

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: October 20 2009	MEETING NAME: Executive
Report title:		Southwark Compact	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Strategic Director of Law, Communities & Governance	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Executive endorse the revised Southwark Compact attached as Appendix 1 and make a commitment to fulfilling the council's undertakings.
2. That the Executive agrees that the principles of the Compact must be embedded across council departments.
3. The Executive requests that officers from different departments work together to ensure a consistent approach to partnership and funding for the voluntary sector in line with the Compact.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

4. In 1998 the Government published COMPACT – getting it right together between Government, the voluntary, community and faith sectors. The Compact is a vision document; a statement of shared principles and undertakings that underpins the relationship between Government, voluntary, community and faith sectors into the future.
5. The Southwark Compact follows on from the national framework. It is not a legally binding document but a voluntary agreement between statutory agencies and voluntary, community and faith sector organisations that sign up to it. Its authority is created through commitment to partnership working and consultation by all partner agencies. The vision is encapsulated in a statement of intent jointly agreed by all stakeholders which states that:

“Southwark’s Voluntary, Community and Statutory sectors are committed to the principle of working together for the collective benefit of the residents of Southwark. Southwark’s Compact will provide a framework for developing improved relationships based on shared values and mutual respect across all sectors”.
6. The Compact was endorsed by the council's Executive in October 2002 and subsequently adopted by the Local Strategic Partnership, Southwark Alliance in 2003. Copies of the final version of the Compact were then forwarded to all voluntary and community sector organisations and statutory partners in the borough.
7. Having been endorsed, the intention of the Compact Working Group was to produce a number of Codes of Practice including partnership working, resourcing, volunteering et al. It was subsequently agreed that the overarching principles should underpin all aspects of the statutory and VCS partners’ relationships and as a result the codes of practice were not progressed further. Following endorsement of the Compact by its members the Compact Working Group was subsumed as part of the Southwark Change-Up group which is now renamed Southwark Infrastructure Group (SIG) and comprises representatives from key infrastructure groups and the council.

8. In September 2007 Southwark Alliance Management Group agreed to update the existing Compact document and the following revisions were proposed.
- Incorporating a list of organisations that have signed up to the document
 - Eliminating the early sections relating to the process of compiling the Compact
 - A shortened introduction followed by Vision & Principles
 - Updating the main text and deleting reference to organisations which no longer exist
 - Omitting the action points relating to development of further more detailed guidelines
 - Omitting the acknowledgements and working group membership sections at the end of the document
 - The establishment of a Compact Conflict Resolution Group
 - An annual review of the Compact.
9. It was agreed that a Southwark Compact Conflict Resolution group be set up comprised of three representatives from each of the voluntary and statutory sectors. The purpose of this procedure would be to deal with complaints between VCS and statutory bodies but only as **a measure of last resort**, where there is no recourse to any other process and where there is evidence that attempts have been made to reach a resolution before any referral via this process. The procedure for conflict resolution including membership will be subsequently drawn up in consultation with the partners and presented to the Stronger Communities Partnership for endorsement.
10. During 2008/9 the Southwark Infrastructure Group agreed the above revisions and prioritised the Compact as part of its development plan. The Compact has also now been endorsed by the Primary Care Trust before being submitted to the council's Executive for approval.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

11. Following approval by the council's Executive the Compact will be relaunched and a communications strategy developed to ensure that all partners are aware of its contents and are signed up to its principles. The objectives of a communications strategy are:
- To ensure that once endorsed the Compact is then cascaded through each of the partner organisations to ensure that the principles are embedded
 - To identify any action necessary to take on board the implications of working in a 'Compact way' and consider how it can be taken forward within each partner organisation.

12. The key elements of a communications strategy are proposed as follows:
 - Printing sufficient copies to allow for distribution through statutory and voluntary and community sectors
 - Produce a revised executive summary for distribution
 - Ensure that the Compact is available on key partners' websites
 - Publicise the Compact through newsletters, ebulletins and promote it at major events
13. Following approval of the revised Compact by the Executive, Southwark Infrastructure group will review the need for Compact champions in both the VCS and statutory partner organisations with the purpose of making the document live and promoting the key principles within their organisations.
14. The national Compact agreement between central government and the third sector has now been revised and is currently out for consultation. The emphasis is on creating a document that provides a useful framework and context for partnership working between local partners. This deadline for responses to this consultation is October 15 2009. Responses will be analysed and it is anticipated that the final version of the refreshed document will be published in November 2009.

Community Impact Statement

15. There is a legal duty on local authorities to promote equal opportunities, eliminate discrimination and to promote positive community relations. The objective of the Community Support Programme is to empower and enable hard-to-reach communities and those communities which experience discrimination, to achieve a better quality of life.
16. Implicit throughout the Compact are the principles of equalities and diversity and the promotion of active involvement and engagement of Southwark's diverse communities.

Resource implications

17. There are no specific resource implications. Development costs, have to date, been met from existing budgets allocated for voluntary sector activity. Any further costs associated with the development of the Compact would be expected to be met from existing budgets.

Consultation

18. Changes to the Compact have been agreed by the Southwark Infrastructure Group and this report has been produced in conjunction with Community Action Southwark. Copies of the revised version of the Compact will be forwarded to all statutory partners and VCS groups in the borough.

Supplementary Advice from Other Officers

Finance Director

19. As stated in the Resource Implications in paragraph 15 there are no significant financial implications associated with the development of the Compact and any costs incurred will be met from existing budgets.

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Southwark Compact	Community Engagement	Bonnie Royal 020.7525.7389
Local Infrastructure Plan	Community Engagement	Bonnie Royal

Audit Trail

Lead Officer	Stephen Douglass, Head of Community Engagement	
Report Author	Bonnie Royal, Principal Commissioning Officer, Community Engagement.	
Version	Final	
Dated	8/10/09	
Key Decision	Yes	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / EXECUTIVE MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Strategic Director of Communities, Law & Governance	Yes	Yes
Finance Department	Yes	Yes
Head of Procurement	No	No
Executive Member	Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional Support Services	09/10/09	