



Report of the Cabinet Member for Supporting Communities

Cabinet - 20 January 2022

Third Sector Compact Agreement Update

Purpose:	To provide an update on Swansea's Third Sector Compact Agreement and the work to date of the Compact Liaison Group who were formed as part of the updated Swansea Compact Agreement with the Voluntary Sector in 2018.
Policy Framework:	Swansea Third Sector Compact Agreement 2021 (attached as Appendix1)
Consultation:	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that: 1) The report is noted.
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1. Background

- 1.1 Swansea Council first agreed a Compact with the Third Sector in 1999, the Compact has been renewed and refreshed a number of times in the intervening years.
- 1.2 The Compact is an agreement between the Swansea Council and the voluntary and community sector. It sets out key principles and establishes a way of working that improves their relationship for mutual advantage.
- 1.3 The renewed 2018 Compact Agreement established the Compact Liaison Group. The purpose, aims and objectives of the Compact Liaison Group are stated as:

“Monitoring and evaluation of the Compact Agreement between the Council and the Sector will be conducted through Compact Liaison Group, with the main purpose of the group being to share a general overview of strategic developments and a general exchange of information.

The group would:

- Comprise of equal membership of Council and Third Sector representatives*
- Meet every two months (more frequently if required)*
- Third Sector representatives elected from a broad cross section of the Sector, Council representatives shall be drawn from across service areas with links to the Third Sector*
- Charing of meetings will alternate between the Council and Third Sector, minute taking and administering the meeting will likewise alternate between partners.*
- Ensure Third Sector Forum Groups and relevant council groups to feed in*

The purpose of the group is:

- To promote the Compact Agreement and encourage ownership and support across both sectors*
- To monitor the expected outcomes outlined in the Compact Agreement and review the objectives to ensure the document remains responsive to current trends*
- To act as a mechanism to facilitate dialogue between the Council and the Third Sector on matters of shared interest*
- To agree a joint work programme for each year to share and manage risk*
- To monitor the progress of delivering the work programme”*

1.4 In line with the agreement, the Council are to be updated annually on the work of the Compact Liaison Group and any development or amendments to the Compact Agreement. The Compact Agreement has been reviewed and updated by members of the Compact Liaison Group; the 2021 update is attached as **Appendix 1**

2. Compact Liaison Group - 2020/21

2.1 The group is comprised of Council Officers and representatives of the Third Sector who were elected by their peers via hustings events hosted by SCVS.

2.2 There was a hiatus during COVID lockdown, which meant there were no meetings between March and August 2020. However, since August 2020 the group established its work plan for the year and agreed to rotate the Chair and Secretariat of the meeting between the partners. The Group has met nine times since August 2020, most recently October 2021.

2.3 In line with the purpose of the group to *act as a mechanism to facilitate dialogue between the Council and the Third Sector on matters of shared*

interest areas of work undertaken or discussed by the Third Sector Liaison Group in the 20/21 year included:

- Post COVID Community Support – Achieving Better Together
- Update on additional funding opportunities for the Sector
- Volunteer ID Letters to allow travel during lockdown
- Letters for Carers to allow travel during lockdown
- Possible Changes to Local Resilience Networks
- Care Home Support during COVID
- Growing Food Policy
- 3rd Sector Procurement
- Community Renewal Funding
- Update on Volunteering Policy and practice
- Regional Volunteer Recovery Toolkit
- Community Asset Transfer: research with the third sector
- Climate Change
- Resilience/Emergency planning

2.4 The group has worked together to promote the Compact Agreement and encourage ownership and support across both sectors by adopting an inclusive agenda planning process, encouraging partners to suggest items and drive workplans. Also by agreeing to share the Chair and secretariat of the meetings ownership of the group is shared at all levels.

2.5 The Infographic at **Appendix 2** provides a snapshot of highlights and the status of the Third Sector in Swansea and demonstrates the importance and variety of support the sector provides to our residents of Swansea including;

- 2,103 Voluntary and Community organisations operating in Swansea
- 28.5% of people in Swansea Volunteer
- 10% of employment in Wales is within the Charitable/Voluntary Sector
- The Top 5 categories of activity within the sector are as follows, demonstrating the additional Tier Zero support provided by the third sector are:
 - Education and Training
 - Health and Social Care
 - Children and Families
 - Sports & Recreation
 - Community

These figure although impressive do not reflect the actual size of the sector in Swansea but is drawn from publicly available and reported information, the actual stats will all be larger as some are based on estimates from all Wales stats. An action for the Compact Liaison group would be to undertake a sector survey in Q1 2022 to develop a more localised version of the information.

- 2.6 COVID has affected all sectors of society adding pressure and stress on groups and their staff and one of the outcomes of the Compact Agreement is *to ensure we work together to remain responsive to current trends*. Throughout the year we have discussed pressures in the system and in particular how this is effecting the Third Sector and what solutions we can collectively find to move forward. Some common themes are identified below;
- Additional funding sources to alleviate effect of COVID have been welcome, however tight deadlines have been problematic and stressful
 - Requirement to spend allocated funds within deadlines has been difficult – issues with running projects include; staffing, product supply, venue, changing rules/lockdowns and many others
 - Monitoring information required is stringent and onerous with so much short term funding monitoring regimes could be more pragmatic.
 - The third sector has had to rely upon social media for its face to face contact which although very new and difficult has been conversely successful in attracting interaction with clients
 - Anxiety over post COVID recovery and future funding availability
 - Clarity and update of Volunteering strategies is required as we move forward
- 2.7 The case study at **Appendix 3** demonstrates some of the difficulties people have experienced throughout COVID and how third sector groups have been able to support; in this example from Your Voice Advocacy - adults with learning disabilities.

