

REPORT TO:	Tameside Strategic Partnership Board
DATE:	5 th June 2009
REPORTING OFFICER:	Councillor Brenda Warrington, Joint Chair of the Cross Sector Policy Group Tony Okotie, Director, Tameside Third Sector coalition and Joint Chair of the Cross Sector Policy Group
SUBJECT:	Annual Report of the Cross Sector Policy Group
REPORT SUMMARY:	This report outlines the background and progress of the Cross Sector Policy Group. The group (formerly the Compact group) aims to bring about an effective working relationship between the third sector (voluntary, community and faith groups) and other sectors and partners to the benefit of Tameside communities.
RECOMMENDATIONS:	It is recommended that the Board: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Note and comment on the report• Continue to support the work of the group
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:	None.
POLICY IMPLICATIONS:	The work of the group directly supports the delivery of the LAA and Community Strategy specifically around volunteering.
NEED FOR DECISION:	None.
LINKS TO COMMUNITY STRATEGY:	The work of the group contributes significantly across all aims of the community strategy but specifically to the achievement of the Supportive aim.

Cross Sector Policy Group

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2008/09

1.0 Background

- 1.1 This is the first annual report to the Tameside Strategic Partnership from the Cross Sector Policy Group. The group (formerly the Compact group) aims to bring about an effective working relationship between the third sector (voluntary, community and faith groups) and other sectors and partners to the benefit of Tameside communities. This first report aims to provide an overview of the sector, current activity and work streams for the year ahead, and headline progress against volunteering action plan agreed by the TSP board in December 2008.

2.0 About the Cross Sector Policy Group

- 2.1 The groups aim, to bring about an effective working relationship between the third sector and other sectors, will be achieved by:
- Building the capacity of third sector organisations (TSOs - voluntary and community organisations) and of the sector as a whole
 - Working together on strategic/policy issues related to the third sector
 - Working together towards the achievement of the Tameside Community Strategy
 - Promoting sharing of skills and knowledge, and joint learning opportunities
- 2.2 Nationally, the Compact was established in 1998 as an agreement between Government and the voluntary and community sector in England. It recognises shared values, principles and commitments and sets out guidelines for how both parties should work together. The Tameside Compact Group was set up in 2002, following the successful launch of the local Compact in April 2002. Its function was to oversee the implementation of the Compact, and to further develop the Codes of Practice, as set out in the national documents. The name of the group was later revised to that currently used, the Cross Sector Policy Group in recognition of a change in focus from concentration on process issues, to dealing with implementation and practice.
- 2.3 Membership of the group includes senior officers from a number of strategic partners (TMBC, NHS Tameside and Glossop, Fire Service and GMP) and representatives from Tameside third sector organisations. It is co-chaired by the Cabinet Deputy for Personal and Community Services (Cllr Brenda Warrington) and the Director of Tameside Third Sector Coalition (Tony Okotie).

3.0 Overall progress

- 3.1 The Cross Sector Policy Group monitors its performance at the highest level against 2 performance indicators from the National Indicator Set (NI6, volunteering and NI7, environment for a thriving third sector). NI6 has been adopted in the Tameside LAA. In addition, the LAA includes a local measure, volunteering by older people.
- 3.2 2008-09 produced baseline data for the national measures:

		Baseline
NI6	Participation in regular volunteering	18.1% (provisional)
NI7	Environment for a thriving third sector	20.1%

However, the contribution of the third sector (voluntary, community and faith groups, and social enterprises) is implicit in a large number of other LAA targets.

3.3 The partnership has established an overall action plan that sets out activities towards achieving these measures. The action plan (included at appendix 1) sets out 5 high level objectives:

1. Engagement with, and Involvement of, the third sector in local partnerships and decision making
2. Funding and commissioning
3. Supporting volunteering
4. Helping to build the capacity of third sector organizations
5. Promoting and embedding the Compact

4.0 Overview of activity and key issues

4.1 The general state of the sector

In the autumn of 2008, Office of the Third Sector (located within the Cabinet office) commissioned ipsos MORI to undertake a National Survey of Third Sector organisations (NSTSO) for the first time to inform NI7. In total over 104,000 TSOs across all 149 single and two-tier authorities in England were invited to participate in the survey. There was a high response rate nationally – 47% (over 48,900 organisations responded). 155 responses were received from Tameside organisations, a response rate of 46%.

