

**THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
Resources Committee 17.2.10**

Agenda Item	
Report No	

A Compact with the Third Sector
Report by the Head of Policy and Performance

Summary

This report presents the compact with the third sector. Members are asked to note the process for developing the compact and to support the arrangements for implementing it.

1. Introduction

1.1 The third sector refers to voluntary, charity and community organisations and social enterprises. It contributes to our society through civic engagement, community action and public service delivery. It strengthens democratic processes and can give a voice to people, particularly those excluded from normal participation processes. It provides social capital in communities; benefiting communities and individuals and improves personal wellbeing for those engaged actively.

1.2 Council and Partnership commitments to the third sector

The Council's Programme has a commitment to developing working relations with the third sector. It states that we will "develop a compact with the third sector (voluntary, charity and community organisations and social enterprises) in the Highlands, setting out how we will support the sector and work together". There are also commitments and targets in the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) 2009-11 which relate to supporting the development of the sector as well as performance expected from it (e.g. affordable housing and money advice targets).

1.3 A [joint statement on the relationship at local level between Government and the third sector](#) was agreed in September 2009 by the Scottish Government, SOLACE, COSLA and SCVO. It is attached and considered more fully with the separate item for this meeting on improving the funding relationship with the sector. The joint statement defines a successful relationship and sets out principles covering the funding relationship including: strategic commissioning; procurement; tendering, grants and contracts; and monitoring, reporting and evaluation.

1.4 Regional Context

The size of the third sector in the Highlands is large and significant. Over 1200 charities are registered with the regulator, the third highest number of all local authorities in Scotland; against the 8th largest population. Sector representatives have stated they believe there are around 10,000 voluntary organisations in the region. During consultation with the sector in five area events over the last year, the 175 voluntary organisations taking part could identify that together they contributed to all local outcomes in the first SOA. At an individual level, 29% of the adult population volunteer in some capacity, with over half (56%) volunteering in more than one activity and taking part at least once a week¹.

¹ Highland Council Performance Survey 2009

2. Developing the compact with the third sector

- 2.1 The national joint statement sets out how the third sector is an important partner of government at all levels. It states that:
- “A successful relationship between the Scottish Government, Local Government and the third sector will be built upon mutual respect and a joint understanding of the roles played and challenges faced by each partner in delivering better outcomes for the public. It will be a supportive and sustainable relationship which reinforces and celebrates our interdependence”.
- 2.2 A compact is a written agreement which defines and manages the relationship between the voluntary sector and one or more public sector bodies. It sets out shared principles, values and commitments, and outlines an agreement that public and third sector bodies have developed together to define and manage their relationships. It is designed to clearly state what each party can expect from the other. A compact can support the working relationship by building mutual trust and confidence as well as an appreciation of the roles and contributions of public and third sector bodies in achieving positive outcomes for the Highlands. It can be seen as a code of conduct.
- 2.3 With the commitment to developing a compact, the Council organised a conference in March 2008 to investigate the wider appetite for a compact between the public and third sector in Highland. The conference was well attended and demonstrated that a compact should be taken forward and involve not only the third sector and Highland Council but also NHS Highland and Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE). Other public sector partners (SNH, UHI, Northern Constabulary and the Highlands and Islands Fire and Rescue Service) are considering if they can sign up to the compact as well.
- 2.4 The conference recommended that there should be regional events across Highland in order to consult on the development of a Highland compact. These were hosted by the local CVS². 175 third sector organisations attended. They provided an opportunity to consult with the sector on the design and expectations of the compact and also to raise awareness about the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) and how the sector contributes to it.
- 2.5 Since then a partnership working group drafted a Highland compact. This was launched at a conference event on 23rd November 2009, with a view to formal adoption by the end of March 2010. It is attached at Appendix 1. The principles of the compact are supported by a description of the behaviours required in the working relationship.
- 2.6 A detailed Action Plan has been drafted to ensure the implementation and monitoring of the compact. It is attached at Appendix 2. It covers 3 key areas:
- Communication and Understanding
 - Participation and Representation
 - Resourcing arrangements
- 2.7 A mediation approach has been designed to support organisations to implement the compact. It is attached at Appendix 3.

