

COMPACT

for HULL

Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Voluntary and Community Sector Groups: a Code of Good Practice



Compact on Relations between the
Public Sector and the Voluntary and
Community Sector in Hull

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1. Introduction

The Compact for Hull

1.1 The compact for Hull is an agreement intended to provide a framework for developing effective relationships between the public and voluntary and community sectors in the city of Hull. Its objective is to create a level playing field and ensure that services are delivered in the best way possible and to the needs of local people.

1.2 As part of that process, the Compact sets out the key principles and undertakings which will underpin the relationship between the public and voluntary and community sectors in the city of Hull.

Status of the Compact for Hull

1.3 The Compact has been drawn up in partnership, following extensive consultation between the public and voluntary and community sectors in Hull. The Compact is deliberately not exhaustive, but recognises the diversity of the voluntary and community sector and its activities. It is both a general framework and an enabling mechanism that enhances the relationship between the public and voluntary and community sectors.

1.4 The Compact is an agreement about relations between the public and voluntary and community sectors. It is an agreed statement of intent, its authority is derived from its endorsement by all parties during the process through which it was drawn up, and with their ongoing involvement in its review and development.

1.5 The Compact has been supported by five codes of practice, covering:

- Funding and procurement;
- Consultation and Policy Appraisal;
- Volunteering;
- Black and minority ethnic (BME) voluntary and community organisations; and
- Community groups.

1.6 All of these codes, within the principle of the Compact, have a commitment to equality and diversity. The Compact is committed to promoting equality and diversity, and believes that all people should be treated fairly and not be discriminated against. If you would like any advice or further information relating to equality or diversity issues please contact:

Hull City Council's Equalities Team

Telephone 01482 300300 or e-mail equalities@hullcc.gov.uk

or

Humber all Nations Alliance (HANA)

Telephone 01482 491177 or e-mail admin@hanaonline.org.uk

2. What is the BME Voluntary and Community Sector Groups Code of Good Practice?

2.1 This Code of Practice is one of five which are part of Hull Compact. The Code of Practice is designed to support the aims and efforts of both the BME voluntary and Community sector groups and the public sector. It is recognised that Hull's expanding BME Communities contribute positively to the social, economic and cultural life of the city; however, the real potential of these communities has not been realised or fully appreciated because of institutional barriers and individual practice that too often limit the progress of BME citizens and groups. The same factors often prevent BME residents gaining access to services available to the general community and limit BME groups' participation in the delivery of services. This code is intended to help eliminate those barriers and create opportunities for BME groups to serve their members and the wider community. It aims to help the Compact signatories consider

their own practices and/ or experiences and reflect on how improvements can be made and sustained.

2.2 Members of Hull's BME community groups are not concentrated in a particular part of the City but are spread throughout most of the neighbourhoods and into the villages of the East Riding. There are few if any groups whose members are based exclusively in the East Riding, and Hull tends to be the central gathering place for BME people living in the sub region north of the Humber. Events such as meetings, festivals and performances usually take place in Hull, bringing with them business for Hull firms and activities for its citizens, even though the groups sponsoring them may have many members who live in the East Riding. BME residents straddle the boundaries between Hull and the East Riding, living in one area and working in another, spending leisure time and engaging in cultural and charitable pursuits in more than one area.

2.3 Because of these realities all sectors in Hull and the East Riding need to co-operate to cater for the needs of BME groups that have memberships that are not confined to one authority. There must be an awareness of the cross-border relationships that operate in BME groups and a willingness to share support for projects that serve residents (and employees) of both local authorities.

2.4 The National Code of Good Practice asserts that BME groups tend to be disproportionately smaller and less well financed than the average VCS organisation. We know this to be the case at present in Hull and because of this the local public sector recognise that special attention needs to be paid to ensuring that sufficient support is available to maintain a strong and vibrant BME voluntary and community sector.

Aims

2.5 The overarching aim of this Code of Practice is to make a positive difference to the relationships between Hull's BME voluntary and community sector groups and the

public sector. It seeks to build greater participation by BME communities in Hull's regeneration and service delivery and to develop and strengthen relationships between the Voluntary, Community, and Public sectors by:

- enabling Hull's BME communities to contribute effectively to the development of strategy and policy in Hull, covering all themes so that Hull's BME communities can actively influence the ways in which local services are delivered to them;
- supporting Hull's BME communities to engage strongly within mainstream regeneration, and developing the sector's capacity to do this by providing resources and training where needed;
- ensuring that the contribution of Hull's BME communities to a socially inclusive and cohesive Hull is valued, recognised and encouraged to grow further; and
- ensuring that with assistance from the public sector and its partner agencies, appropriate levels of resources and support are made available to achieve these aims.

Shared Values

2.6 Four main values are shared and promoted by this Code of Practice. These apply to all those signing up to the Hull Compact. They are:

- promoting racial equality and community cohesion;
- recognising, respecting and celebrating multi-culturalism and diversity while placing equal emphasis and appreciation for those characteristics, ethics and values which all of Hull's communities share;

- shared responsibility; and
- equity and fairness in relationships and in allocation of resources.