4.2 The survey was designed to capture third sector organisation's (TSOs) views on a range of relevant local issues, which together might contribute to a supportive environment in which they could thrive and contribute to the quality of life in an area. These include:

- The strength of local partnership arrangements
- The availability of local resources – including human resources (volunteers, employees, trustees), and financial, management and other support services
- Funding opportunities and relationships (grants and contracts)
- Opportunities to influence local decisions
- The support available from other (second tier or umbrella) third sector organisations.

4.3 The headline findings show that:

- 30% of Tameside TSOs responding were very or fairly satisfied with the support available to their organisation in the local area, compared to 22% nationally
- 23% of Tameside TSOs responding reported that they currently get support from other third sector organisations (such as T3SC and VCT), compared to 18% overall.
- There were 659 paid employees working in Tameside TSOs, a ratio of 3.08 per 1,000 population. This is the lowest 'per capita' number of third sector employees in a Greater Manchester borough. The national average was 12.69 per 1,000 population, and in GM only Manchester exceeds the national average (at 13.97).

However, 659 employees still represents approximately 1% of the overall number of employees in Tameside.

- In Tameside there are 1.56 registered TSOs per 1,000 population, against a national average of 3.38. Tameside's score ranks it 9th in Greater Manchester, with only Wigan lower.
- Looking at trustees, the survey found 1,232 trustees of TSOs in Tameside, 5.75 per 1,000 population. This ranks Tameside 9th of the 10 GM boroughs, national average 15.31.
- In Tameside, the survey found a 'churn' of 4% of new organisations registered, and 4% dissolved in the previous 12 months, both higher than the national average of 3% and 3% respectively.

4.4 Detailed results from the NSTSO were released in mid May, and the Cross Sector Policy group will shortly be assessing these. However, the survey only sampled TSOs that were registered charities or from a range of other incorporated organisational types including Community Interest Companies (CICs). The Cross Sector Policy group believe that much of the third sector activity was not captured in this survey - in Tameside an important part of the third sector are small community groups, which are 'under the radar' in this sample and not included. The results may, therefore, paint an unrealistic picture of the sector in Tameside.

4.5 T3SC are therefore undertaking a further survey in the borough, with a key focus of demonstrating:

- the size and shape of the sector (number of organisations; number of employees; number of volunteers, income streams)
- the economic contribution of the sector (income, value of volunteering)
- the perceptions of the support from local organisations like T3SC and relationships with statutory partners

4.6 This survey will include non-registered voluntary groups (those described as 'under the radar' above). This work, to be published in the early summer (and to be repeated in 12-24 months), will provide further information in relation to NI7 which will inform the work of the Cross Sector Policy Group. Where possible, the survey is asking the same questions as the national survey, to allow comparisons.

5.0 Engagement with, and Involvement of, the third sector in local partnerships and decision making

5.1 There are over 800 voluntary, community and faith groups active in the borough, and Tameside Voice is the structure for them to be involved in decision making locally. Voice, and its associated networks, are facilitated by T3SC. Through Voice, the sector elects 24 representatives to the TSP and thematic networks.

5.2 Over the last six months T3SC have been working with Voice members to further develop Voice so that it meets the need of the sector, and improves the quality and reach of representation from the sector, enabling organisations to better articulate the contribution that the sector makes to local quality of life.

5.3 The thematic networks facilitated by T3SC as part of Voice (for example the Health and Social Care network; TOPAG, the older peoples network; BME network) also provide

opportunity for strategic partners to consult with 'communities of interest' around specific themes and issues. Over the last year, these networks were consulted on 30 separate issues, and over 150 groups are actively involved with Voice and thematic networks. The networks are an important mechanism under the 'duty to involve' introduced in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

- 5.4 In the NSTSO, 20.1% of Tameside TSOs responding replied that statutory bodies had a positive or very positive influence on their organisations' success, the key question being used to inform NI7. The level of Tameside response is higher than the national average (16.2%) and ranks Tameside 5th out of the 10 Manchester boroughs (Bolton was highest, 23.2%, Trafford lowest with 10.4%).
- 5.5 Over the winter the Children and Young People's thematic partnership undertook a self assessment looking at its engagement and commissioning with the third sector, with an action plan resulting. Similar work with other thematic partnerships will be progressed by the TSP link officers group during the next 12 months.

