

THIRD SECTOR COMPACT AGREEMENT 2021



Background

Swansea Council has a long and productive history of partnership working with the Third Sector in Swansea.

A Compact agreement was made between the parties in 1999. This document has been co-produced in consideration of the Compact as the basis for a Third Sector Strategy to reflect joint working principles between Swansea Council, Swansea Council for Voluntary Services and the wider Third Sector to provide a robust and workable framework for ongoing dialogue between the partners.

Definition

The Third Sector is a term used to describe the range of organisations, groups, associations and enterprises, which fall outside the public and private sectors. These groups include:

- Local and national independent, non-governmental bodies;
- Local and national registered Charities
- Groups established voluntarily by people who choose to organise themselves for benevolent, not for profit purposes;
- Community Businesses - value-driven and motivated by social, cultural or environmental objectives, rather than profit, committed to reinvesting their surpluses to further their social aim

Strategic Context

The Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act places new requirements on Welsh Government along with 43 other public bodies across Wales to think more about the long term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined up approach (*Shared Purpose, Shared Future*).

We will collectively ensure a clear contribution is demonstrated to the seven well-being goals and that the five ways of working principles are applied

Swansea's Corporate Plan 2017/22

As required by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, Swansea Council published its well-being statement before 31st March 2017.

The well-being statement sets out our key priorities. These priorities, known as our 'well-being objectives', are our objectives for improving the environmental, cultural, economic and social well-being of Swansea and Wales.

In order to meet these challenges, we have prioritised six well-being objectives. These are:

- **Safeguarding people from harm** - so that our citizens are free from harm and exploitation;
- **Improving education and skills** - so that every child and young person in Swansea gains the skills and qualifications they need to succeed in life;
- **Transforming our economy and infrastructure** - so that Swansea has a thriving mixed use City Centre and a local economy that will support the prosperity of our citizens;
- **Tackling poverty** - so that every person in Swansea can achieve his or her potential;
- Maintaining and enhancing Swansea's **Natural Resources and Biodiversity** – so that we maintain and enhance biodiversity, reduce our carbon footprint, improve our knowledge and understanding of our natural environment and benefit health and well-being.
- **Transformation and future council development** - so that we and the services that we provide are sustainable and fit for the future.

We will work collectively to ensure a clear contribution to Swansea Council's Corporate Plan and Well-being Objectives and be explicit in the outcomes we are seeking to achieve for citizens

Third Sector Strategic Vision

Along with public sector bodies, the Third Sector is facing increasing challenges many of which hinge on reduced funding and ever-increasing demands on the sector very much linked to the new ways of working within the public service agenda.

Although there are challenges the Sector within Swansea remains vibrant and necessary- delivering quality support and services to community members.

Income, assets and resources

The Sector generates income for Swansea, with Third Sector organisations funding their own operations raising funds from sources as diverse as via philanthropy, trading, and managing their own physical assets.

Where local groups deliver services employing local people, money stays within the Swansea economy.

Volunteering

The Sector has always been reliant on the time given free for no financial reward. The governance and operational elements of third sector groups continue to depend on volunteers.

In a changing landscape, volunteering is an important step for many citizens as a step towards paid work- either as a returner or for those seeking to enter the workplace for the first time.

Demographic changes are having impact on the volunteer base and bring both challenges as well as adding value to the work of groups.

Organisations using volunteers' face the challenge of meeting the increasingly high support needs of those for whom volunteering is a way of moving closer to employment.

When considering utilising volunteers in new models of service delivery it must be recognised that volunteer led delivery is not a no cost option.

Democracy

The Third Sector has a long history of supporting the engagement of local people in local issues and solutions, Third Sector groups are grounded in the '5 Ways of Working'.

Involving the Sector at an early stage in policy development and service design, adopting a co productive approach leads to better outcomes for citizens where community based groups are well placed to provide insight into the unique challenges faced by community members they meet.

Information and communication

In a changing world, it is vitally important that there is clear understanding across the local authority (and other public sector agencies) about what the Third Sector does, its contribution and the benefits of working in partnership.

Clear, accurate and early information about Council led strategy enables the Third Sector to plan and to contribute meaningfully as a supportive partner.

Swansea Council and the Third Sector share a fundamental aim to serve and represent the citizens of Swansea, through working together to create an environment, which encourages healthy communities, community participation, self-reliance, local innovation, stronger local government and a viable, sustainable and flexible Third Sector.

Future Direction and Aspirations

As local government budgets reduce, new ways of working will have to be found to maintain and improve services to residents with less or no direct financial support from Swansea Council.

The Council recognises the innovative nature of the Third Sector and aims to support innovation through the continuation of small funding pots to drive new ideas.

We will work together to secure funding from independent sources and ensure information is shared on any new sources of funding, and promote local groups whenever possible over national or international organisations or businesses.

We will work together to encourage shared services and premises to reduce core organisational costs.