² These events were held on: 26th November 2008 in Lairg; 2nd December 2008 in Thurso; 13th January 2009 to cover the Inner Moray Firth area held in Inverness; 27th January in Fort William; 11th February to cover Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross held in Kyleakin

- 2.8 To promote the compact and assist with the mediation process in the Council compact champions are identified and will be trained. A description of the role of champions is attached at Appendix 4.
- 2.9 To support implementation of the compact further it will be used in our induction process and included in management development, competencies and briefings. The compact should be used routinely in our working practice with third sector organisations.

3. Financial implications

- 3.1 The compact has been developed within current resources. It does not commit funding to the sector but defines how we should work together which will include how we communicate on funding issues. It is worth noting that the communication standard and the ethos of 'no surprises' for the sector was implemented in the notice sent to third sector organisation about their funding from 2010-11, timed to coincide with the issue of the budget papers for the Council meeting in February 2010.

4. Recommendation

4.1 Members are asked to:

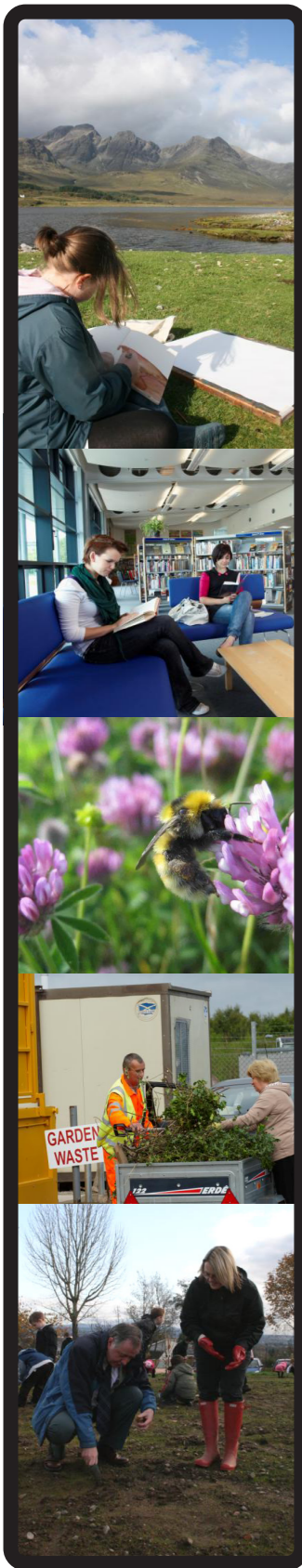
1. Note that developing a compact with the third sector is one commitment in the programme of 'Strengthening the Highlands'.
2. Note that the compact has been subject to extensive consultation and joint development with the sector over the past 18 months, with HIE and NHSH also committed to it.
3. Support the roll out of the compact in Council working practice with third sector organisations.

Signature:

Designation Head of Policy and Performance

Date: 3.2.10

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Implementation/Action Plan

Buileachadh/Plana-gnìomha

Compact Partnership will oversee the implementation of the Compact. Representation on this group will include officers from The Highland Council (THC), Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), and NHS Highland and representatives from the Third Sector. This Partnership will be formally recognised as part of the Community Planning Processes in Highland.

The Compact Action Plan will underpin the implementation of the Compact.

Following consultation, the key priorities of the plan are:

- Communication and Understanding
- Participation and Representation
- Resourcing Arrangements

The plan can be accessed at: www.highlandlife.net/highlandcompact

To assist with implementing the Compact, Compact Champions will be appointed within public sector organisations and for the Third sector. These Champions will promote the Compact and help to embed it within everyday working practices.

Monitoring Sgrùdadh

Monitoring will be carried out by the Compact Partnership and the Compact and Action Plan reviewed on an annual basis. Regular feedback to this group is welcomed and encouraged. To ensure wider participation and engagement an annual pan-Highland event will be organised. For further information go to www.highlandlife.net/highlandcompact

Compact Mediation Approach

Dòigh-obrach Eadar-mheadhain a' Chòrdaidh

The purpose of the Compact is to set out a framework within which the public and third sectors will work together. There may however be occasions where one partner feels the other is not complying with this agreement. A mediation approach has been designed to support organisations, with the Compact Champions assisting by providing a mediation role and the Compact Partnership providing final arbitration.