6.0 Funding and commissioning

- 6.1 Funding is always a key concern for voluntary and community groups, and the Cross Sector Policy group has a role in creating an environment where TSOs can thrive.
- 6.2 Activities over the last year have included working with commissioners across NHS Tameside and Glossop and TMBC, to help them understand the drivers and challenges faced by TSOs; commissioners delivering joint training to TSOs about the procurement process; and a 'Commissioning Marketplace' event bringing TSOs and commissioners together to improve understanding and explore opportunities.
- 6.3 There is currently low provision of services delivered by the Third Sector per head of population (as outlined in the National Third Sector Survey). Recommendations from the recent DoH Health Inequalities National Support team visit to Tameside included the creation of a market development strategy for the Third Sector. The Cross Sector Policy group will shortly be discussing how it can support and enable this, and would ask for the support of the TSP board in undertaking this.
- 6.4 In the last year, T3SC has helped third sector organisations secure over £1m of funding, much of it inward investment into the borough. Other strategic actions have been to support the market development activities within the POPPs project and the introduction of the Innovation Fund, under the Working Neighbourhoods fund, to allow small TSOs to develop activities that support the worklessness agenda.
- 6.5 The Putting People First agenda looks at transforming adult social care and will have major implications for the way individuals engage with services and in so doing, make a real difference to their lives. How this will affect the commissioning and options of services that are available is not yet clear but there is a clear need for TMBC and the Third Sector to continue to work together. By doing this we can develop the local market to ensure there are options available for them to access. A Changing Landscapes conference in July 2009 will involve discussions with the sector and partners to clarify the agenda and to look at the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead for all. Personalisation is about whole system change, not about change at the margins, and will

need the energy and enthusiasm of users, other commissioners and TSOs to ensure there is a vibrant market that will offer exciting and fulfilling opportunities for people.

7.0 Supporting volunteering

- 7.1 The borough's vision for volunteering, along with progress on the volunteering action plan, were presented and endorsed by the TSP board in December 2008. The Cross Sector Policy Group manages the monitoring and delivery of volunteering action plan. Our vision for volunteering is that *"We want to foster stronger communities in which people are actively involved and able to make a positive contribution through volunteering. Communities where everyone has the motivation and opportunity to volunteer, and are supported in their action to have a positive experience that is of benefit to everyone"*
- 7.2 The volunteering action plan contains the following high level objectives:
- Increase the number of people regularly volunteering in Tameside
 - Ensure volunteers have a positive volunteering experience
 - Improve the capacity of organisations in Tameside to support volunteering
 - Maximise the wider benefits of volunteering to deliver our Community Strategy aims
- 7.3 Activities over the last year have included a successful series of events to support National Volunteers week in June. In order to support the vision for volunteering, Tameside Strategic Partnership asked Volunteer Centre Tameside to develop a Compact Code on Volunteering for the borough. After wide consultation with over 200 voluntary and statutory organisations the code was developed and adopted by TSP in December 2008.
- 7.4 Following TSP Board a Volunteer Development Group has been established, with a core membership of Tameside Council, Volunteer Centre Tameside, T3SC, the Primary Care Trust and Vinvolved, with other organisations being invited to attend as necessary. The aim of the group is to co-ordinate, develop and monitor the comprehensive set of actions within the Volunteering Action Plan, while focusing on the following key actions:
- The measurement and monitoring of the level of volunteering in Tameside
 - Development of a marketing campaign to highlight both the existing volunteering work going on in the Borough and the opportunities to volunteer in the future
 - How volunteering can be developed under the Worklessness agenda
 - Increasing the number of organisations signing up to the Compact Code on Volunteering
 - Production of a Council wide Volunteering Policy which will include the development of an Employee Supported Volunteering scheme for Tameside Council staff
 - Production of a Volunteering Strategy for the Borough

8.0 Helping to build the capacity of third sector organizations

- 8.1 A core role for both T3SC and Volunteer Centre Tameside is to build the capacity of third sector organizations. This not only involves helping them secure funding; it includes providing support on business planning, governance, charity law and legal structures;

recruiting and managing volunteers and paid staff; training for management committees and boards; support to chief officers within TSOs on leadership. In the last year, T3SC worked directly providing capacity building support to over 100 local TSOs. VCT also delivered organisational support on Volunteer Management to 85 volunteer recruiting organisations.

- 8.2 As well as this operational activity, there are a number of strategic actions being undertaken through the Cross Sector policy group partners, including
- Developing a social enterprise strategy jointly with the Economic Development Unit, TMBC, to help provide increased recognition and support for social enterprises (a legitimate part of the third sector). This strategy will be presented to TELP for endorsement.
 - T3SC undertaking a TSO 'premises needs' assessment and 'voluntary sector village' concept (described in more detail in 10.5)
 - Developing a borough wide third sector strategy

9.0 Promoting and embedding the Compact

9.1 The idea of the Compact still remains elusive to many, especially smaller voluntary and community groups. Through Tameside Voice, T3SC will undertake a series of events and information briefings within national Compact week (November) to raise the profile of the Compact locally, and the benefits it brings to the relationship between the third sector and partners.