3. COVID Recovery and Future Work Programme

- 3.1 Working together with the Third Sector will form an essential part of the Councils COVID-19 recovery strategy, Achieving Better Together.
- 3.2 The council has planned its initial re-mobilisation of immediate priorities from the COVID-19 crisis, the longer term plan from recovery to transformation.
- 3.3 The Third Sector Liaison group will work with this strategic approach 'Swansea Achieving Better – Together' and will work in partnership to ensure all groups in Swansea work together to aid recovery in the short and longer term through the phases outlined in the strategy. Re-mobilise, Re-focus and Re-shape
- 3.4 Future review of the Compact will include references to community resilience to ensure planning for any future situation similar to COVID is better prepared
- 3.5 Promoting the work of the West Glamorgan Volunteering Support (WGVS) multi-agency project creating shared resources to develop the knowledge, management and coordination of volunteers and volunteer involving organisations across the Swansea and Neath Port Talbot areas. It has been funded through the Welsh Government Volunteering Recovery Fund.

3.6 To encourage a return to volunteering after COVID the WGVS has worked in partnership to develop a series of toolkits:

- Diversifying your Volunteers Toolkit – WGVS
- Friends of park & allotment groups Toolkit – WGVS
- Individual Action to Community Action Toolkit – WGVS
- Volunteer Co-ordinator Guide Toolkit – WGVS
- Volunteering in Primary Care GP Practices Toolkit – WGVS
- Green Recovery Toolkit – WGVS

Information on these toolkits are available on the WGVS website.

4. Third Sector Funding 2021 - Grants and Contracts

4.1 The Third sector play an integral part in Swansea Council meeting its statutory and philanthropic aims. In situations where the Third sector is the best provider of a service, function or facility they are afforded to opportunity of competing for Contracts via the council's procurement process or Grants via individual grant programmes.

4.2 The Council has administered a significant number of Third Sector Grant Funding programmes over the year, some of these have had a particular focus due to the COVID pandemic, and others are longer term.

4.3 An infographic summarising the grants can be found as **Appendix 4** and a summary table is below which shows 288 Grants have been awarded amounting to a total of circa \$1,900,000

Funding stream	Number of third sector projects/organisations supported	Amount allocated
Food Poverty Fund	35 grants awarded	£196,270
Period Dignity Fund	12 grants awarded	£13,793
Men's Shed Fund	7 grants awarded	£25,000
Community, Partnership & Destination grants	23 grants awarded	£93, 271
Rural Development Fund Grants	4 grants awarded	£107,440
Valleys Taskforce grants	3 grants awarded	£99,000
Summer of Fun for Children and Families	77 grants awarded	£331,784
Winter of Wellbeing for Children and Families	93 grants awarded	£471,946
Youth Support Emotional Health & Wellbeing Grant	20 grants awarded	£210,000
Carers Respite Support Grant	9 grants awarded	£154,224
VAWDASV Grants	5 grants awarded	£157,732

4.4 Grant funding administered by other organisations is an important tool which allow third sector organisations to fulfil their aims and objectives and assist the clients they serve in Swansea. An example of this is a third sector group working in Swansea is Faith in Families, one of their pilot projects called 'Inspiring Futures' is an Intensive confidence building and back to work project across Swansea. Over the course of its pilot the achievements included:

- Have supported 77 individuals with back to work support and wellbeing checks
- Provided 156 online training courses
- 47 individuals have gained work relevant certificates
- 215 other certificates have been achieved
- 57 families have been supported to access foodbanks
- 480 wellbeing checks have taken place
- 7 individuals have gone on to attend Health & Social care courses
- Recruited 7 volunteers for local projects, 3 went into employment, 2 into supported employment and 4 went onto university.

Further information on this project is attached as **Appendix 5**.

4.5 Third Sector organisations hold a number of Contracts with Swansea Council, These contracts are procured via the 'Sell to Wales' portal and are won via the Councils procurement process.

5. Integrated Assessment Implications

5.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage
- Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language
- Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

5.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2005 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.

- 5.3 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.
- 5.4 The IIA screening undertaken can be found at **Appendix 6** demonstrated that there are no equality implications for Swansea Council. This is because the report updates on Swansea's Third Sector Compact Agreement and the work to date of the Compact Liaison Group who were formed as part of the updated Swansea Compact Agreement with the Voluntary Sector in 2018.

In line with the agreement, the Council are to be updated annually on the work of the Compact Liaison Group and any development or amendments to the Compact Agreement. The report fulfils this requirement and updates to Compact for 2021.

The Compact Liaison Group is comprised of relevant Council Officers and representatives of the Third Sector elected by their peers via hustings events hosted by SCVS. The Group is not a decision-making body but reviews and advises on policy issues affecting both the Statutory and Third sector. The Compact Liaison Group therefore plays an important part of the Councils Consultation process, and can feed into reviews of Strategies, policies and services via its regular meetings.

The Compact Agreement is a partnership commitment, it is not party to a decision making body but can impact upon the council services in strategic way. The report updates the Agreement and on its subsequent workplan outputs for 2021.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 There are no legal implications.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 There are no financial implications.

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 – Revised Swansea Compact Agreement 2021
- Appendix 2 - Infographic - Third Sector Activity in Swansea
- Appendix 3 – Case Study, SM, Your Voice Advocacy
- Appendix 4 – Infographic - Third Sector Grant Funds 2021
- Appendix 5 – Case Study Faith in Families
- Appendix 6 – IIA Screening Form