

COUNCIL SEMINAR
4th October, 2016

Present:- Councillor Yasseen (in the Chair); Councillors Allen, Andrews, Atkin, Bird, Russell, Sheppard, John Turner and Williams.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Allcock, Beaumont, Cowles, Cusworth, Senior and Simpson.

ROTHERHAM COMPACT

Waheed Akhtar, Policy, Improvement and Partnerships, introduced Shafiq Hussain, Deputy Chief Executive, Voluntary Action Rotherham, and Carole Haywood, Policy, Improvement and Partnerships Manager.

Councillor Yasseen, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Working and Cultural Services, would be in attendance shortly.

A powerpoint presentation was given which would help Members to:-

- Be aware of the Rotherham Compact
- Understand the key principles of the Compact
- Support implementation within the Council
- Raise awareness within your ward and in your community leadership role.

What is the Voluntary and Community Sector – Size

- Estimated 1382 voluntary and community organisations in Rotherham
 - 79% Micro (income under 1£0k) = 1091 groups
 - 13% Small (income between £10k – 100k) 180 groups
 - 7% Medium (income between £100k -1M) 97 organisations
 - 1% Large, income over £1M - 14 organisations
- 55% are involved in health/welfare and social care
- 41% are involved in education research and training

Over 50% of all organisations support

- Local communities and the general public
- Elderly
- Children Young People & Families
- People with Disabilities
- Work in deprived neighbourhoods

What is the Voluntary and Community Sector – People

- The Voluntary and Community Sector is a major employer – over 3,600 employees many of whom live locally/many are part-time and high percentages are women
- There are 49,000 volunteers
- Over 12,000 committee/board members
- Volunteers give over 85,000 hours of their time each week

What is the Voluntary and Community Sector - Income

- The combined contribution of paid employees and volunteers in the sector is valued at £187M per year
- The income of the sector is estimated at £61M per year
- The sector is financially fragile – 34% of the sectors have reserves of less than one month, over 50% have less than 3 months reserves
- The sector raises significant extra income for Rotherham

What is the Voluntary and Community Sector – Impact

- The sector works across all ages/geographical communities/communities of interest/area of work
- 64% improve peoples' mental wellbeing
- 61% address the needs of the most disadvantaged
- 53% increase peoples skills
- 49% help people feel they belong to the their neighbourhood
- The sector helps people and communities engage, become active and connected/learn new skills and be successful/care for their environment and make Rotherham welcoming and proud

What is the Voluntary and Community Sector – Our networks

- Voluntary Action Rotherham – over 760 members
- REMA – over 50 members
- The following Voluntary and Community Sector consortia:-
 - Children Young People & Families
 - Adult Service
 - Food in Crisis
 - Advice in Rotherham
 - Rotherham Ethnic Communities Network
 - Rotherham Open Arts Renaissance
- Rotherham Together Partnership – 4 Voluntary and Community Sector representatives plus Voluntary Action Rotherham Chair
- Together the above make up the Voluntary and Community Sector Strategic Reps group and ensure Voluntary and Community Sector are represented on all Key Strategic Decision Making Boards

Rotherham Compact – The Context

- A mutually agreed document which sets out how we all work together for the benefit of communities and citizens
- Locally – council/local public sector partners and the voluntary and community sector (VCS)
- Last reviewed around 2010
- Rotherham received national and regional awards for previous versions of the Rotherham Compact
- Feedback received from Council managers and VCS organisations
- Now seen as out of date and 'no longer has meaningful impact'
- Part of Rotherham's improvement journey

Where are we now?

- Voluntary Sector Liaison Officer in post (January, 2016)
- Established a baseline position which suggests:
- Not a clear and shared understanding of the Compact
- Some scepticism and lack of trust over the Compact
- VCS – feedback ‘still need to get the basics’ right
- Research shows a ‘Mixed picture’ across other local authority areas
- Local Government Association Advice
- All noted that the Rotherham Compact is still relevant but requires commitment
- All noted opportune time to review

What needs to improve?

Main feedback from discussion with Voluntary and Community Sector:

- Improve Communication – aim for clear, transparent communication
- Define Commissioning – aim for clarity and consistency on the process; social value benefit and feedback on performance
- Improve Consultation and Engagement – aim for an open and inclusive approach
- Being brilliant at the basics – relationships, payment, processes

What are we doing now?

- Partners Compact Working Group established
- Compact commitments
- Involvement in policy development
- Allocating resources
- Advancing equality

What do we need to do?

- Provide some clarity on the relationship we want with the Voluntary and Community Sector now and in the future
- Redefine the relationship now, knowing the financial challenges we face
- Be clear on expectations and outcomes as commissioners
- Understand what we are buying with the Voluntary and Community Sector and share the information collectively to avoid any perceived duplication
- Consider and explore further opportunities to work collaboratively with the Voluntary and Community Sector
- Raise awareness, improve communication, work in partnership

What are Services doing?

- Use Compact principles to improve and maintain good working relationships
- Raise awareness of the compact – promotion, discussions in team meetings
- Consider whether it is deliverable

REPORT FOR INFORMATION - 04/10/16

- Consider how the Compact can be embedded in your work – Ownership and Compliance – Policies, Procedures and Practice
- Being brilliant at the basics
- Provide feedback into the consultation!

Timeline

- Rotherham Together Partnership (RTP) CEO Group 4th August
- 12 Week Consultation period ends: Thursday 3rd November
- Finalised Compact ready by end – November
- Revised Compact to Rotherham Together Partnership in December
- RMBC: Overview and Scrutiny Management Board ‘pre-scrutiny’/Cabinet / Council
- Other public sector partners will have their own governance process for sign up

Compact – Remember the context

- A mutually agreed document which sets out how we all work together for the benefit of communities and citizens
- Between the Voluntary and Community Sector and the public sector partners in the Rotherham Together Partnership
- A framework for partnership working
- Energising the relationship with Voluntary and Community Sector

Discussion areas

- How do you see the relationship evolving between the Council and the Voluntary and Community Sector over the next 3 years?
- Given the profile of the sector, what do you think are the opportunities and challenges in these relationships?
- How can the Compact support you in your community leadership role?
- How do you feel as a Councillor you could work with the Voluntary and Community Sector to support communities in your area?

Councillor Yasseen assumed the Chair.

Discussion ensued with the following issues raised/highlighted:-

- The Compact was a written set of principles in the spirit of partnership. The aim was to achieve better outcomes for Rotherham
- It would be a mutually shared document for the benefit of citizens not just for the Council/organisations
- The Partners Compact Working Group was Chaired by Shafiq Hussain (VAR) and included representatives from CAB, Crossroads, REEMA, Police, Rotherham Foundation Trust with invitations also to Rotherham CCG, RDASH, South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue and Rotherham Colleges

REPORT FOR INFORMATION - 04/10/16

- There was said to be over 700 groups on Gizmo. More work was to be undertaken to publicise it and the ability to use it as a directory to search for a particular area/name/theme etc. The link would be forwarded to Councillors to publicise to local groups. It was free to register
- Were local groups given assistance to bid for funding/administration/premises etc.? A piece of work was being undertaken by the Assistant Director Strategic Commissioning to ascertain where the gaps were and map where there were empty buildings that could be used by community groups
- Activity was needed in the community to find the small groups and supply them with the information as to where they could find other groups and help each other

It was proposed that a further seminar be held in the evening to enable attendance by those Councillors unable to make this morning session.