9.2 In addition to the overarching Compact document, two additional codes of practice have been developed in the last year – the Volunteering Code and a Funding and Commissioning Code.

10.0 The third sector and the economic downturn

10.1 Government's action plan, *Real help for Communities: volunteers, charities and social enterprises*, launched in February 2009, outlined the impact that the recession is having on the third sector. This can be summarised as:

- Demand for services provided by third sector organisations is increasing. Particular service areas are experiencing very high increases in demand – notably those relating to housing and debt, employment and mental health. Other services will need to act pre-emptively to maintain downward pressure on property crime, drugs and alcohol and domestic violence;
- Small and medium-sized community organisations that may be best placed to provide responsive advice and support services in deprived communities, are least able to secure funding.
- A likely overall increase in volunteer numbers
- An overall decline in income and the need to consider collaborative working arrangements.

10.2 T3SC have recently produced a 3rd sector recession resilience action plan in response, and this has been endorsed by the Cross Sector Policy Group. Examples of increased demand that TSOs are facing locally include Tameside CAB: a 51% year on year increase (Q3 08-09 compared to 07-08), with 989 new clients seen – over 330 more than the same period in the previous year. Employment enquiries are the largest growth area,

up 91.7% on the previous year. Within the category of debt enquiries, the areas of unsecured personal loans, catalogue debt, bankruptcy and hire purchase have all seen sharp rises in demand.

- 10.3 In the six month period November 2008 to April 2009, Volunteer Centre Tameside has seen a 50% increase in the number of prospective volunteers seeking Volunteer Brokerage compared to the previous year. (657 individuals 08-09, compared to 438 07-08). The number of unemployed people seeking volunteering opportunities rose from 79 to 172 over the same period the previous year. VCT also report that the numbers of referrals from Job Centre Plus, Work Solutions and Shaw trust have doubled in the same period.
- 10.4 The 3rd Sector Recession Resilience Action plan recognises that there are already a significant range of activities to support the sector to help it play its role in working with communities affected by the recession. These include many of the activities already mentioned, plus:
- T3SC delivering a range of 'recession survival' sessions for TSOs in conjunction with TMBC EDU
 - Working Neighbourhood Fund: Innovation Fund and Co-commissioning projects for Timebanking and developing the role of Credit Unions
 - Hardship fund: To be launched by government in June for TSOs affected by the recession. £20m in total, but currently unclear about allocation or application process.
 - Increased collaboration between local TSOs: examples include TSOs working on the 'Supporting People' programme considering forming a consortium together to bid for future services; T3SC, Volunteer Centre Tameside and St Peters Partnership forming a consortium (TLC – Tameside Learning Consortium) to work together on project delivery; Groundwork and St Peters Partnership working together to develop training and support in priority neighbourhoods
 - Targeted Support Fund: Tameside will receive £229,143, which will be administered by the Community Foundation Greater Manchester. The fund launched at the start of May, with grants of £10,000 - £40,000 available for established organizations with an annual income of £30,000 - £250,000. The TSP is represented on the fund panel by Cllr Roy Oldham, chair. Funding is aligned with three themes:
 - Information, advice and guidance (housing, financial, debt and legal)
 - Employment and employability (training and support related to finding employment)
 - Health and wellbeing (mental health, relationship breakdown, counselling, domestic violence and substance abuse)
- 10.5 However, the Recession Resilience action plan also acknowledges that more needs to be done. One long standing and strategic idea is for a 'voluntary sector village' or shared, sector owned, building within Tameside, and the recession is now helping to focus the thinking of a number of medium sized local organisations around this theme. The need for larger, or better quality, premises is reported as a continuing, limiting, factor by a number of organisations – for example in the NSTSO only 16% of Tameside respondents reported that they were very or fairly satisfied with the office space they had to operate in. A handful of larger, local organisations that work across the borough are now actively

beginning to consider how they can work together to secure joint premises, and see this as a significant opportunity to:

- reduce costs
- collaborate on service delivery in future
- improve the quality of environment for staff, volunteers and clients / service users
- increase capacity for service delivery
- Improve environmental sustainability by reducing energy costs and carbon footprint

10.6 T3SC are currently beginning to map premises needs, the support available from partners and potential funding and ownership models, in recognition that shared premises would enable the sector to be better equipped to deal with any future downturn.

