



**AVON &  
SOMERSET**  
POLICE & CRIME  
COMMISSIONER

## VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL ENTERPRISE SECTOR CHARTER

Please send any comments on this charter to: [pcc@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk](mailto:pcc@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk)

## ***Purpose***

This agreement plays a crucial part in strengthening and building on the existing relationship between my role in office as the Police and Crime Commissioner for the Avon and Somerset area and the voluntary and community sector organisations I engage with.

The role of this sector has never been more important.

As Police and Crime Commissioner I aim to deliver improved, more responsive public services, supporting the needs of the diverse communities in the area I cover which can only be done with the help of the third sector.

March 2014

**The Office of the Avon & Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner**

## ***Introduction***

This charter acknowledges that to serve the local community to the best of our ability everyone needs to work effectively together as partners. This means that from the smallest community group to the largest public sector organisation everyone has a part to play and a contribution to make in supplying the best possible services and activities for the people and communities of the Avon and Somerset policing area.

By providing a framework for both public and voluntary sectors to follow; it contributes to greater understanding between partners who are often of unequal size, sophistication and influence. It strengthens collaboration, whilst respecting each other's mutual rights as independent bodies. It will also encourage the sharing of information of those they represent; opening the channels of communication amongst sectors across the Avon and Somerset area.

### Our commitment to you:

- We have different levels and forms of accountability and are answerable to a range of stakeholders; however we will always aim to be open, transparent and objective in our decision making, taking into account the needs of the community we serve and ensuring the right services are being delivered in the right way to the right places.
- We will act with honesty and integrity and endeavour to foster trust and confidence in the service we provide.
- We will always ensure our services are fit for purpose whilst valuing diversity and encouraging innovative and responsive ideas and trying new solutions to resolve problems.
- We will break down/remove barriers which inhibit the ability to try something new or just get in the way of sensible decisions being made. For example, payments in advance.
- We recognise your independence and encourage you to constructively challenge policy and procedures irrespective of any funding relationship that might exist.
- We respect and embrace the recommendations made from the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 and will ensure that consideration is given to the economic, social and environmental improvements a potentially procured service can make to the communities in which they serve.

## ***Procuring services/funding***

### Our commitment to you

The Office of the PCC has funding constraints and regular funding will not always be available to support the voluntary and community sector.

Where funds are available these will be used to deliver services effectively and efficiently in order to meet the needs of the community.

We will:

- Publicise information about our grants openly with a clear criteria and critical dates for applications
- Ensure all eligible organisations have a fair and equal opportunity to apply
- Ensure the application process is proportionate to the value and length of the funding
- Provide unsuccessful applicants with constructive feedback and the opportunity to ask for further information regarding this
- Ensure failure to gain success in a funding round will not prohibit applicants from reapplying, unless this is part of the criteria and made clear
- Publish a list of successful applicants
- Agree payment terms in a timely manner and ensure these are adhered to
- Consider quarterly payments in advance of expenditure when there is a clear business case that will be subject to agreed performance monitoring deliverable
- Ensure that the outcomes set will be fair, achievable and clear
- Negotiate fairly any amendments to agreed delivery times and/or outcomes

### Your commitment to us

When applying for funding we expect you to:

- Meet the priorities of the Avon & Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner
- Ensure you are eligible to apply and have the ability to deliver on promises made
- Dedicate time to attend regular relevant meetings
- Be able to monitor outcomes and demonstrate overall results and value for money
- Be clear on accountability and have relevant robust finance procedures in place, proportionate to the level of funding requested
- Have the processes in place to evaluate successes

## ***Consultation***

### Our commitment to you

We recognise that effective consultation often leads to the design and development of more effective policies and services for communities and residents.

We commit to:

- Provide adequate time for responses with a consultation period proportionate to the level of change, scale and impact on the voluntary and community sector, service users and communities. Wherever possible we will consult on large, complex, strategic and high impact proposals for up to 12 weeks and for others a minimum of 4 weeks
- Ensure that all those who wish to do so can access consultations in a suitable format and can

contact staff in the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner in a way that suits them

- Ensure voluntary and community sector umbrella organisations are notified of the consultations as soon as they are announced so they can cascade information in a manner most suitable to the organisations they represent
- Make our motivations for consultation clear and give due regard to responses prior to any decision making

#### Your commitment to us

- Make time to take part in consultations for relevant subject areas
- Submit responses that accurately record the views and opinions of the represented group
- For umbrella organisations - provide clarity on whose views are represented, including knowledge, experience or evidence based views and how strongly they are held
- Voice the specific needs, interests or contributions of equality groups
- Maintain the confidentiality of consultation responses as appropriate and respect all obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

## ***Volunteering***

We recognise that volunteering contributes to the wellbeing of people and communities in Avon & Somerset. Volunteers commit their time and energy to benefit society by providing services and activities.

#### Our commitment to you

We undertake to value the contribution of volunteers; supporting high standards in training, management and deployment. We support and promote volunteering opportunities within the remit of the Office of the Avon & Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner.

#### Your commitment to us

- Abide by the terms and conditions set down by the individual volunteering scheme
- Maintain the confidentiality of information disclosed as appropriate and respect all obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Make time to attend training courses as required
- Submit expenses applications in a timely manner