objectives it means that the parties will:

- Have an equal say about the arrangements for the parties to work together;
- Contribute at a formative stage and as early as possible in informing the development of policy;

- Contribute to the procedures for the administration and distribution of resources to the voluntary sector;
- Have proposals assessed against common, fair and equitable criteria;
- Have opportunities to lead in those areas where they are best placed to do so.

The agreement works from the premise that with regard to these matters, the parties are equal partners.

2. Vision

This agreement recognises that voluntary action combined with partnership working is the basis for a vibrant local democracy and strong communities in which local people:

- Actively support each other;
- Share in the decision making needed to improve their communities;
- Can fully develop and use their skills;
- Live in safe, sustainable and well designed built environments;
- Participate in the distinct artistic and cultural life of Wales;
- Have access to a wide range of local services and facilities that improve health and well-being.

This shared vision will only be achieved if the parties and the wider voluntary sector:

- Understand, recognise and respect their distinctive roles;
- Work together to enable the energy and diversity of local communities to find expression through partnership.

3. Shared Values

The Council and the Voluntary sector in the Vale of Glamorgan share a number of common values that underpin all aspects of this Compact, which are:

- To offer equality of opportunity for all people living in the Vale of Glamorgan, regardless of race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, disability, health status, language preference, religion or family/domestic responsibilities;
- Understanding and acceptance of the independence and complexity of the voluntary sector;
- To enhance local democracy by empowering people to contribute to the development of their communities;
- To enable people to participate in economic, social and cultural activities in the Vale of Glamorgan;

- To actively encourage partnerships between public, private and voluntary sectors to improve the quality of life for communities and individuals;
- To encourage voluntary action to foster community leadership and enhance local democracy.
- To acknowledge the contribution of volunteers and unpaid carers to the health and well-being of Vale of Glamorgan residents.

4. The Partners to the Compact & Context

Glamorgan Voluntary Services [for Rachel to review]

The definition of a voluntary organisation, promoted by Wales Council for Voluntary Action, and adopted by the Welsh Assembly Government is that it should be "self-governing, independent of the state or business, does not distribute any surplus, and benefits from philanthropy (donations, gifts in kind or of time). Additional criteria include the demonstration of public benefit and the presence of a majority of non-statutory appointees or representatives on the board of trustees and a majority of non-statutory members".

A voluntary organisation may or may not employ paid staff and may receive some or all of its funding from statutory sources. It will be considered to be a voluntary organisation as long as the criteria in the above definition apply.

The voluntary sector in the Vale of Glamorgan is a key social partner, working alongside the public and private sectors to create a fair and healthy modern democracy. Voluntary action and volunteering form an intrinsic part of the fabric of local communities, underpinning much of the activity and organisation that binds communities together.

Voluntary and community organisations complement elected government by providing a vital channel for disadvantaged groups to get their voice heard. They create opportunities for people to work together to tackle problems in their communities and develop community leadership. They are involved in every sphere of public service, as advocates for improvement, engines for change and innovation, sources of independent advice and mainstream providers of services.

The distinctive strengths of the voluntary and community sector in the Vale of Glamorgan are:

- its independence;
- its closeness to communities and users of public services;
- its ability to campaign to meet their needs;
- its capacity to innovate new approaches and provide choice and diversity in services;
- the opportunities it creates for people to participate in decisions affecting their lives.

In response to increasing demands, at both national and local levels, voluntary organisations change and evolve. In order to support and develop the economic, social and environmental well-being of the community, the voluntary sector itself needs access to information and development support. In the Vale of Glamorgan, GVS is constituted to play a key role in facilitating the representation of the local voluntary sector and in identifying and responding to the sector's need for development and support.

Glamorgan Voluntary Services acts as the umbrella organisation that supports, develops and promotes voluntary action in the Vale of Glamorgan.

The Vale of Glamorgan Council

The Council has a pivotal role in shaping the future of its area. The Council's overall vision for its area is one of “strong communities with a bright future”. The Council’s Corporate Plan sets out a series of well-being outcomes and objectives which contribute to achieving the national well-being goals introduced by the Well-being of Future Generations Act. The Act seeks to ensure public bodies practice sustainable development which is the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action aimed at achieving the well-being goals.