11.0 Summary

11.1 The third sector in Tameside is still quite young and developing, but its contribution is becoming more important, and more apparent, under the Comprehensive Area Assessment regime. The Cross Sector Policy Group is continuing to evolve, developing more strategic actions with a clearer performance and success focus, to ensure that the third sector can flourish and further contribute to quality of life in the borough through good relationships with other partners.

Appendix

Cross Sector Policy group action plan 2009-10: Creating an environment for a thriving third sector

Work strand	Action	Lead person / agency	Target completion date	Progress / notes
1. Engagement with, and Involvement of, the third sector in local partnerships and decision making	1.1 Support to Tameside Voice, the 3 rd sector 'network of networks'	T3SC– Ben Gilchrist	Ongoing	Ongoing
	1.2 Tameside Voice structures and processes reviewed and revised as 'fit for purpose', including new proposals for election of reps to TSP*	T3SC – Ben Gilchrist	May 2009	'new Voice' relaunch meeting held 12 th May – 60 attendees from TSOs, good feedback
	1.3 Training / briefings provided to sector organisations on LAA / CAA process	T3SC – Ben Gilchrist	September 2009	'new Voice' meeting included session on CAA; plan to brief all thematic networks in hand
	1.4 Improved induction, training and support processes in place for 3 rd sector reps to TSP and partnerships*	T3SC – Ben Gilchrist		T3SC undertaking pilot with NAVCA, May-June
	1.5 Improved tracking of issues raised by 3 rd sector through 'Voice', and responses and action that results*	T3SC – Ben Gilchrist	July 2009	Tracking process being developed
	1.6 Thematic partnerships to undertake 'self audit' of involvement of third sector	TSP / Link officers group	March 2010	CYPSP has already piloted this (December 2008)
	1.7 Present annual report on activity of Cross Sector Policy group to TSP	T3SC - Tony Okotie / TMBC -Adam Allen	June 2009	Completed
2. Funding and commissioning	2.1 Agree and embed 'Funding and commissioning code of good Practice'	TMBC – Phil Spence PCT	July 2009	Currently with TMBC legal
	2.2 Monitor progress of Commissioning Action Group plan	T3SC – Liz Windsor Welsh		Ongoing

	2.3 Develop proposals for a 'Big Tameside Fund' to free up dormant trust fund assets	TMBC – Phil Spence	March 2010	Presentation to Cross Sector Policy group by CGFM October '08; Outline proposals from T3SC received by TMBC May '09
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	2.4 Improve access to funding information through developing an online funding information portal	GMVSS / T3SC	June 2009	Portal to launch summer '09
3.Supporting volunteering	3.1 Ensure effective implementation of Tameside volunteering action plan	VCT – Sue Vickers / TMBC – Adam Allen	Ongoing	Ongoing
	3.2 Develop borough wide Volunteering strategy	VCT – Sue Vickers / TMBC – Adam Allen	March 2010	TBC
4.Helping to build the capacity of third sector organizations <i>(and where appropriate building capacity of communities as a way of supporting 'nascent' TSOs)</i>	4.1 Development of social enterprise strategy for Tameside, identifying needs and availability of social enterprise support	TMBC – Lisa Hoyland	June 2009	Working group developing draft – to TELP end June
	4.2 T3SC support and development service	T3SC	Ongoing	Ongoing
	4.3 VCT support to volunteering involving organisations	VCT	Ongoing	Ongoing
	4.4 Undertake local 'state of the sector' research to help understand current sector needs and challenges	T3SC	June 2009	Survey 'in the field'; results summer '09
	4.5 Develop short-term package of 'recession support' available locally for 3 rd sector organisations	T3SC / TMBC EDU	June 2009	1 st session delivered, recession resilience action plan developed
	4.6 Map asset / building needs of 3 rd sector organisations	T3SC – Tony Okotie TMBC – Phil Spence	September 2009	GMCVO agreed to lead mapping work for T3SC – specification agreed, work to start in June
5. Promoting and embedding the Compact	5.1 Campaign to raise awareness of Compact (within 3 rd sector and statutory sector partners)	T3SC	November 2009	TBC
	5.2 National compact week event	Cross Sector Policy group	November 2009	TBC
	5.3 Increase active membership of Cross Sector Policy group from 3 rd sector and TSP partner organisations	T3SC	September 2009	Ongoing: Groundwork attending, commitment from GMP

Key: * links to T3SC operational plan