

**Gloucestershire Compact**  
**Multi-sector Partnership Code of Practice**  
**Code of Practice**

**1. Who is this Code of Practice for?**

- Voluntary and Community Sector Groups
- Public Sector Bodies

**2. What is the Gloucestershire Compact?**

The Gloucestershire Compact is an agreement between local public sector bodies and the voluntary and community sector to support and improve partnership working between the sectors. It is underpinned by Codes of Practice, based on the national Codes, which cover the following areas:

- Advancing Equality
- Commissioning
- Community Groups
- Consultation
- Mediation
- Multi-sector Partnerships
- Volunteering

The Gloucestershire Compact and its Codes contain specific undertakings for each sector, as well as a series of joint undertakings, which aim to make a positive impact on partnership working in the county. In this context, the term “undertaking” commits partners to work towards the principle or action in question.

**3. What is the aim of this Code of Practice?**

This Code of Practice, which has been locally developed, aims to make a positive impact on the relationship between the public sector and the voluntary and community sector (VCS) and their joint commitment to establishing effective multi-sector partnerships where appropriate. It aims to set a framework for:

- Understanding what makes a partnership effective
- Encouraging good practice in managing and servicing partnerships
- Enabling the full participation of both sectors

**4. What are Multi-sector Partnerships?**

Good multi–sector partnerships involve the voluntary and community sector and the public sector working together in a way that adds value to and improves the effectiveness of service delivery and makes a difference.

Common success factors for such partnerships include:

- Active agreement that a partnership is necessary

- Shared, clear and defined purpose
- Confidence in the commitments and actions of different partners
- Commitment to achieving the best outcomes for end users
- Leadership by respected individuals
- A clear and open decision-making process
- The development of a shared vision of what might be achieved
- Time to build the partnership
- Shared or overlapping agendas
- Good communication between partners
- Effective partnership management

## 5. Joint Undertakings

All partners to the Gloucestershire Compact are committed to ensuring multi-sector partnerships are made effective in the ways outlined above and undertake to:

- 5.1 Identify common needs, goals and shared priorities which will be effectively addressed through multi-sector partnerships.
- 5.2 Develop and be part of multi-sector partnerships where they can add value to existing work arrangements.
- 5.3 Review the effectiveness of multi-sector partnerships on a regular basis and if not working agree a way forward to improve effectiveness
- 5.4 Develop open and representative multi-sector partnership processes and structures.
- 5.5 Understand what current resources are needed for the multi- sector partnership to work effectively
- 5.6 Ensure that the needs of seldom heard groups are heard and considered by the partnership.
- 5.7 Recognise the value, specific skills and expertise of all sectors.
- 5.8 Clarify organisational interests and recognise the limits and boundaries of participating organisations and sectors.
- 5.9 Support the participation and involvement of participating organisations/sectors.
- 5.10 Provide for induction of new partners and representatives including use of this Code and understanding of other sectors.
- 5.11 Ensure each agency is clear about their role and the commitments involved.
- 5.12 Ensure the role of staff members and volunteers in representing organisations in partnerships is fully recognised within their job roles and supported by their employing or sponsoring organisation.
- 5.13 Identify and support the training and development needs of partnership members, including induction and mentoring.
- 5.14 Be clear whose responsibility it is to ensure sound organisation, management and appropriate resourcing of the partnership including:
  - Clear Terms of Reference for partnership including clarity on where it is positioned within a wider partnership structure
  - Clear and agreed administrative and secretariat function
  - Strategic Plan
  - Communication Strategy

- Reporting mechanisms
  - Performance management
  - Accessible meetings
  - Costs of participation and representation
- 5.15 Identify clearly the role of the Chair, and ensure this person is able to encourage the involvement and participation of all players.
- 5.16 Accept ownership for decisions made by the partnership and its promotion.
- 5.17 Promote the Gloucestershire Compact and comply with the undertakings outlined in this code.
- 5.18 Use representative structures and processes available within the VCS to identify and support VCS involvement in partnerships at the earliest practicable stage.

## **6. Public Sector Undertakings**

The Gloucestershire Compact public sector partners undertake to:

- 6.1 Recognise and value the skills and expertise that VCS organisations bring to partnerships.
- 6.2 Recognise that VCS organisations have a strategic as well as a service delivery role.
- 6.3 Reference and use the representative structures and processes within the VCS when seeking to identify VCS members.
- 6.4 Where relevant, communicate their legal and financial duties and requirements in relation to developing new partnerships
- 6.5 Be clear whether it is a VCS advisor, a VCS representative or a VCS organisation in their own right that is being requested to participate in the partnership

## **7. Voluntary and Community Sector Undertakings**

The Gloucestershire Compact voluntary and community sector partners undertake to:

- 7.1 Ensure VCS representatives consult and represent the wider views of the sector wherever possible including hard-to-reach groups.
- 7.2 Seek to understand and respect the statutory requirements and frameworks (including monitoring) within which the public sector operates.
- 7.3 Ensure that issues concerning VCS funding are raised only when directly relevant to the partnership and that more appropriate routes of redress are sought when necessary.
- 7.4 Reference and use the representative structures and processes within the VCS when seeking to represent a sector view