The Council recognises that the Third Sector is growing to fill gaps left in services, to facilitate this growth we will work together to encourage the development of social enterprises, co-operatives, apprenticeships and other wider Third Sector models of delivery.

Objectives

Our objectives have been drawn up in recognition of the benefits that an effective compact can bring.

To achieve our vision and future aspirations and directions the aims of objectives of this agreement will be to work together to:

- Provide a framework for developing shared working and partnership agreements;
- Provide a forum for discussing and developing complementary strategic policies, which deliver best value services for Swansea;
- Promote mutual understanding of each sectors concerns, issues and working practices;
- Encourage and support good citizenship, healthy communities and volunteering;
- Develop consistent good practice in grants funding and procurement arrangements to the third sector, and wherever possible support local groups;
- Develop good practice in joint commissioning processes and procedures;
- Provide a co-ordinated approach to the provision of and planning of services;
- Develop partnership working in relation to the Welsh Government and/or any new regional participation arrangements which it sets up;
- Develop effective coproduction, consultation and communication mechanisms;
- Create an environment for discussing cross boundary issues;
- Identify unmet need and advice on strategic priorities;
- Exchange relevant information;
- Facilitate, promote and influence joined up solutions within the Council, Third Sector and other statutory or non-statutory agencies in Swansea;
- Work together as partners to create and environment to progress the Regional Working agenda;
- Provide governance support to ensure all Third Sector groups have robust constitutions and governing documents, up to date policies and financial arrangements
- Formally recognise and celebrate the contribution and quality services of Third Sector organisations in Swansea

Underpinning Shared Values and Principles

The following underpinning shared values and principles have been developed and agreed with all partners to ensure we build trust as we work together to meet the aims and objectives.

- **Mutual Respect:** To recognise, value and respect the contribution of each of our communities to the people and services in Swansea. To work together to foster a partnership that is based on principles of integrity, transparency, trust and mutual respect.
- **Quality Services:** All partners will work together to create and sustain a safe and healthy living environment through quality, coordinated service delivery, but also allow for innovation and new ideas;
- **Equality And Diversity:** To support the quality of life for all citizens of Swansea and promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination for those who belong to the protected groups outlined in the Equality Act 2010 (and Welsh Regulations 2011) and any implications from the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure (2011);
- **Communication and engagement:** To promote and support user involvement and public consultation on the services provided in Swansea;
- **Partnership working, Joint events and activities:** Either in partnership or independently to provide services in support of the above to a cost effective and high quality standard;
- **Volunteering:** to recognise volunteering as an important contribution and commitment made by local people to their communities. Support develop and promote volunteers' meaningful contributions to service delivery, sustainability and development of projects and initiatives.
- **Development:** To recognise development and training as an essential tool to maintaining high quality service provision, and support those who require training to develop individually and collectively by utilising ways of sharing best practice.

Engagement and Involvement

To ensure the Third Sector and Swansea Council are involved and engaged with revision of the Compact agreement, a series of events and workshop have taken place to gain the sector's views

on how best we can work together to meet the future challenges. Further engagement, co-production and monitoring of the Compact agreement will take place to ensure the sector is fully aware of future plans and opportunities.

Structure

The current structure and scope of consultation, representation and partnership arrangements between the local authority and the Third Sector is already well established and working well in many areas. Many organisations and departments have built up positive partnership and working arrangements. It is not the intention that any new structure should disrupt or duplicate these in any way but to support these ways of working. The following structure aims to involve all stakeholders in determining the strategic policy and direction through:

- Annual Standing Conference; recommended a joint event in partnership with SCVS annual conference
- Annual update report – to the Swansea Council Cabinet
- Third Sector Task and Finish working group - a small group to meet, should the need arise, to discuss and report upon one off, urgent and wider policy and strategy issues.

Commissioning Model and Funding

The Council's approach to commissioning is to ensure there is an overview of all commissioning activity in order to support achievement of corporate objectives in line with the following principles:

- Outcome based for cohorts of people
- A move towards a single contract with a provider
- A move towards a single lead commissioner
- Alignment to the commissioning cycle – plan, do, review, analyse
- Co-production as part of the commissioning cycle, whenever possible.

Swansea Council will publish and update all commissioning opportunities on Sell2Wales. All other funding opportunities through the Compact Fund will be published annually and promoted to the

whole sector. The External Funding Panel will be the decision making body for funding. All systems will work within the Council's political process.

Monitoring and Evaluation

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 would include:

- 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

Conflict Resolution

The Compact Liaison Group shall be the first point of reference for any conflict resolution; here issues can be discussed and agreed between the partners.

Compact Agreement Annual Review

The Purpose of the annual review will be to assess progress on the objectives outlined in the agreement and aid with future direction.

The review conference will be open to all stakeholders from statutory and voluntary sectors. All Third Sector groups will be invited to participate. No group will be excluded by reason of holding a commissioned procured contract or being in receipt of grant aid or not being funded by the partner organisations (it is proposed the annual review be held tandem with SCVS AGM).