



Bradford District Assembly
*the voluntary and
community sector together*

Bradford & District Safer Communities VCS Forum Terms of Reference

1. Mission / Role of the Forum

The Bradford & District Safer Communities Forum will improve engagement between the Voluntary and Community Sector and the Safer Communities Partnership.

The Forum will provide an arena for discussion and debate and have voice and influence within the strategic decision making partnerships.

The Forum and its members are committed to developing and maintaining services to support prevention and intervention. We will raise the profile of the VCS and highlight areas of expertise and provision.

Members and representatives will bring knowledge, skills and expertise to the Forum gained through working with the Voluntary and Community Sector and the diverse range of communities within it.

The Forum aims to bring together VCS organisations, groups and interested individuals in the District with an interest in the following areas:

- Domestic violence, sexual abuse
- Drugs and Alcohol Services
- Safer neighbourhoods and roads
- Anti social behaviour, hate crime
- Probation, offender management
- Youth provision
- Community Development services

2. Aims and objectives

Communication and information

The forum will develop and improve effective channels of communication between the voluntary and community sector (VCS) and the Safer Communities Partnership. The Forum will provide an arena within the VCS for information exchange, meaningful consultation and participation opportunities. We will raise the profile of the VCS and highlight areas of expertise and provision.

Representation

Representatives from the Forum will be s/elected to represent the Forum on various strategic bodies and related sub-groups.

3. Membership

Full membership of the Forum is open to Voluntary and Community Sector non-statutory groups and organisations in the Bradford District with stated social aims and objectives. Each group or organisation is entitled to one vote in elections etc.

Applications for membership will be subject to approval by the Forum Steering Group.

Membership should as much as possible include a balance of representation in terms of diversity. Where voting is required each member organisation will have one vote. Quorum: 5 member votes. Any decision can be carried by a rule of majority.

4. Structure

i. Forum Steering Group

The group will be responsible for the development and activities of the forum. The group will consist of member organisations, elected officers and community representatives.

ii. Forum Sub-Groups

Members with an interest in particular areas can form specialist task groups subject to approval from the Forum Steering Group.

The wider membership of the Forum and external partners will be invited to participate in themed meetings and briefings. The membership will have access to regular feedback from Forum representatives and the minutes of forum meetings.

5. S/election of Officers

Elected Officers will serve for a term of 3 years from the date of Election.

6. Protocols

The Forum will comply with the Bradford Compact and the Voluntary and Community Sector Shared Strategy.

The Forum will implement the CLG's (**C**ommunities and **L**ocal **G**overnment) Principles of Representation outlined below;

1. **Accountability** – clearly defined responsibilities for all decisions and actions
2. **Equality** – place equality, diversity and inclusiveness at the core of what you do
3. **Leadership** – the sector's representatives will need to think and act strategically
4. **Openness** – be as open as possible in all your dealings and relationships
5. **Purpose** – be clear about the local sector's objectives and support them with a strong evidence base
6. **Sustainability** – ensuring the continuation of the collective voice
7. **Values** – identify and build on the values of the local sector

7. Declaration of Interest

Forum members may occasionally have a specific interest in the matters under discussion. When these matters involve financial gain and/or interest, a full declaration of interest must be made and no participation in any vote, decision-making or endorsement of proposals on the matter will be allowed.