



AGENDA ITEM

MEETING

**Better Places Partnership Board
18th January 2006**

TITLE

Haringey's Draft Compact 'Working BETTER Together'

SUMMARY

This paper outlines the importance of Haringey's Compact and the contents of Haringey's Compact agreement.

The Voluntary and Community and Faith Sector in partnership with public agencies have been developing Haringey's Compact since Haringey's Strategic Partnership endorsed the process in April 2004.

The Compact, once in place, will be a key partnership tool and a mechanism to strengthen the relationship with the VCS to effectively meet the needs of Haringey's communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 Better Places Partnership Board partners to agree to consider the draft Compact agreement and to take the agreement to their individual management boards
- 1.2 Better Places Partnership Board to actively support and encourage the commitment to the 'buy in' of Haringey's Compact.
- 1.3 Better Places Partnership Board to agree that the Compact will underpin the partnership work of all partners and the partnership board.

LEAD OFFICER(S)

Greg Lucas, Head of Safer Communities and the Voluntary Sector

2. Introduction

2.1 Local Compacts follow on from the National Compact between the government and Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCS). A Compact is set of principles and undertakings that provide a framework for partnership and relations between the public sector and the VCS.

2.2 Over 94 per cent of local authority areas are now covered by a Local Compact or are working towards one. A Local Compact is required by the Active Community Directorate (Home Office) and the Department of Health by April 2005.

3. Importance and Benefit of Haringey's Compact for the Better Partnership Agenda

3.1 The government has introduced a number of initiatives to improve the governance of partnerships locally. For example the development of local area agreements (LAAs) should help to improve accountability, align budgetary and other processes and streamline decisions and service planning.

3.2 The Local Area Agreement (LAA) will shortly be introduced in Haringey. The LAA brings together multiple government funding streams deciding what funding reaches the local level. It will be a mechanism to join up local public services that will be overseen by the Council and the HSP. The VCS will have a role to play in helping to identify, shape and deliver local services. Partnership is a pre-requisite to a functioning and effective LAA and the Compact should be a vital tool in this process.

3.3 The Compact can bring clarity among partners about purpose, membership, roles and responsibilities among other things. The absence of formal partnership arrangements both inhibits the achievement of the partnership's objectives and increases the potential for a breakdown in governance arrangements and controls.

3.4 A Compact can make a real contribution to developing partnership and to achieve the Better Places Vision which is Lead the delivery of cleaner, safer and greener public spaces and improvement of the quality of the built environment in deprived areas and across the borough, with measurable improvement by 2008:

- Promote a productive relationship with the VCS enabling improved delivery of services to the local community.

- Meeting the national partnership floor target for Better Places
- Provide a clear framework and mechanisms for resolving differences
- Help to formalise partnerships that engage with local community and reflect local needs.
- Continuing the process of building stronger relationships and achieving better performance with partners and community stakeholders in the context of Better Places
- Partnerships bringing more resources to address local needs in areas such as housing, crime and disorder and environment.
- More structured and comprehensive reporting on performance and finance
- Implementation of the Change Up agenda and Haringey's Infrastructure Development Plan.
- To develop a better understanding of the restrictions and responsibilities placed on the respective sectors.

3.5 The Compact does not seek to duplicate existing work but to build on the good practice that is currently being delivered across Haringey.

4.0 Update: Haringey's Development Process

4.1 The timetable for developing Haringey's Compact has been extended to facilitate further engagement work with local organisations particularly small black and minority ethnic organisations (BME), and to ensure that the Compact is accessible to all partners in terms of language before it went out for official consultation. Please refer to Appendix A, which details the achievements since the process began.

4.2 The commitments included within the draft Compact are a reflection of the extensive consultation process. A full 13-week consultation is being conducted to ensure that the draft Compact agreement can be considered and approved through the various partners' internal processes. Partners need to consider, comment and approve the draft Compact agreement. The draft Compact agreement was presented to the HSP on the 7th November 2005.

4.3 The consultation process will end on the 8th February 2006) and it is anticipated that partners would officially 'sign up' to the final agreement with a public launch in early March 2006. This may be subject to change. There will be a range of consultation events and presentations on the draft Compact across Haringey to different partners, networks and forums throughout the consultation period, i.e. Nov-Dec 2005 and Jan-Feb 2006.

5.0 Content of Haringey's Compact (draft Compact agreement will be circulated at meeting)

5.1 An important feature of the Compact is that it is about the rules of engagement between the voluntary, community, public and private sectors. At a local level, each Compact is a result of discussion and negotiation, which acts as an important means to develop better understanding between the different sectors. It also represents what local partners have agreed to, reflecting the local circumstances, and joined up working between organisations including through local strategic partnerships.

5.2 The content of Haringey's Compact has been influenced by the consultation on Compact Plusⁱ conducted by the Home Office earlier this year. Elements of Compact Plus will be adopted as part of Haringey's Local Compact agreement.

5.3 In addition to Compact Plus, the content and the style of the content of Haringey's Compact has been based on other local authority Compacts, which provides practical commitments and guidance for each sector to follow and adhere to.