To realise the Council’s vision it has in place the following well-being outcomes:

- An Inclusive and Safe Vale – Citizens of the Vale of Glamorgan have a good quality of life and feel part of the local community;
- An Environmentally Responsible and Prosperous Vale – The Vale of Glamorgan has a strong and sustainable economy and the local environment is safeguarded for present and future generations.
- An Aspirational and Culturally Vibrant Vale – All Vale of Glamorgan citizens have opportunities to achieve their full potential.
- An Active and Healthy Vale – Residents of the Vale of Glamorgan lead healthy lives and vulnerable people are protected and supported.

The Well-being of Future Generations Act puts in place the sustainable development principle which means that the body must act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The Council takes into consideration five things in order to demonstrate that it has applied the sustainable development principle. Following these ways of working will help us work together better, avoid repeating past mistakes and tackle some of the long-term challenges we are facing. The five ways of working are:

- **Long term:** The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs;
- **Prevention:** How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives;

- **Integration:** Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies;
- **Collaboration:** Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives;
- **Involvement:** The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.

The Corporate Plan seeks to ensure the Council maximises its contribution to the well-being goals and contains commitments to following the ways of working in order to deliver strong communities with a bright future. Examples include working collaboratively, recognising that it can achieve more and deliver better services by working as part of a team, for example the Third Sector, Town and Community Councils and other organisations. Involving the population in decisions is a key way of working by engaging with residents and customers with alone or increasingly often, in partnership. This underpins an integrated approach whereby customers' needs are taken as the starting point for how services are delivered and designed by working with partners. A key example of activity in this area is in the focus between the Council, health services and the voluntary sector. Taking preventative action and looking to the long term are important ways of working and underpin the many competing demands on council services and help inform policy making. There are clear synergies between this Act and the Social Services and Well-being Act which the Council and its partners are working to deliver.

In response to the challenges presented by the current climate, the Council has developed a strategy for transformational change called Reshaping Services. Recognising the unprecedented financial challenges facing the Council, the proactive strategy seeks to reshape the way in which the Council works in order to mitigate the effect of the impact of cuts and assist in continuing to provide priority services. The Reshaping Services programme involves work that cuts across all Council departments and seeks to exploit the synergies between departments and the economies of scale presented by tackling issues corporately. The Council is also continuing to recognise and further harness the value of the contribution that the Voluntary sector and Town and Community Councils have to play, with dedicated projects in place to pursue these opportunities and these partners represented on key project boards and involved in decision making.

5. Contributions to the Compact

The Council	The Voluntary Sector
The Council recognises:	The voluntary sector recognises:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The diversity of voluntary activity in the Vale of Glamorgan; • The contribution to community life and the health and well-being of the community by volunteers, and voluntary and community organisations; • The independence of voluntary and community organisations in determining their own priorities and managing their own affairs; • The voluntary sector's advocacy and campaigning roles on behalf of the community; • That the voluntary sector offers services that complement those provided by the Council; • That volunteering takes place formally and informally to benefit the community and is a commitment of time and energy, freely given; • That voluntary and community organisations represent the interests of their constituents including those from harder to reach and minority groups; • That voluntary and community organisations are bound by their governing documents, and are accountable to their members and the individuals and communities with whom they work. • Their statutory duties and responsibilities to the voluntary sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The statutory responsibilities of the Council; • The legal and financial framework within which the Council operates; • The requirement for the Council to account for the commissioning / expenditure of public money; • The need for individual groups to have clearly defined procedures and structures to enable them to fulfil their obligations and to be accountable; • That support for voluntary and community organisations will be decided on the basis of priorities, policies and procedures adopted by the Council following consultation with the sector; • That voluntary and community groups have a responsibility to provide services which are responsive to the changing needs and expectations of local people in line with national and local priorities; • That voluntary and community groups have a responsibility to consistently meet measurable, regularly improved and affordable performance targets.

6. Delivering the Compact

For each of the four themes of the Compact, a series of objectives have been established and commitments made by both Council and the voluntary sector as to how these will be delivered.

i. Communication, Consultation and Participation

Effective communication between the Council and the voluntary sector is essential in achieving positive outcomes in joint working to deliver this theme's objective:

- To encourage the development and maintenance of a range of mechanisms for effective and transparent communication on issues of shared interest.

