



Black & Minority Ethnic Voluntary and Community Organisations Code of Practice

coming together is a beginning

staying together is progress

working together is **SUCCESS**



What is Wolverhampton's Compact?

It is a commitment between the Statutory Sector and the Voluntary and Community Sector in Wolverhampton which aims to ensure we work better together.

The Wolverhampton Compact Partnership came together in 2004 to develop the Wolverhampton Compact it's Codes of Practice and steer their implementation. Local Compacts are based on the Compact between National Government and the Voluntary & Community Sector that was agreed in 1998.

The Wolverhampton Compact Partnership is made up of:



“The development and maintenance of strong and effective working partnerships between statutory organisations and the voluntary sector and community organisations is important in the provision of good quality services for the community. In Wolverhampton we are proud of those working relationships.

The Compact is designed to demonstrate a commitment to open and transparent partnerships. The Compact will apply to all statutory agencies and voluntary and community sector organisations operating within the City; complementing existing joint working arrangements.

By signing up to the Wolverhampton Compact organisations signal their commitment to uphold the 10 jointly developed principles that will underpin Compact working in our city”



Jon Crockett.
Chair,
Wolverhampton Partnership.

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1.0 Introduction

Wolverhampton is one of the most diverse cities in the United Kingdom. The Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities represent over a quarter of the total population of Wolverhampton. The BME Code of Practice is therefore a key element to the way Wolverhampton frames local working between the Statutory Sector and Voluntary and Community Sector.

This Code of Practice sets out an agenda of undertakings for the Statutory and the Voluntary and Community sectors in Wolverhampton. It should be used in conjunction with the Wolverhampton Compact Document. It provides a framework for joint working towards race equality that gives the BME sector an increased voice and more effective support, engagement and resources.

The Compact and Codes of Practice are designed to be a shared vision between the Statutory Sector and the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) that inspires all parties to work together to create a better Wolverhampton.

The BME Code of Practice was developed from consultation with a variety of organisations from the BME Voluntary and Community Sector in Wolverhampton and the wider VCS. The Statutory Sector, Black Country Change Up Consortium and National Compact Champion have informed the context of the BME Code of Practice. This has been through events, workshops and by desktop research, such as the Black Country Summit, the BME Code of Practice Workshop and the Citywide BME Round Table Reference Group.

In developing this Code of Practice we recognise that the emerging commissioning agenda has had an impact on the relationships between all sectors. We also recognise that we need to ensure that we are clear about those relationships, that the expectations of all parties will be different depending on the activities involved. Specifically, the relationships will be different when BME organisations are working with the Statutory Sector and their primary role is to represent their communities of identity, than when they have been commissioned to be a specialist provider of services. When providing services, BME organisations should use this code in conjunction with the Funding, Commissioning and Procurement Code of Practice.

2.0 Definitions

Black and Minority Ethnic (BME): The BME sector consists of any organisation staffed and managed primarily by volunteers of black or minority ethnic backgrounds, or one that is concerned primarily with the needs and welfare of ethnic minority groups. More broadly, this code can cover any group of BME individuals who come together for a common purpose.

1.0 Introduction

Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS): The Voluntary and Community Sector are distinct from the public and private sectors and comprises of not-for-profit organisations, which include voluntary and community organisations.

3.0 Fundamental Principles to the BME Sector

Recognition

To recognise that the BME Sector represents diverse people, communities and families in Wolverhampton including faith groups, refugee and asylum seekers and others. There will also be a range of views dependant on cultural, economic and social background and age, disability and sexual orientation.

Value

Emphasising the important role of the BME Sector in bringing a distinctive value to society enabling BME individuals to contribute to public life and in supporting the creation of a more cohesive and inclusive society.

Support

The Wolverhampton BME Code of Practice will strengthen relationships between statutory agencies and BME VCS organisations. It seeks to enable BME VCS organisations to contribute to policy development and service delivery in Wolverhampton on a more equal footing with statutory partners, and the mainstream Voluntary and Community Sector.

4.0 Wolverhampton Citywide BME Council

The BME Code of Practice was prepared by the Wolverhampton Citywide BME Council, a network of Voluntary and Community Sector organisations and groups across the City of Wolverhampton.

We aim to develop and strengthen the network of BME voluntary and community groups and organisations in Wolverhampton. The Citywide BME Council focuses on enabling and promoting BME representation at all levels in the city-
"Ensuring Inclusive, Cohesive and Engaged Communities"

5.0 The BME Code of Practice

This code aims to make a positive impact on the experience of BME VCS in engaging and working with the Statutory Sector.

5.1 Statutory Sector Undertakings

In supporting this code, the statutory agencies commit to:-

Implement strategies which promote good race relations and equality of opportunity and prevent discrimination in Wolverhampton, with clear management frameworks, objectives and targets and transparent reporting and evaluation

Recognise and support the independence of the BME sector and its right within law to challenge and comment constructively on public policy by consulting appropriately and committing to the principle that challenge and comment should not have adverse financial or other consequences.

Value the work, knowledge, expertise and experience of BME groups and organisations and promote better understanding and awareness of the diversity, independence and contribution of the BME VCS

Work with and support capacity building for BME groups and organisations so that they can effectively deliver their services to BME and wider communities.

Ensure that adequate support, resources and information are in place in order to allow the BME VCS to work effectively with the Statutory Sector.

Use a range of methods to appropriately, engage and consult with the BME VCS and individuals which go with their specific need and circumstance.

Be open and transparent to BME VCS organisations on how the commissioning process works, and to provide clarity for the BME VCS on the conditions under which grants, tendering, procurement and service delivery opportunities are advertised and allocated.

Ensure that 'infrastructure' organisations, within the BME VCS, have fair access to funding allocation, to enable them to support the delivery of joint priorities between the statutory and VCS sectors.

5.2 BME Voluntary and Community Sector Undertakings

In supporting this code, BME Voluntary and Community groups and organisations commit to:

Participate actively within the wider community and playing a full and active role as part of the wider VCS.

Work actively in partnership with the Statutory Sector and wider VCS in tackling social exclusion and promoting race equality and community cohesion.

Work in partnership with the Statutory Sector and wider VCS to identify trends and to monitor the changing needs of BME communities in Wolverhampton and offer solutions in response to those needs.

Encourage co-operation and collaboration and strive to encourage joint working amongst the diverse groups that make up the BME sector.

Actively develop open and dynamic organisations and to make use of appropriate training and development support for trustees, staff and volunteers.

Adopt appropriate quality standards and apply best practice in management and service delivery within BME organisations

5.3 Mutual Undertakings

All sectors agree to recognise that we have individual and complementary roles but a shared responsibility to make sure that the Compact works through:-

Sharing a vision of how the Compact and this Code of Practice can contribute to significant improvements in joint working.

Building mutual trust and confidence between the sectors by contributing to joint initiatives that will transform Wolverhampton.

Creating transparency and openness through the sharing of information and through joint communication.

Reviewing ways of working in order to create full and equal partnerships and a 'level playing field'.

Implementing, supporting and promoting equality as required by the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 and any other equalities legislation.

Taking steps to eradicate individual and institutional racism within our organisations, and observing policies for responding to incidents of harassment.

Regularly reviewing, assessing and providing solutions for introducing and enhancing new services, where appropriate, to the BME and wider communities.

Ensuring that the principles contained within the Compact are written into partners' strategies and plans.

Offering additional support to encourage volunteering amongst BME communities.

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Copies of the Wolverhampton Compact and Codes of Practice are available from:
www.wolverhamptoncompact.co.uk

If you require this document in any other format or community language, please contact Saffi Price at the above address / telephone.