Making third sector engagement work
Experience from the LSC Working Together Third Sector Advisory Group

- The Group benefited from leadership, authority and active encouragement from the top – the Chair, National Council, Chief Executive and senior executives gave a remit with permission to intervene and hold people to account.

- The Working Together Group was established as a sub-group of the National Council’s Equalities and Diversity Committee. A National Council member with a third sector background was appointed as Chair.

- The membership of the Group was carefully selected by an open process in order to provide a breadth of experience, and to ensure respect and recognition by the wider third sector.

- The Group identified a small number of key issues and persistently raised them in every relevant forum until they were acted upon.

- The Group focused on the key issues, bringing the right, sometimes senior, people to the group to be challenged about what needed to be done, with persistent follow-up of actions.

- A responsible person acted as the interface between the LSC and the third sector and was located centrally and strategically, with direct access to senior executives in order to influence and co-ordinate information and action, with a dedicated budget to directly resource materials.

- There was an extension of third sector championing roles throughout LSC in specific job roles, from a Director on Management Group to regional and local-level roles.

- The Group’s credibility across LSC was based on evidence from delivery built from the third sector strategy and was demonstrated for example through Working Together publications of outcomes, including example case studies.

- Robust brokering by the Working Together Group members back into the third sector over the high-profile issues about the Compact – only possible as relationships already established with LSC and across the third sector.

- Direct engagement with Ministers in BIS (previously DIUS), DCSF and OTS.

Dame Mary Marsh
Chair, Working Together Third Sector Advisory Group to LSC National Council
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