

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

REPORT TITLE **Staffordshire Compact.**

Submitted by: **Partnerships Officer (Community Development)**

Portfolio: **Communications, Policy & Partnerships.**

Ward(s) affected: **All**

Purpose of the Report

Newcastle Borough Council is a signatory to the current Staffordshire Compact, which sets out the principles of a good working relationship between the public and voluntary/community sectors.

An updated version of the Staffordshire Compact was drafted by VAST and went out for consultation during Autumn 2014.

Newcastle Borough Council had been asked to sign up to the new Compact in advance of it going out to consultation with a view to endorsing the general approach being taken.

Recommendations

That the Borough Council endorses the revised Staffordshire Compact

Reasons

- **The principles of the Staffordshire Compact are still relevant – there is no reason to change the Council’s support for them;**
- **The revised Compact updates the existing Compact and is more appropriate to the current situation;**
- **The Compact is consistent with the Co-operative Council concept and LAPs; and**
- **The Compact is consistent with commissioning and the Social Value Act 2012**

1. Background

- 1.1 The Compact is an agreement between the public and voluntary/community sectors that sets out how the two sectors should work in partnership, and there has been a national Compact since 1998.
- 1.2 A Newcastle Compact was agreed and signed by representatives of both parties in 2007 through the then Newcastle Local Strategic Partnership (LSP).
- 1.3 The Staffordshire Compact was agreed and signed in June 2009. It was also agreed that partners in Newcastle would sign up to the Staffordshire Compact.
- 1.4 The Staffordshire Compact is currently being reviewed and a new Compact 2014 went out for consultation in August 2014. A final version has been produced following consultation.

2 Requirements

- 2.1 VAST are leading on the development of the new Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Compact 2014.

- 2.2 VAST are asking for the Borough Council to consider the signing up to the new Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Compact 2014. This would involve agreeing that we:-
- Support the principles and ways of working of the Compact
 - Will use it as a framework for cross sector working
 - Will aim to create a more open, equal and constructive working relationship with other sectors (Public sector, Private sector and the voluntary & community sector)
 - Will promote Compact principles and develop better communication between all sectors
- 2.3 There are two main changes in the approach to the new Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Compact 2014:-
- a) A pan-Staffordshire Compact which reflects much of the cross-border work that takes place in the north of the county i.e. that covers both Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent; and
 - b) A Compact that recognises that the private sector has a role to play with, for example, support for the voluntary & community sector through Employer Supported Volunteering and Corporate Social Responsibility.

3. **What does the Council need to do?**

- 3.1 Consider the request to sign up to the proposed new Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Compact 2014 and the commitments as listed in 2.2.

4 **Why should the Council take action?**

- 4.1 The Council is signed up to the previous Staffordshire Compact. It would be inconsistent to not support the new Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Compact 2014.
- 4.2 The proposed changes (see 2.3) are consistent with the current climate in which we are operating.
- 4.3 The Compact is consistent with:-
- The Council's Co-Operative Council status;
 - The development of active and effective LAPs; and
 - The Council's approach to commissioning. and its commitment to the Social Value Act 2012.
- 4.4 The Compact provides a set of good practice guidelines to assist in managing the relationship between the Council and our voluntary & community sector partners. Under the previous Staffordshire Compact these were used in a number of ways including:-
- a) The co-development of the Council's Third Sector Commissioning process.
 - b) Managing grants for the voluntary & community sector in a manner consistent with good practice by, for example, be ensuring that the monitoring and evaluation requirements that we expect from recipients is proportionate with the level of grant funding.

- c) Collaboration with VAST in provision of support for and to LAPs through training & information sessions.
- d) Ensuring that consultations with the voluntary & community sector are carried out so as to allow sufficient time for partners to respond.
- e) The Council's development, with partners, of a Social Enterprise Toolkit – cited as a model of good practice.

4.5 The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires public authorities to have regard to economic, social and environmental well-being in connection with public service contracts, and for connected purposes. Compact principles help the Council to meet its obligations thereof in respect of the voluntary & community sector.

5 **Proposal.**

5.1 The preferred option is that the Council signs the new Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Compact 2014, and the commitments thereof.

5.2 The Council could decide not to sign. This option is not recommended since it would be contrary to the Council's Co-Operative Council status, and commitment to partnership working.

5.3 The option to stick to the current Compact is not a viable one since the existing Compact will soon become redundant.

6. **Reasons for Solution**

6.1 The principles of the Staffordshire Compact are still relevant – there is no reason to change the Council's support for them.

6.2 The revised Compact brings it up to date (see 2.3) and will therefore be more appropriate to the current environment.

6.3 The Compact is consistent with, and supportive of:-

- The Council's Co-Operative Council status
- The development of active and effective LAPs
- The Council's approach commissioning and its commitment to the Social Value Act 2012

7. **Outcomes Linked to Corporate Priorities**

7.1 Voluntary & community organisations provide services that cover all Corporate Priorities. Therefore, support for positive relationships with the sector through the Compact will lead to outcomes linked to all Corporate Priorities.

7.2 There is a particular resonance to the Council's Co-Operative Council corporate priority and for LAPs.

8. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

8.1 The Compact is a voluntary agreement, and therefore there are no direct legal implications.

8.2 Having said that, there are a range of legal implications in relation to commissioning and funding with and for the voluntary & community sectors. These are covered by contract law and not directly affected by the Compact.

8.3 The Social Value Act 2012 sets out statutory obligations on local authorities in respect of commissioning. The Compact's principles are consistent with, and support the Council in meeting these obligations.

9. **Equality Impact Assessment**

9.1 The Compact supports positive cross-sector working relationships. Strong partnership working between the Council and the voluntary & community sector could have a positive impact on equalities in two specific ways:-

- Working with and supporting organisations that provide services for and with individuals and communities who experience inequalities; and
- Working with and supporting organisations that provide a voice for communities, geographical and of interest, who experience social, economic or financial exclusion.

10. **Financial and Resource Implications**

10.1 There are no financial or resource implications of the Council signing the new Compact.

10.2 The new Compact runs until 2018. It is not anticipated that there will be any financial or resource implications during that period.

11. **Major Risks**

11.1 Failure to endorse the approach to the new Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Compact risk damage to the Council's positive relationship with VAST and with the voluntary & community sector as a whole.

11.2 Failure to sign up to the new Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Compact risks damage to the Council's reputation.

11.3 Opportunities under the new Compact to build on the Council's positive partnership with the voluntary & community sector, and specifically to recognise and build on the role that the private sector can play thereof, through for example, Corporate Social Responsibility policies could be lost if the Council does not sign the new Compact.

12. **Key Decision Information**

12.1 This report is classed as a decision document as there are no legal implications linked to non-compliance.

13. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

13.1 Cabinet, 27th August 2006

13.2 Newcastle LSP Board, 11th June 2009.

13.3 Cabinet, Social Value Act 2012, 6th February 2012.

14. **Management Sign-Off**

Each of the designated boxes need to be signed off and dated before going to Executive Director/Corporate Service Manager for sign off.

	Signed	Dated
Financial Implications Discussed and Agreed <i>Lead Officer – Dave Roberts</i>		
Risk Implications Discussed and Agreed <i>Lead Officer –Annette Vacquier</i>		
Legal Implications Discussed and Agreed <i>Lead Officer – Mark Bailey</i>		
Equalities Implications Discussed and Agreed <i>Lead Officer – Jane Sheldon</i>		
Report Agreed by: Executive Director/ Head of Service		