

# **THE BRISTOL COMPACT**

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## **EQUALITY IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE**

The Compact seeks to recognise and value the diversity that exists in society generally and in Bristol specifically. It aims to promote the inclusion of groups and individuals that have in the past been under-represented and excluded, for the benefit both of individuals who make up those groups and communities and neighbourhoods of interest of Bristol as a whole.

This guidance should be used in conjunction with the National Association of Councils for Voluntary Service (NACVS) - 'Toolkit for Developing and Implementing Equal Opportunities Policies' and any other guidance available for the specific promotion of equality. Organisations should also be aware of their responsibilities under both domestic (United Kingdom) and European legislation on equalities issues.

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## **PROMOTING GENUINE PARTNERSHIPS**

The Partners will increase diversity within the partnership by:

- Ensuring consultation of a wide range of individuals and groups when carrying out our decision-making and planning processes.
- Developing training packages to enable the 'partners' to work with people from the equalities communities, including how to use consultation to change policy and practice.
- Making sure that the way the Compact partners make decisions allows **all** partners to have a real influence on policy making and designing, developing and introducing services.
- Ensuring that consultation is genuinely accessible to all disabled people and other equalities groups. (The Partners will encourage groups and individuals to get actively involved in helping to improve services.)
- Continually consulting **all** sections of the community, particularly the equalities community, acknowledging that consultation initiatives in the past have often proved to be inaccessible to some groups and communities.
- Developing and maintaining strong and innovative ways of consulting with children, adults and people from equalities communities who use services provided by the 'partners'. (The Partners will review this

regularly to make sure that the needs and views of different disadvantaged groups are acknowledged and met).

- Recognising the different ways that people from more than one equality community experience oppression, making sure that adequate resources and support are provided to enable them to take part in consultation and planning initiatives.
- Recognising and acknowledging that disabled children and young people from black and minority ethnic communities have specific cultural, language and access needs which could be overlooked if they are placed under one category.
- Ensuring rather than assuming that race equality or disability equality principles will automatically be applied in consultation exercises involving young people
- Recognising and utilising the expertise of adults and young people from organisations, which are run by and for equalities communities.
- Supporting self-organised groups (also known as representative organisations) to develop activities and widen membership to attract older adults and young people from different communities with different expectations and experiences.
- Developing needs-centred, accessible ways of working with young people and children in a meaningful way.
- Developing and using innovative and effective ways to continually consult and involve children and young people who are 'looked after' by the city council.
- Making sure that young people have their views heard separately from those of families and carers, providing independent support if needed.
- Continuing to support forums that represent Looked-After Children and Young People.
- Recognising that adults from equalities communities will have had experience as children and young people, using this expertise and life experience when appropriate.
- Recognising the need to consult disabled adults, young people and others who are cared for, separately from carers, as their experience of discrimination will be different.

- Developing methods of consultation with advocates (people who act on behalf of disabled and other people or groups with communication needs and are told what to say by the individual or group concerned)
- Making sure that consultation is of a consistent standard.

## **ACCESSABILITY**

- The Partners will ensure that the highest standards of access are met, (time, support and formats) in all consultation processes
- The Partners will utilise local interpreting, formatting and translation services in Bristol and will budget for out-of-pocket expenses for individuals that attend working groups, formal consultation initiatives and other meetings.
- The Partners will ensure that they recognise and acknowledge religious, faith and cultural needs when organising meetings and consultation initiatives.
- The Partners will help groups and local communities to develop their knowledge of the policies and procedures of statutory agencies.
- The Partners will help groups to develop their ability to influence policies and procedures through the development and implementation of consultation processes. (This will include working with people from equalities communities by supporting and promoting their skills, self-worth, creativity and enterprise.)
- The Partners will also utilise the city council's consultation strategy and citizens panel to set satisfaction levels and targets.
- The Partners will consult religious and faith groups in the community about developing and introducing appropriate and culturally sensitive services.
- The Partners will support and maintain links with strong local community and voluntary organisations, that recognise the important role and resource of the disability, race, gender, lesbian, gay and bisexual and age equality voluntary sectors.
- The Partners are committed to targeted and strategic community development work with all equalities groups.

## **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

- The Partners will work with organisations that provide services to equalities groups to make sure that they consult and involve equalities groups in their decision-making structures. This will be achieved by putting conditions in funding agreements as well as providing advice and support.
- The city council supports six equalities forums - Disability Equality, Older People's, Women's, Race, Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual and Younger people's Forums. Each Forum is supported either by dedicated staff or a development worker and an equalities officer. The Partners will work with these groups, together with other equalities community organisations, as part of any partnership/Compact consultation exercise and service delivery review.
- The Partners will develop and lead ongoing strategic partnerships with equalities communities as part of community planning and community leadership initiatives. These partnerships will have systems built in for including the views of **all** equalities communities.

## **THE JOINT DECLARATION ON RACIAL EQUALITY**

The modernising agenda for local government and the increasing emphasis on local authorities as leading partners in community planning has highlighted the importance of the council being a model of good practice on equalities. Bristol City Council recognises the influence that council practice can have on other employers and service providers in the city and that this role carries major responsibilities.

In 2000 the city council took the lead on race equality among public authorities in the city by developing the Joint Declaration on Race Equality. Eight partner organisations signed up to this high profile declaration which commits partners to progressing race equality in employment and service delivery and to being able to evidence the results.

The Declaration states:

‘We, the major employers, service providers, public agencies and leaders in Bristol, recognise that oppression, disadvantage and discrimination exist in society, and that people and communities often face simultaneous oppression, which can manifest itself in a number of ways including racial harassment. In our leadership role, we will work to make Bristol a more just and fair community: a community where everyone has an equal chance to learn, work and live free from the fear of discrimination, prejudice and violence. We recognise that we have a responsibility to rebuild confidence and take positive and deliberate action to address the

findings and recommendations of the Macpherson report into the death of Stephen Lawrence.

As organisations, we accept that institutional racism exists, and that we must take visible action to address this, and be held publicly accountable for our actions. A truly effective diverse organisation is one in which the differences individuals bring are valued and used. To achieve this, we must address our ways of working, our personnel practices, and our workforce, in terms of recruitment, retention and progression.

As signatories to this joint declaration, we commit our individual organisations to develop detailed action plans to address the recommendations in terms of workforce, service delivery and organisational cultural issues, which will be subject to public scrutiny on a planned and regular basis. We also commit ourselves to work together to make a real difference, and to overcome barriers that have in the past stopped effective joint action. In particular, we commit ourselves to work through Bristol Partnership Against Racial Harassment to learn real lessons from hard earned experience and achieve substantive change.

We accept the following definition of institutional racism: Institutional racism consists of the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through witting or unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness, and racist stereotyping which disadvantages minority ethnic people’.

This work has similar aims to the CRE’s Leadership Challenge, working on the principle that organisations whose leaders have made high profile commitments to racial equality are more likely to take definite action and achieve real progress.

The Partners as representatives of individual organisations are asked to commit to the spirit and letter of the Joint Declaration and to use it to underpin the development and adherence to equalities strategies within their individual organisations.