The Council will:	The Voluntary Sector will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a commitment to the Voluntary Sector Joint Liaison Committee; • Provide opportunities to the voluntary and community sector to contribute to the development of short and long-term plans; • Establish early consultation on policy matters which directly affect voluntary and community organisations and the people they serve; • Allow the voluntary sector adequate time to implement consultation arrangements with their own networks and users of services (8 weeks minimum, 12 weeks where possible); • Feedback outcomes of consultation to participants in the process within agreed timescales; • Link with GVS and other appropriate representational bodies to facilitate consultation; • Provide opportunities for the voluntary sector's continued involvement in implementing and evaluating policies; • Maintain and develop channels of communication to keep partners and stakeholders fully informed of ongoing issues and developments. • Help partners and stakeholders to be fully engaged by ensuring regular and effective communication of developments and changes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain an inclusive commitment to the Voluntary Sector Joint Liaison Committee; • Be involved in the planning process at the earliest possible stage; • Act as a bridge between the Council and organisations or individuals who need support, and in assisting to identify areas of unmet need; • Participate in consultation in particular with those organisations funded by the Council and to take a lead in representing the interests of specific groups; • Accurately represent the sector's views when making representations to the Council or participating in consultation; • Ensure that information presented to the Council is correct and results from unbiased and objective research; • Adhere to legislation and guidance affecting representational and campaigning work; • Support the development of initiatives within the sector which address identified need.

ii. Partnership

The Compact defines 'Partnership' as working together towards a common set of goals, based on equality in terms of ownership, decision-making and recognition of each party's distinctive contribution. The Council and the Voluntary sector are committed to the work of the Public Services Board and will contribute to its work and achievement of its performance targets. It is recognised that an equal and effective partnership brings benefits and responsibilities to all those involved in order to meet this theme's objectives:

- To encourage good practice in participation, consultation and decision making;
- To maximise the role of Glamorgan Voluntary Services (GVS) in maintaining and developing the interface between the Council and other public and private sector organisations in the Vale of Glamorgan
- To encourage the development of appropriate mechanisms for reviewing statutory and voluntary services together with opportunities to become involved in review programmes in line with national and local priorities.

The Council will:	The Voluntary Sector will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote a corporate approach to partnership working with the voluntary sector that builds on existing systems; • Designate named officers to take responsibility for issues relating to the voluntary sector; • Encourage dialogue with the Voluntary Sector regarding long-term objectives, through the development of various mechanisms, such as forums and working groups; • Involve relevant voluntary and community organisations to explore the impact of proposed policy changes, prior to formal consultation; • Work with the voluntary and community sector to develop partnerships in order to reach under-represented groups in the community; • Enable effective voluntary sector participation in Community Planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the value of partnership working with the Council in developing voluntary activity in the community; • Contribute to the development of arrangements for working in partnership with the Council; • Be proactive in informing the Council of any developments within the voluntary sector that are relevant to formulating policy and strategy; • Help the Council to develop partnerships and extend information networks in order to reach underrepresented groups in the community; • Work with the Council to explore new ways of approaching service delivery to meet specific needs of service users. • Actively participate in the Public Services Board and contribute to achieving actions and performance targets.

iii. Funding & Resources

By working together it is recognised by both the voluntary sector and the Council that there is the capacity to access additional resources and make more creative use of resources, which is increasingly important in times of diminishing funding and increasingly complex demands on services.

This theme has the objective:

- To develop and maintain mechanisms for making the best use of the available funding and resources for the voluntary sector and Council by working transparently and creatively together and with others

The Council will:	The Voluntary Sector will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish / communicate widely, clear information on availability of grant aid, commissioning intentions, and other funding, eligibility and application procedures; • Ensure consistency between funding regimes; • Ensure that administration and assessment procedures for funding and contract programmes are transparent and objective; • Promote formal agreements that can be evaluated through targets, objectives, and performance indicators; • Notify the outcomes of grant aid and other funding applications within an agreed timescale; • Monitor funding arrangements to promote effective long-term planning; • Adopt policies and procedures for effective and efficient organisational management, including giving appropriate notice regarding any proposed disinvestment and supporting exit strategies; • Adopt financial systems procedures appropriate to the level of grant aid or other funding arrangements; • Use effective planning mechanisms and monitoring systems to evaluate performance against targets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt policies and procedures for effective and efficient organisational management; • Adopt financial management information systems and procedures appropriate to the level of grant aid or other funding arrangement; • Use effective planning mechanisms and monitoring systems to evaluate performance against targets; • Ensure that agreements are secured with the Council prior to applying for time-limited external grants, if continuation funding for the projects is required from the Council; • Work within agreed framework for grant aid and other funding applications or contracts; • Adopt policies to ensure equality of opportunity in all aspects of its work; • Demonstrate the effectiveness of its work e.g. through the implementation of appropriate quality assurance systems; • Publicly acknowledge the support of the Council. • Promote the use of Council funding to “lever” additional resources from other sources.