3. Undertakings by the Public Sector

3.1 The public sector will undertake:

- to oppose racism, discrimination, inequality and exclusion in any form, individual or institutional, as a priority. This means not only meeting legal requirements but also a commitment to effecting, where necessary, genuine cultural changes within organisations;
- to recognise and promote the importance of communities of interest when planning the use of resources that come into Hull, ensuring that the authority's BME communities are not disadvantaged by the targeting of resources exclusively at geographical communities;
- to demonstrate an awareness that Hull's BME groups need to serve a geographical area that sometimes goes beyond the City into the East Riding and the public sector will seek and promote co-operation with that Authority to support their development needs;
- to recognise that BME people are relatively few and sometimes isolated in the sub-region. For this reason the public sector needs to be aware that BME groups will benefit from cooperation and economies of scale by joining cross-boundary activities. The public sector needs to encourage and support such joint efforts;

- to make sure that information of all kinds (but particularly regarding participation and service provision) is presented and disseminated in a way that meets the needs of BME residents (e.g. language, format etc);
- to ensure that BME communities have the opportunity to influence the development of strategy and policy. The public sector needs to ensure that sufficient time (three months is an appropriate length) is made available for consultation of BME residents and representative organisations, taking account of a lack in infrastructure and capacity which makes reaching people more time-consuming than in the public sector and larger voluntary sectors;
- to provide clear feedback on the results of any consultation that takes place and to communicate clearly the reasons behind any decisions that are made, recognising that “consultation fatigue” occurs when people hear nothing of its results, and that accurate and appropriate feedback encourages further participation;
- to recognise and value the unique skills, expertise and experience that exist within the BME Voluntary and Community sectors, developing clear and inclusive frameworks (e.g. for service provision) to make sure this recognition is demonstrated;
- to recognise and support the independence of the BME sector and its right to challenge institutions, policy and practice without jeopardising support from partners;
- to ensure that all structures in the public sector are accessible and sensitive to BME needs, creating clear means by which these communities can influence the planning processes; and
- to promote equalities through best practice, for example, via provision of training for members of planning partnership boards.

4. Undertakings by BME Voluntary and Community Sector Groups

4.1 Hull's BME Voluntary and Community Sector Groups undertake:

- to work in partnership with the public sector and other voluntary and community organisations in promoting race equality, tackling social exclusion and promoting community cohesion;
- to play a full and active part within the wider voluntary and community sectors in Hull, assisting the effective implementation of the Compact as a whole and other initiatives such as the Community Strategy. In particular, Hull's BME groups agree to take an active part in the opportunities for training, consultation and planning offered by the Hull Community Network;
- to build closer links with the BME networks at Sub-regional, Regional and National levels in order to provide the planning structures with perspectives on key regional and national issues affecting the sector;
- to actively promote joint approaches and partnership working among Hull's BME communities through sharing expertise and other practical skills;
- to present BME communities' concerns to planning boards in a coordinated, responsible and accountable way;
- to observe good governance. This means that BME community organisations will place clear responsibility on Trustees, Officers and Representatives to use all resources appropriately. It also means informing agencies when organisations face significant management and resource challenges, including financial difficulties;

- to apply Best Practice in management and delivery within BME community organisations and to work towards and adopt appropriate quality standards;
- to continuously improve the infrastructure and capacity of BME community and voluntary organisations; and
- to utilise fully all training opportunities (including those supported by the public sector, as listed in the third undertaking by the public sector) in order to achieve these undertakings.

5. Joint Undertakings

5.1 The Public sector and Hull's BME Groups jointly agree:

- to recognise and actively celebrate diversity;
- to work closely together to carry forward and monitor the success of Hull's Community Strategy and all Race Equality legislation, Diversity Schemes and their Action Plans across the Region;
- to work in partnership with other agencies (e.g. Learning and Skills Council, Yorkshire Forward etc) to promote initiatives and programmes which will directly benefit Hull's BME Communities;
- to ensure that Community Cohesion is a key consideration in all areas;
- to monitor support to BME community groups in order to ensure that adequate and appropriate support is provided;

- to raise awareness of the requirements of this Code of Practice to the wider statutory, voluntary and community groups, and to make appropriate reference to this Code in all relevant Public sector documentation and Voluntary and Community sector publications; and
- to recognise and welcome integration and co-operation of all sectors of society, whilst benefiting from diverse cultures and backgrounds

For further copies of this document please contact:

Hull's Local Strategic Partnership

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Alfred Gelder Street

Hull

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There is a national version of the Compact (including five national codes of practice) that outlines the agreement between the Government and the voluntary and community sector to improve their relationship for the benefit of each other and the communities they serve. To view the national Compact please visit the Compact website www.thecompact.org.uk