



Case Study Scenarios – The Highland Compact in Action

Below are two examples of potential scenarios that could lead to a request for mediation through the Highland Compact which aims to enhance Third and Public Sector co-operation:

Example 1

Third Sector Perspective

You work for a Third Sector organisation and you are currently trying to access a range of assistance in kind from a public sector body. You now find that the person you have to deal with in the organisation is really obstructive and seems to try everything possible to prevent you from accessing help. You find his/her attitude very difficult to deal with – s/he makes you feel that you are making unreasonable demands when all you are doing is asking for the support you thought had been agreed. You are becoming increasingly frustrated with the officer you have to deal with who seems to you unnecessarily bureaucratic and keeps asking for more and more detailed information before committing to anything. You have become so exasperated with him/her that you have approached his/her manager direct to try to get things moving.

Public Sector Perspective

You work for a Public Sector organisation. You are currently working with a representative from a third sector organisation to help them access a range of assistance in kind. Your organisation has just introduced a new process for administering funding in kind, regarding the use of buildings and provision of photocopying. You have new protocols to follow as your organisation needs to quantify all forms of assistance provided. The third sector representative seems particularly demanding, turning up without prior warning and assuming that you can just drop everything to attend to his/her needs. S/he doesn't seem to have any appreciation of how busy you are, appears to be getting angry and has started going direct to managers instead of speaking to you.

Example 2

Public Sector Perspective

You commission services for a public sector organisation. You recently attended a meeting with a representative from a small third sector childcare organisation to discuss the purchase of a new service. You felt that the representative was reluctant to provide what you were requesting and did not seem to understand that your organisation is funding them to meet the



requirements of an agreed contract specification, rather than giving them a grant for them to provide the service in the way they have in the past.

Third Sector Perspective

You work for a small third sector childcare organisation. You recently attended a meeting with a representative of a public sector organisation to discuss the service your organisation provides. You felt that the person you spoke to had no real understanding of your issues. Your staff have worked with you for years and are all dedicated to the work they do and will not respond well to being told that they have to change the way they work. You feel that this is your area of expertise and the public sector organisation should allow you to work in the way you have found to be successful in the past. You resent what you perceive as their attempts to micro-manage the service you have agreed to provide.

The role of the Compact Champion

In both of the examples it is clear that there is a lack of understanding about each other's perspective and organisational constraints and requirements. The Compact Champion would not be expected to provide advice or make direct suggestions as to how to resolve this, but would take on the role of impartial mediator to assist both parties to have a structured, solution focussed discussion enabling them to increase their understanding and explore new ways to work together more effectively, restoring relations within the partnership. Mediation is voluntary and therefore both parties are required to agree to mediation prior to it commencing.

If it is agreed that mediation is appropriate, a Compact Champion will be identified by the Lead Officer (See Compact Mediation Approach). The Champion will contact both organisations to ensure that they are happy to participate in mediation and arrange a time and venue for this to take place. Separate individual meetings will first take place between the Compact Champion and each organisational representative prior to a joint meeting.

Following mediation, participants will be encouraged to draw up an agreement of their discussion. The agreement will focus upon actions for both parties to take forward. The agreement, as is the whole mediation process, is voluntary.