iv. Volunteering

The majority of voluntary organisations operating in the Vale of Glamorgan involve volunteers on a daily basis, helping them to provide many and varied services to the communities of the Vale of Glamorgan. Volunteering is the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society and the community and can take many forms. It is undertaken freely and by choice, without concern for financial gain.

This theme has the objective:

- To encourage voluntary action and volunteering initiatives that demonstrate a potential to add value to existing services and meet unmet needs.

The Council will:	The Voluntary Sector will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise the economic and social value of the input of volunteers to services and the life of communities as an important expression of citizenship and an essential component of local democracy. • Recognise the costs of volunteering within its grants and service strategies; • Develop a corporate volunteering policy to ensure consistency in arrangements for working with and involving volunteers; • Recognise the role and importance of independent advice and information on volunteering; • Raise the profile of volunteering within the Vale of Glamorgan Council area and amongst its employees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide regular information on the extent of volunteering activities and its economic value within the Vale of Glamorgan; • Implement best practice principles in volunteering, including reimbursement of out of pocket expenses; • Ensure that voluntary organisations have volunteering policies; • Promote and provide volunteering opportunities for all sectors of the community; • Develop initiatives for recognising and rewarding the contribution of volunteers; • Involve and consult volunteers on the work of the voluntary organisations; • Monitor the involvement of and patterns of volunteering within the Vale.

v. The Voluntary Sector Joint Liaison Committee Terms of Reference

The Voluntary Sector Joint Liaison Committee (VSJLC) is a committee of the Vale of Glamorgan Council. The purpose of the Voluntary Sector Joint Liaison Committee is to facilitate joint working between the Council, the voluntary sector and others. Its terms of reference are:

1. To refer, as appropriate, reports and recommendations to the Council's Cabinet and the Executives of Voluntary Sector organisations.
2. To appoint a Chairman and Vice-Chairman from amongst the 8 members of the Council and an honorary Vice-Chairman from amongst the 7 representatives from the Voluntary Sector.
3. To advise the Council of the needs, views and concerns of the Voluntary Sector .
4. To report on the work of those organisations grant funded by the Council, either in full or in part.
5. To act as a consultative forum where the Voluntary Sector and the Council may, in partnership, put forward policy proposals for discussion and decision.
6. To facilitate and promote joint working between the Council and the Voluntary Sector..
7. In accordance with the statutory provisions, only members of the Council will have voting rights. However, where there is no consensus, this will be reported in the minutes and placed before the Cabinet prior to a decision being taken.
8. To review the Compact and associated Annual Work Plan and to monitor and report on progress made towards achieving the actions contained within the Compact and the Plan.
9. To consider reports of the Cabinet and other Committees of the Council which have a bearing and impact on the Voluntary Sector.

The committee comprises a proportional representation of the Council and voluntary sector representatives who are elected by the members of the GVS and other public sector organisations.

It meets regularly on published dates and membership is reviewed regularly. The Chair of the committee is an Elected Member of The Vale of Glamorgan Council.

In practical terms the Voluntary Sector Joint Liaison Committee takes responsibility for agreeing a strategic framework by:

- Clarifying the expectations of the Council and the voluntary sector within the Vale of

Glamorgan area;

- Identifying collective aims and priorities in sufficient detail to inform policy;
- Specifying those aspects of the relationship that require a partnership approach.

vi. Monitoring and Reviewing the Compact

The Compact is fully reviewed and updated every four years or sooner if there is an agreed need to do so. The Voluntary Sector Joint Liaison Committee will measure progress in achieving the aims of the Compact through the setting and reviewing of actions contained in a work plan, which will be formally reviewed annually.