Full details of the mediation approach can be found at www.highlandlife.net/highlandcompact

For further information or to request this information in an alternative format e.g. large print, braille, computer disk, audio tape, or suitable language, please contact:
Policy and Performance Team: 01463 702006 or e-mail: policy6@highland.gov.uk

CONTACTS SEÒLAIDHEAN

To find out your organisational or local Compact Champion go to:
www.highlandlife.net/highlandcompact
For further information on the Compact please contact:
Highland Third Sector Forum: 01479 812100
e-mail: info@voluntaryactionhighland.org.uk
Policy and Performance Team, The Highland Council: 01463 702006
e-mail: policy6@highland.gov.uk



THE HIGHLAND COMPACT: Introduction AN CÒRDADH GÀIDHEALACH: Ro-ràdh

This Compact sets out shared principles, values and commitments which have been developed and agreed together by the Public¹ and Third² Sectors in Highland to define and manage their relationships. It has been designed to clearly state what each party can expect from the other and can be summarised as a shared commitment to build mutual trust and confidence and an appreciation of the roles and contributions of public and Third Sectors.

The Partnership welcomes the opportunity to enter into this Compact which promotes more effective partnership working as the key to success for the Highlands. It will enhance current working relationships between the public and third sectors – to work even more productively and effectively together with mutual trust, understanding and commitment.

The development of this compact way of working has involved extensive consultation at both pan-Highland and local level. This has told us that a Compact is welcomed because it will improve:

- **Communication** by breaking down barriers in terms of language and organisational cultures
- **Commitment** to working together, leading to improved relationships, added value and the delivery of better outcomes
- **Relationships** by providing a framework and clarifying the two-way nature of the partnership
- **Representation** by highlighting the need for clear representation of the third sector
- **Understanding** by providing a focus to promote information sharing, understanding and awareness raising

The Compact will strengthen partnerships which will achieve far more than the sum of their parts and deliver better outcomes and services for the Highlands.

¹ The Highland Council (THC), Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), and NHS Highland (others may join). ² Third sector is now the recognised name for the former Voluntary sector. It includes voluntary and community organisations, charities, social enterprises, cooperatives and mutuals.



COMPACT PRINCIPLES AND BEHAVIOURS PRIONNSABALAN AGUS MODHAN CÒRDAIDH

AIM AMAS

“To enable third and public sector partners across the Highlands to find effective ways of working together co-operatively toward the achievement of outcomes that will improve the quality of life of local people and communities. This will build on the high levels of voluntary activity in the Highlands to achieve a culture of mutual understanding, trust and confidence”.

The consultation process has led to the development of a set of key PRINCIPLES and BEHAVIOURS that are essential to ensure the success of the Compact. These will govern how both sectors will operate and expect from each other.

Respect and Value

Meas agus Luachan

We will respect and value the professionalism of all organisations, agencies and individuals across the third and public sectors. Conduct and service delivery will recognise the independence of each party whilst developing relationships that preserve the dignity, integrity and worth of each contributor.

When I represent my organisation I will use these behaviours:

- I will invest time regularly and constructively in order to ensure that relationships are positive.
- I will strive to establish courteous relations with all I come into contact with.
- I will behave with consistency and do what I say I'll do.
- I will exercise the responsibility of constructive individual and personal leadership.

Partnership

Com-pàirteachas

We will recognise that we can achieve more by working together through co-operation, collaboration and cohesion. The contributions from different sectors will result in improvements as we learn from each other, recognising and valuing each other's strengths and progressive thinking.

When I represent my organisation I will use these behaviours:

- I will be accountable and act with integrity.
- I will learn from the past and move forward with my relationships with others in a positive way.
- I will not allow personal agendas to override the needs of the community I serve.
- I will value the skills and abilities which exist within the partnership.
- I will be clear about my own and appreciate the organisational constraints of partner organisations.
- When I challenge my partners, I will do so in a respectful way, recognising that to enable constructive dialogue, shared contribution and challenge are important.

A Detailed Action Plan has been developed to ensure the implementation of the Compact. This will be a living document which will be monitored and reviewed by the Compact Partnership.

This document can be accessed at www.highlandlife.net/highlandcompact



All partners - organisations, employees and volunteers - will be committed to promoting equality and diversity as employers, commissioners and service providers.



Communication and Understanding

Conaltradh agus Tuigse

We will enter into partnerships with transparency, honesty and openness. Partners will strive towards continuous engagement and consultation and ensure that they are aware of the obligations, responsibilities and limitations of other organisations.

When I represent my organisation I will use these behaviours:

- I will be transparent, honest and open.
- I will listen actively.
- I will interact professionally, constructively and competently.
- I will communicate timeously, openly and fully.

Equality

Co-ionannachd

We will ensure that within partnerships there will be equality of access to knowledge, opportunities and information.

