

COMPACT ACCOUNTABILITY

1. Implementing the Compact

- 1.1 In the renewed national Compact, the Coalition Government has put more emphasis on options being in place for dealing with departures from the agreement's principles. In effect, the new document looks like it will have more teeth.
- 1.2 Compact Voice supports the voluntary sector, at national and local level, to take forward the Compact. They provide training and advice to the sector on using the Compact, and represent its interests to national government. They also work closely with the Compact Advocacy Programme (details below) to ensure Compact implementation and good practice are widely recognised and upheld.
Contact Compact Voice:
Email: compact@compactvoice.org.uk
Telephone: 0207 520 2451.
Website: www.compactvoice.org.uk
Twitter: @compactvoice
- 1.3 The Compact Advocacy Programme support Voluntary and Community Organisations (VCO's) in dealings with any public body at a national or local level, particularly in the early stages of a potential dispute. Their role is to help mediate and support better outcomes for VCO's in their dealings with public bodies. If a VCO thinks a public body has made a decision that is not in line with the Compact they can help.
Contact the compact Advocacy Programme:
Email: evsAdvice@ncvo-vol.org.uk
Telephone: 0207 520 3161
Website: at www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/compactadvocacy
- 1.4 As well as Compact Voice and the Compact Advocacy Programme, the renewed Compact's accountability guide includes a channel of formal complaints to the **Local Government Ombudsman**. This exists if issues cannot be resolved in the first instance through dialogue with the public body concerned. In addition, the Government has taken another major step towards increased transparency by embedding the Compact within Government departments. From 2012-13 it is intended that government departments include a statement on how the Compact is being implemented in their business plans.

2. Local Action

- 2.1 Support from either Compact Voice and/or the Compact Advocacy Programme may resolve any potential dispute. However, in recognition of the good inter-agency working relationship in Torbay, it is clearly in the interests of all agencies in Torbay to resolve issues without the need to go to the Local Government Ombudsman. Therefore a three stage approach is proposed;

- **Stage 1 - Torbay Together Involvement Group (TTIG)** to be the first point of contact. The group will;
 - Keep a register of all issues raised
 - Make an initial attempt to resolve issues through dialogue with the parties involved
 - Record the outcomes of these negotiations
 - If the a dispute cannot be resolved within 10 working days it will moves to stage 2
 - Prepare an annual report on compact compliance to the Torcom Consortium and to Torbay Strategic Partnership
- **Stage 2 – Representatives from the respective sectors** will seek to achieve a resolution
 - If a voluntary sector organisation raises an issues with an agency in Torbay the Torbay Strategic Partnership Executive will seek to achieve a resolution
 - If an Agency raises an issue with a voluntary sector organisation the Torcom voluntary sector Consortium will seek to achieve a resolution
 - Outcomes will be fed back to TTIG to be included in the register.
- **Stage 3** – A third stage could be considered if reciprocal arrangements could be made with another area with for example appropriate representatives in Plymouth providing a service for Torbay and vice versa.

The option to take a formal complaint to the **Local Government Ombudsman** remains as a last resort.

Contact the Local Government Ombudsman
PO Box 4771

Coventry
CV4 0E

Helpline: 0300 061 0614

Fax: 024 7682 0001

Email: advice@lgo.org.uk

Website: www.lgo.org.uk

3. Transparency

- 3.1 Copies of the register will be made available on Torcom, the Voluntary and Community web portal for Torbay, with an annual report to Torcom the Torbay Consortium and to Torbay Strategic Partnership on Compact Compliance.