

# Milton Keynes Compact

## An effective partnership



[www.milton-keynes.gov.uk](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk)

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## Introduction

### What is a Compact

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)<sup>1</sup> and public sector bodies have often worked together in their local communities. In recognition of such relationships the first national Compact was established in 1998. The Compact was an agreement that sought to outline a way of working effectively, to mutual advantage, for the benefit of communities. It has become a framework for the shared commitments and principles of both the public sector and CSOs. Local areas were also strongly encouraged to develop their own Compact.

### About the Milton Keynes Compact

Milton Keynes established a Compact in 2005 which sought to provide a framework for relationships between the statutory sector (Milton Keynes Council, Police, Fire Service etc) and CSOs. Following a meeting of Milton Keynes Council Cabinet on 26 July 2011 it was resolved that Milton Keynes Council's relationship with CSOs should be considered and a refreshed Compact proposed; essentially to ensure the Milton Keynes Compact is fit for purpose. This initiative was welcomed by the MK Community Local Infrastructure Partnership, the umbrella body for CSOs in Milton Keynes.

### About the National Compact

The coalition government reviewed the national Compact and issued a renewed version in December 2010. It has a focus on outcomes and continues to seek improved partnership working.

## Overarching principles

The new Milton Keynes Compact is an agreement between Milton Keynes Council and Milton Keynes CSOs. It sets out the guidelines for working together in Milton Keynes and develops a core set of shared values and principles. The following principles apply to the new Milton Keynes Compact:

- A desire to see strong, diverse and independent CSOs
- Effective, open and transparent engagement between Milton Keynes Council and CSOs
- An expectation that partners will seek to achieve high quality and positive outcomes
- That equality and fairness will underpin the actions of partners



<sup>1</sup> Civil Society Organisations refers to the voluntary and community sector, formerly known as the Third Sector.

**1. Strong, diverse and independent civil society organisations**

<b>Milton Keynes Council will:</b>	<b>CSOs will:</b>
Respect and value the independence and distinctiveness of CSOs in representing the Milton Keynes community.	Advocate on behalf of the community using a balanced and evidence based approach
Recognise the value of CSOs as providers of services.	Ensure they retain their independence, regardless of relationships financial or otherwise
Support and encourage CSOs to lead innovation and change	Have a strong and coherent focus on strategic leadership
Ensure CSOs are resourced appropriately and fairly where they are helping achieve the council's aims and objectives	

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**2. Effective and transparent engagement**

<b>Milton Keynes Council will:</b>	<b>CSOs will:</b>
Involve and engage with CSOs in the design and development of strategies, policies and services	Respond positively to and engage in consultations and developmental processes
Ensure consultations are meaningful, fully involving the members, users, volunteers of CSOs and other stakeholders	Seek the views of volunteers, members, users and other stakeholders when making representation to the council
Give consideration to feedback where the views of CSOs have been sought	Focus upon positive outcomes and seek to provide evidence based views

<sup>2</sup> Whilst this section defines the responsibilities of each sector it is recognised that this is not always clear cut and responsibilities may sometimes be shared.

### 3. Achieving high quality and positive outcomes

<b>Milton Keynes Council will:</b>	<b>CSOs will:</b>
Operate within the established commissioning framework	Operate within the established commissioning framework
Ensure that sufficient resources are available when undertaking procurement	Ensure they are fit for purpose to deliver effective services and achieve the agreed outcomes
Provide a clear rationale with regard to funding decisions	Provide the evidence of outcomes in an open and transparent way
Seek to minimise bureaucratic burdens in terms of reporting, monitoring and reviewing processes	Apply principles of good governance

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### 4. Equality and fairness

<b>Milton Keynes Council will:</b>	<b>CSOs will:</b>
Work with CSOs to advance equality, eliminate unlawful discrimination and ensure representation and support for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups	Act as a voice for under-represented and disadvantaged groups
Recognise the important role and value of CSOs in promoting social and community cohesion	Promote equality of opportunity and actively work to build stronger communities
Be committed to an approach built upon fairness, accountability and transparency	

## Resolution of disagreements

Through the development and shared experience of new ways of working together it is inevitable that disagreements may arise from time to time. Where possible, disagreements should be settled by the immediate parties involved.

The procedure for the resolution of disagreements on matters relating to the Compact is outlined below; it will not replace the complaints procedures of individual organisations.

**Stage 1:** if an organisation is concerned that another organisation has acted in a way contrary to the Compact they should seek to resolve the difference directly, by contacting the person they believe has breached it, clearly stating the Compact commitment that has not been adhered to. Organisational complaints procedures may come into operation at this point if an outcome satisfactory to both parties is not reached:

**Stage 2:** a mediation panel will hear both sides to ascertain if it is a Compact issue. If it is, the panel will attempt to mediate an agreement between the parties. The panel will be comprised of five people – two representatives from Milton Keynes Council and two from CSOs, with an independent chair. If agreement cannot be reached in this way proceed to Stage 3.

**Stage 3:** the panel can signpost to relevant mediation services. The panel will make a record of the issues and outcome for the purpose of monitoring the effectiveness of the Compact and this procedure.

Ombudsman for Health – [www.ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.ombudsman.org.uk) – free service

Ombudsman for local government – [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk) – free service

Compact Mediation Service – [www.cedrsolve.com/compact](http://www.cedrsolve.com/compact) - fee charged

## Review of the compact

There will be an annual review of the compact which will be undertaken by nominated representatives from Milton Keynes Council and CSOs and managed through the Milton Keynes Community Local Infrastructure Partnership (MKCLIP).

[www.milton-keynes.gov.uk](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk)



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