When I represent my organisation I will use these behaviours:

- I will work towards developing equal partnerships and strive to maintain this with colleagues even where it is not entirely possible due to commissioning arrangements.

Performance

Coileanadh

We will work together towards the achievement of positive outcomes and will attain excellence through ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

When I represent my organisation I will use these behaviours:

- I will deliver on agreed aims and objectives.
- I will learn from others and share good practice and my own experience.
- I will be committed to the principles of effectiveness and efficiency in service delivery.
- I will strive towards best practice and continuous improvement, in relation to:
 - Identification of needs and solutions.
 - Consultation and engagement.
 - Service modelling in relation to best practice.
 - Service delivery.



COMPACT ACTION PLAN – DRAFT

Appendix 2

This first Compact Action Plan has been developed to ensure the implementation of the Compact. This will be a living document which will be monitored and reviewed by the Compact Partnership. Actions will be reviewed quarterly and when completed will be removed. Through annual review and consultation, other actions will be added to the Plan to ensure continuous improvement.

Workstream 1: COMMUNICATION AND UNDERSTANDING

Key Objectives for the Compact relating to Communication and Understanding area:

- *Raise awareness of the Compact*
- *Generate participation and engagement in the Compact and its ongoing development*
- *Promote improved communication between Public and Third sector bodies, in line with the National Standards for Community Engagement*
- *Achieve greater understanding between Public and Third sector bodies*
- *Avoiding the use of unnecessary jargon*

Action	Indicator	Lead	Timescale	Outcome
An annual Compact event is held to act as a forum for discussion and ensure wider involvement in the Compact	Annual meeting is held	Compact Partnership	February annually (first 2011)	Annual meeting acts as a wider forum for discussing and raising issues of joint interest
An annual report on progress of the Compact is published	Annual report is published	Compact Partnership	February annually (first 2011)	Publicising of the progress of the Compact action plan
Highland Life is utilised as a hub for Compact information	Number of documents placed on the Highland Life site	Compact Partnership	Reviewed quarterly	One site for information related to the development and operation of the Highland Compact

Workstream 1: COMMUNICATION AND UNDERSTANDING cont.

Action	Indicator	Lead	Timescale	Outcome
Identify and train Compact Champions within the public and third sector	Number of Compact Champions trained	Compact Partnership	Reviewed quarterly	Compact Champions are available within the public and third sector to promote the Compact and support individuals and organisations
Investigate ways in which to disseminate and promote understanding of the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA)	Options to be decided	Compact Partnership	September 2010	Development of a strategy to disseminate and promote the SOA
When undertaking consultation, Partners will aim to undertake a standard twelve week consultation	Number of consultations where the 12 week standard has not been applied, as reported to the Compact Partnership	All	Review Quarterly	Improving involvement of Partners in the decision making process
Develop an awareness raising plan for the Compact across the sectors	Plan developed and actioned	Compact Partnership	Review Quarterly	Greater awareness of the Compact across the Third and Public sectors

Workstream 2: PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION

Key Objectives for the Compact relating to Participation and Representation are:

- *There is clear representation within the Third Sector*
- *The Third Sector has a greater influence in Community Planning*
- *There is closer joint working between the sectors*

Action	Indicator	Lead	Timescale	Outcome
The Compact Partnership will continue to meet and operate as part of the Community Planning Process	Group meets on a quarterly basis	Compact Partnership	Meets quarterly	Group acts as a forum for discussing Third and Public sector issues
Increase participation in Compact related discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of visits to the Compact pages on Highland Life • Increase the number of individuals participating in the on-line forum 	Compact Partnership	Reviewed quarterly	Greater participation from the Public and Third sector in the Compact
Increase Third sector participation in the Highland Third sector forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase number of Third sector groups participating in the Third sector forum meetings 	Third sector forum	Reviewed quarterly	Greater participation from Third sector organisations in the Third sector forum
Map current community planning groups and their third sector membership	Report to Compact Partnership	Third sector forum	October 2010	Fuller understanding of third sector membership on community planning groups
Develop proposed protocols and remits for Third sector representatives on pan-Highland groups	Protocol and remit drawn up	Third sector forum	Reviewed quarterly	There is clear guidance and protocols in place for third sector groups on pan-Highland bodies
Develop a pro-forma to enable all Third sector organisations to consider how to contribute to these objectives	Pro-forma developed and circulated for use	Third sector forum	October 2010	Third sector organisations can demonstrate how they are contributing to the Compact objectives
Increase participation in the Compact from Public sector bodies who engage with the Third sector	Increase the number of public bodies signed up to the Compact	Compact Partnership	Reviewed Quarterly	Greater participation from the Public sector

