



# Making a positive difference to keeping the communities of Cheshire safe

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**A Compact Agreement** between the Police & Crime Commissioner for Cheshire and the Voluntary & Community sector in Cheshire.

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This document is intended to complement the local Compacts that already exist in the four areas of Cheshire and outlines the particular role the Police & Crime Commissioner may have with the local voluntary and community sector.

## **Introduction**

This Compact is an agreement between the Police & Crime Commissioner for Cheshire (the Commissioner) and the four Cheshire local support and development organisations on behalf of the voluntary and community sector in Cheshire and has been agreed by the responsible officers for the respective organisations.

The Commissioner recognises and values the role of partners in providing solutions to crime and disorder and community safety and providing support to victims in Cheshire. The Commissioner is keen to ensure that as many partners as possible support this agenda, particularly the voluntary and community sector.

The Compact provides a framework to improve engagement, develop shared aims and objectives, mutual respect and understanding and will assist the Commissioner and voluntary and community sector partners to improve the quality of services for the people of Cheshire. It sets out high level principles that are complementary to the Compacts that exist in other areas and reflects a desire by all parties to work together. However, the Commissioner and the local voluntary and community sector have recognised the need for a separate Compact Agreement to underpin their relationship, given the particular role of the Commissioner and the fact that the policing area spans across the areas of a number of existing local compacts.

The success of the compact relies on the commitment of all parties. Collaboration can strengthen existing working relationships and at a time of economic pressure this can enable all parties to be equipped to meet future challenges. Working more closely will enable organisations to maximise resources and knowledge and so become more effective and efficient.

## **Aim of the Compact**

The Compact is intended to help enhance the relationship between the Commissioner and the voluntary and community sector in Cheshire, so that we can make a positive difference to victims and to community safety. We believe that by doing this we will make Cheshire an even safer place to live and improve life for people and communities that we all work with.

## The Compact will help us to:

1. Improve engagement and communication between both parties and recognise the role that the voluntary and community sector can play in reaching people and communities that might not always have a voice.
2. Allow the voluntary and community sector an opportunity to influence and shape the commissioning plans, strategies and intentions of the Commissioner.
3. Promote a greater understanding of the contribution that the voluntary and community sector can make and to help the sector understand more about the work of the Commissioner.
4. Increase opportunities for the voluntary and community sector to play a part in meeting the challenges that Cheshire faces.
5. Improve services by identifying and addressing community needs and gaps in provision.
6. Work together to make best use of resources and improve the effectiveness of services.

## Key principles for the Compact

The key principles and values underlying this Compact include the following:

1. It is based on **equal rights and responsibilities**, mutual respect, recognition of difference and shared vision. Specific agreements will be clearly spelled out, reviewed regularly and agreed.
2. all partners are committed to eliminating unlawful discrimination, advancing equality and ensuring a voice for under-represented and disadvantaged groups.
3. all partners are **accountable** for their actions, and share the need for integrity, objectivity, openness, honesty and leadership. This will be achieved through appropriate management within all groups and organisations.
4. that an **independent** and diverse voluntary sector is fundamental to the well-being of a democratic society.
5. that effective partnership will be achieved through **communication, consultation and collaboration** at all levels of the voluntary, public and private sectors .
6. that there are varied roles for groups and they may act as **campaigners, service providers** and **advocates**. Groups should be clear at all times which role they are taking.
7. recognition of the importance of the **diversity of funding relationships** to both sectors.
8. all **funding relationships** between the statutory sector and voluntary organisations will be underpinned by written agreements in clear language, which spell out the required outcomes and state how these will be monitored and evaluated.

## **Voluntary and Community Sector Undertakings –**

The voluntary sector will:

1. Recognise the need for value-for-money in the spending of public money, and be prepared to adopt, as agreed and appropriate, procedures for the monitoring and evaluation of our services.
2. Adopt and implement policies for the promotion of equal opportunities.
3. Adopt and implement policies and codes of practice when working with volunteers.
4. Involve those using our services in the development and where appropriate, management of services.
5. Work towards implementing agreed quality standards.
6. Maintain high standards of governance, and meet agreed reporting and accountability obligations to funders and clients.
7. Where appropriate, work towards diversifying our funding base and, if possible, avoid reliance upon any single source of funding.
8. Promote effective relationships between the Commissioner and voluntary and community sector.
9. Actively maintain the voluntary and community sector's role of campaigning to improve practice, policy and services.
10. Ensure we act lawfully and comply with, where appropriate Charity Commission guidance and Company Law.
11. Recognise that public sector organisations are governed by statute and as such have statutory duties to discharge.
12. Work towards ensuring that our services and policies are transparent, open and inclusive.

## **Police & Crime Commissioner Undertakings –**

The Commissioner will:

1. Recognise the contribution made by the voluntary and community sector in Cheshire, particularly to helping make Cheshire an even safer place to live.
2. Recognise that voluntary and community sector organisations are independent.
3. Subject to any legal agreements, accept that the voluntary and community sector has the right to determine and manage their own affairs.
4. Consult with the voluntary and community sector in a timely and reasonable way, enabling effective consultation with users, beneficiaries and stakeholders.
5. Work in a transparent and open manner in my dealings with the voluntary and community sector.

6. Continue to work towards achieving consistency and good practice within and between public sector organisations on issues such as: funding arrangements, monitoring and evaluation, consultation and development of services.
7. Recognise the role that voluntary and community sector organisations can play in supporting my role to be better connected to the voluntary and community sector in Cheshire.

### **Making it work**

All partners are committed to implementing and reviewing the Compact annually to:

- Ensure that it is working as a means of supporting effective partnership working.
- Identify necessary changes to the Compact or the partnership framework.
- Receive feedback from members of the Compact on how it is working in practice.

All partners will distribute and promote the Compact widely to raise awareness, ensure ownership of the agreement and show how it underpins joint working and future growth.

### **The Role of the Commissioner**

The Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner is the locally elected governing body for policing in Cheshire. The Commissioner has an overarching duty to;

- secure an efficient and effective police service;
- hold the Chief Constable to account for the exercise of his functions and the functions of those persons under his direction and control.

In order to fulfil these duties, the Commissioner has a range of powers and responsibilities including;

- being accountable to the electorate and representing the public in policing matters;
- preparing a Police and Crime Plan which sets out the strategic direction and objectives for policing in Cheshire;
- setting the police budget and policing 'precept', this is the part of local council tax that goes towards policing;
- working with partners to prevent and tackle crime and re-offending;
- appointing and, if necessary, dismissing the Chief Constable;
- overseeing complaints against Cheshire Constabulary;
- commissioning community safety services and projects in the area;
- commissioning services for victims of crime and anti-social behaviour;
- ensuring that public priorities are acted upon, the public and victims are consulted and that the most vulnerable individuals are not overlooked;
- ensuring value for money.

## **The role of the Council for Voluntary Service/Voluntary Action Organisations (VCS/VA) in Cheshire**

The four CVS/VA in Cheshire (Halton & St Helens VCA, Chester VA, CVS Cheshire East, Warrington VA) are the umbrella organisations for voluntary and community and faith organisations. They support voluntary action by promoting and supporting volunteering, advising on good practice, providing information on funding sources, offer a range of capacity building support along with a wide range of other services.

The term 'voluntary and community sector' as referred to in this document incorporates voluntary and community organisations and volunteering interests including UK wide charities and their local branches, county based organisations, informal community groups, social enterprises, co-operatives and self-help support groups.

The Compact will give opportunities for the voice of the voluntary and community sector and their service users to be heard and ensure recognition of the significant impact that voluntary organisations contribute to community safety and cohesion.



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