

BRIDGEND COMPACT

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

DRAFT CODE OF PRACTICE

Introduction

The Bridgend Compact is a partnership agreement which supports strategic working relations between the third sector and the public sector in Bridgend County.

It is written in a spirit of mutual respect and understanding and provides a framework for developing shared aims and objectives to improve the quality of life of people in the local community and to provide them with effective support.

The Compact Implementation Plan (to be developed following adoption of codes of practice) will set out the objectives that support continuous improvement and development relating to the Compact themes. This is one of the Codes of Practice that has been produced by the Bridgend Compact Liaison Group.

Partnership Working is:

“A joint working formal arrangement where partners meet in order to agree and achieve a common goal, by making decisions, sharing information and often pooling resources, risks and rewards, which are monitored and evaluated.” (*Partnership Rationalisation Advice Note – Welsh Assembly Government 2007*).

The third sector in Bridgend is involved in partnership working with statutory partners through a number of Joint Working Groups and arrangements that include:

- **Statutory/Strategic Partnerships** such as the Health Social Care and Wellbeing Partnership and the Children and Young People’s Partnership;
- **Strategic Planning or Commissioning Groups** such as those for health, children and young people and community safety;
- **Sub Groups or Task Groups** which undertake detailed work and feed into existing partnership arrangements;

- **Joint Projects and Ventures** with the local authority, health, police and other statutory partners;
- **Forums and Networks**
- **Consultative Bodies** such as the Bridgend Citizens' Panel.

Aims of the Partnership Code of Practice:

- To support partnership working and build mutual trust by working together collaboratively for the benefit of Bridgend County;
- To achieve consistency and transparency of process across the range of areas where there is joint working and where third sector involvement is required;
- To develop greater understanding and respect for each other's roles, strengths, limitations and governance arrangements.

The Role of the Third Sector in Partnerships and Joint Working Groups

The third sector is often ideally placed to identify the needs of citizens and communities and communicate them to planners, based on:

Its **Expertise and Experience** – of supporting a range of complex individual and community needs; addressing gaps in provision or meeting needs that are better informed by third sector input; working with people excluded from traditional provision; drawing on individual and community resources; and of service delivery and innovation.

Experience and knowledge of **Engagement** – through strong links to citizens, service users and communities; a tradition of innovation in engaging with service users and communities; and focussing on developing the confidence of people and communities to take part in local decision making.

Its **Independence** – which allows it to be an advocate for citizens and service users and to challenge constructively regarding service design and delivery.

Code of Practice

All parties will:

- Contribute to creating a positive environment which develops and maintains mutual respect and encourages and supports involvement of the third sector in partnership working;
- Communicate in a timely and transparent manner;
- Make explicit mention of this code in appropriate documents (including individual partnership terms of reference, policy, press releases and publications) and agree to adhere to it;
- Engage communities, including the most disadvantaged, in partnership working;
- Support joint training of staff and secondment opportunities to promote greater mutual understanding;
- Recognise the need to have third sector representatives who are accountable to wider interests at all levels of partnerships and joint working groups;
- Review the effectiveness and quality of partnerships;
- Respond positively to any problems or issues arising from partnership working;
- Tackle all forms of discrimination, no matter from where they arise.

Public sector organisations will:

- Recognise the full contribution that the third sector makes to partnership planning and policy development;
- Ensure that third sector organisations are involved in partnerships and joint working groups from the outset;
- Recognise the role of third sector networks and as the main route to involving third sector organisations in partnerships and joint working groups;

- Recognise the role and responsibilities of third sector representatives and take responsibility for engaging with the appropriate representative as required;
- Liaise with BAVO if there is a problem relating to third sector involvement in partnerships and joint working groups;
- Recognise that the third sector needs resources to support its strategic engagement in partnership working.

On behalf of the Third Sector, BAVO will:

- Encourage and develop representation that is accountable to wider third sector interests;
- Run third sector networks that are representative of the range of third sector interests in the area;
- Strive to identify representatives in partnerships or joint working groups who work at an appropriate level and have the relevant skills and expertise;
- Channel information from partnerships and joint working groups to the wider third sector;
- Offer induction, training and support to third sector representatives on partnerships and joint working groups;
- Make links to third sector members of partnerships and joint working groups.

Third sector organisations will:

- Play a full, active and responsible roll on all partnerships and joint working groups;
- Channel information from the wider third sector to partnerships and joint working groups via existing networks;
- Be aware of, and deal appropriately with, possible conflicts of interest.

Implementation and Monitoring

This Code of Practice will be circulated to all partnerships in the Bridgend county.

The Local Service Board will promote the Code and make reference to it as appropriate.

This is one of the Codes of Practice that has been produced by Bridgend's Compact Liaison Group.

Its implementation will be monitored and reviewed as part of the Compact Implementation Plan. Any issues arising from the Code that are considered through the Compact Mediation and Disputes Process will also be monitored by the Compact Liaison Group.

Supporting Documents

- The Bridgend Compact 2011
- Code of Practice on Commissioning
- Code of Practice on Training
- Code of Practice on Volunteering
- Mediation and Disputes Resolution Process