Workstream 3: RESOURCING ARRANGEMENTS

Key Objectives for the Compact relating to Resourcing Arrangements are:

- *Third sector organisations know where to access opportunities for funding*
- *Greater awareness amongst the third sector of monitoring, evaluation and reporting requirements*
- *Ensure consistent approaches to assessment, evaluation, monitoring and reporting*

Action	Indicator	Lead	Timescale	Outcome
General Funding				
Develop a consistent approach across the public sector to assessment, evaluation, monitoring and reporting (short life working group)	Report from Short Life Working Group	Public sector partners	April 2011	Greater understanding and awareness by Third Sector organisations of resourcing arrangements, monitoring, evaluation and reporting
Tendering				
Promote the tendering process across the third sector	Link to Public Contracts Scotland website on the Highland Life website	Public sector partners	Reviewed Quarterly	Greater understanding of the tendering process
	Number of awareness raising roadshows undertaken	Public sector partners	Reviewed Quarterly	
	Tendering opportunities included within the Third sector bulletin	Third Sector Forum	Reviewed Quarterly	
Grant Funding				
Develop a single application process for grant funding	A standard application form and guidance for all grant funding is available and is also accessible on-line	Public sector partners	Highland Council April 2010 Reviewed annually	Funding information on grant funding is more readily available
Raise awareness across the Third sector of the account management process for organisations trading as Social Enterprises	To be decided	Highlands and Islands Enterprise	Reviewed quarterly	Improve knowledge and understanding
Cascade the information regarding grant process to third sector organisations	To be decided	CVS	Reviewed quarterly	Improve knowledge and understanding

Compact Mediation Approach

Background

The purpose of the Compact is to set out a framework within which the public and third sectors will work together. There may however be occasions where one partner feels the other is not complying with this agreement. This approach has been designed to support organisations, with the Compact Champions providing assistance at stage 2 and the Compact Partnership providing final mediation. The aim is to resolve all concerns at the earliest stage in the process.

An organisation feels that its Partner is not complying with the Compact.

Notes

Need to be clear about what the Partner organisation has done or failed to do. Is this clearly part of the Compact? Is this a concern to be raised through the Compact, or should this be raised through the Partner organisation's complaints procedure or be dealt with as a breach of contract?

STAGE 1

The organisation with concerns should contact the Partner organisation and outline concerns. The aim is to resolve all concerns at this stage.

Notes

Compact Champions will be identified within each public sector organisation. Third Sector Champions will:

- be the CVS in each local area OR
- be selected by the Third Sector Forum to be representative across Highland

The Compact Champion will ensure any concerns raised are legitimate under the Compact or if they should be raised through the organisation's complaints procedure or as a breach of contract. The Champion will attempt to resolve concerns, with the focus on moving forward to restore relations within the partnership.

STAGE 2 – Compact Champions Mediation

Should the concerns raised be unable to be resolved at Stage 1, organisations will contact a Compact Champion who will provide impartial mediation. Organisations can contact a Champion from either sector.

Notes

The group will consider the views of both parties and the view of the Compact Champion. The aim for this group is to restore working relations between the two parties.

STAGE 3 – Compact Partnership

Should the concerns raised be unable to be resolved at Stage 2, the Compact Partnership will consider the views of each party and the Compact Champion. The decision of this group will be the final stage in the mediation process.

Compact Champions: Role Description

Identification of Champions

Compact Champions will be identified within each public sector organisation. Third Sector Champions will:

- a) be the CVS in each local area and/or
- b) be selected by the Third Sector Forum to be representative across the Highland area

Champion's Role

Compact Champions will:

- Raise awareness of the Compact within their organisation and across the sector they work in;
- Act as a first point of contact for queries about the Compact;
- Attend the annual Compact Conference;
- Feed information and concerns back to the Compact Partnership regarding the operation of the Compact;
- Provide a pivotal role in Stage 2 of the Compact Mediation Approach. They will ensure that any concerns raised are legitimate and attempt to resolve concerns between the organisations, with the focus on moving forward and restoring relations within the partnership.

Support for Champions

Compact Champions will receive training prior to taking on this role and ongoing support will be available through the Compact Partnership.