5.4 Haringey's Compact is intended to be practical, relate to existing good practice strategies, achievable, and honest. Partners signing up to the Compact need to be prepared to adhere to the commitments in the agreement. The commitments will need to be negotiated to ensure that there is a willingness to meet them. In some circumstances departments and agencies will need to adapt their working practices to successfully deliver the Compact agreement and develop valuable partnerships.

5.5 The vision of Haringey's Compact is based on the Community Strategy and was agreed by partners at Haringey's second Compact Conference on the 26th May 2005. Partners also agreed the dispute resolution procedure at this event.

6.0 Taking the Compact Agenda Forward

6.1 To move the Compact forward at this crucial stage, ensuring that there is a consistency in engagement of the Compact, local organisations, their trustees and members of Haringey's partnership boards needs to be committed to driving this agenda forward.

6.2 Measurable outcomes for success have been identified and are outlined in Appendix A. The success of the Compact will be dependent on how the Compact is implemented, some key factors are:

- Commitment to implementing the Compact and adhering to the undertakings of the Local Compact agreement.
- Continued engagement in the process by partners
- Value and respect of all partners.
- Engagement and encouragement of input and views from the VCS.
- Willingness to mainstream the Compact within the HSP and within the various partnership organisations.
- Financial support to the future development of the Compact.

6.3 The HCWG commissioned the consultancy 'Insight Business Development' (IBD) in November 2004 to conduct focus groups engaging key stakeholders to inform the content of Haringey's draft Compact agreement and Compact development. This information has informed the following recommendations to facilitate the effective implementation of the Compact:

- The public, voluntary and community sector considers a programme of engagement and development to raise the knowledge and 'buy in' from all levels in the respective organisations.
- The Compact agreement be recognised and fully integrated into HSP processes, it also needs to be built into core business planning processes and used in the design and delivery of local services of all stakeholder organisations

6.4 The Haringey Compact Working Group (HCWG) which is made up of representatives from public and VCS agencies is managing the process. The HCWG are currently compiling a 3-year work plan that will accompany the Compact agreement. This will contain information on what, action needs to happen for the successful delivery and implementation of the Compact and the actions required to strengthen and improve the commitments.

6.5 The Haringey Compact Evaluation Working Group (HCEG) will replace the HCWG and the role of this group will be to monitor and review the implementation and the effectiveness of the Compact agreement.

6.6 The HCEG will facilitate a programme of joint training, engagement and support to enable successful implementation of the Compact across the sectors. Champions will be a key mechanism for ensuring that the Compact is used and understood within individual organisations, or through local forums, partnerships or events. Championing keeps the Compact on the agenda locally. The HCWG has already begun to recruit Champions from the various sectors.

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 There is sufficient funding to complete the development process. Funding for the project 2005/6 has been identified to date as follows:
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|-------------------|--|
| Haringey Council: | £25,000 |
| CONEL: | £10,000 (£5,000 carry over from 2004/05) |
| TPCT: | £8,200 (£2,200) carry over from 2004/05) |
- 7.2 In addition, on behalf of statutory agencies, a part time project officer within the Corporate Voluntary Sector Team has been identified to work alongside HAVCO's Compact Project Officer. Other agencies have contributed time, free space and translation services to the project
- 7.3 Due to scale of the project and projected expenditure for implementation of Haringey's Compact, the HCWG has put in place an ongoing programme to seek funding and resources from local stakeholders including Haringey Community Empowerment Network, Mental Health Trust and the Metropolitan Police. Future funding from Haringey Council has not yet been confirmed. Lack of financial resources will slow down the implementation of Haringey's Compact and development activities will need to be scaled down, if further resources are not forthcoming.

8.0 Conclusion

- 8.1 The government recognises the crucial role that the voluntary and community sector has to play in the delivery of services and community life. The Compact is a valuable tool proven to create better relationships and working partnerships between sectors.
- 8.2 There has been considerable engagement since the compact process began with over 300 individuals from the different sectors participating. The commitment for Haringey's Compact process is steadily growing. The process has enabled discussions between a range of voluntary, community and faith groups probably for the first time on issues such as organisational cultural differences, the weaknesses and strengths of each sector and identifying existing and proposing new ways that partners could/ should work together through the Compact agreement. All of this information has informed the agreement. The draft document is the response to the very positive process that has been undertaken.

APPENDIX A: Development of Haringey's Compact and work to date and measurable outcomes for success

Bibliography:

Other Local Authority Compacts
National Compact and codes of good practice

www.thecompact.org.uk

www.idea.gov.uk

Strengthening Partnerships: next steps for Compact, A consultation document

Governing partnerships, bridging the accountability gap, public sector national report, audit commission

ⁱ The Compact is a powerful mechanism for developing positive working relationships. The Compact made headway in questioning the relationship and working relationships between the sectors but feedback has shown that there is room for improvement. Compact Plus would be a simpler and more succinct tool under which it is clearer to the organisations whether their behaviour is compliant or not. The Compact has been criticised for not working as well as it might because the Compact codes has been lengthy, there is evidence of poor practice among public sector bodies and voluntary and community sector organisations. Compact Plus. Compact Plus builds on the original Compact and its codes.