

NEW REALITIES

**FEEDBACK & COMMENTS
FROM THE WIDER
VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY
AND FAITH SECTOR**



Sefton CVS
Supporting Local Communities

Sefton Council 

Consultation Progress

Sefton CVS hosted a web page at www.seftoncvcs.org.uk/newrealities to allow local groups and individuals to submit feedback using an online form following the approval of the focus group.

The screenshot shows the Sefton CVS website with the following elements:

- Header:** Sefton CVS logo (a sunburst) and the text "Sefton CVS Supporting Local Communities". A search bar with "Search Here" and a "Go" button is on the right.
- Navigation:** A dark blue menu bar with links: Home, About, News, Events, Support & Services, Areas of Work, Projects, Networks & Forums, Contact.
- Main Content:**
 - New Realities** section with the Sefton Council logo and the text: "New Realities: A can-do collaborative agreement between the Voluntary, Community and Faith sector."
 - A quote: "Local government and local communities are at the heart of the changes that are under way. It is these relationships, within which the development of productive partnerships between local authorities and the voluntary, community and faith sectors is essential."
- Feedback Form:**
 - Text: "If you experience any problems in downloading or reading New Realities, please email communications@seftoncvcs.org.uk or call 0151 920 0726. This document is also available in alternative formats including large font, audio format and different languages."
 - Text: "Please submit your comments by **Monday 16th February 2015**."
 - Have Your Say on New Realities** section.
 - Text: "Sefton CVS are keen to gather views and comments about this document which will then be fed into the ongoing process. Please use the online form below to submit your organisation's comments for consideration."
 - Form fields: Name of Organisation, Your Name, Your role / position within the organisation, Contact Email Address.
 - Text: "Do you feel the New Realities document provides a clear framework for both Sefton Council and Sefton's VCF sector to work within?"
 - A large text area for the response.

The online form posed five separate questions for consideration, addressing the various sections of New Realities;

- *Do you feel that the New Realities document provides a clear framework for both Sefton Council and Sefton's VCF sector to work within?*
- *Are the underlying principles appropriate?*
- *Are we trying to achieve the right objectives?*
- *Are the ways in which we are going to do this appropriate?*
- *Do you think the case studies provided help to demonstrate a need for a partnership document such as New Realities?*

Options were also provided for visitors to submit comments by email (directly to communications@seftoncvcs.org.uk) or my phone (0151 920 0726).

During the period of consultation, the website received **117 unique visitors**.

Promotion & Engagement

Twitter: 2,488 Followers

- **Facebook:** 453 'Likes'
- **Website:** 117 'hits'
- **Email Update:** 1,463 Voluntary, Community and Faith sector email contacts
- **Featured** as a main item in the CVS CEO Update on 23rd January 2015.
- **Voluntary Sector North West (VSNW)** Email Update sent to 800+ voluntary sector organisations.

You are receiving this email as a subscriber to the Sefton CVS Email Updates. To unsubscribe please email mail@seftoncvcs.org.uk [View this email in your browser](#)



NEW REALITIES

Sefton Council  **Sefton CVS**
Supporting Local Communities

New Realities: A can-do collaborative agreement for Sefton Council & Sefton's Voluntary, Community and Faith sector.

"Local government and local communities are changing. At the heart of the changes that are under way is a 're-imagining' of local relationships, within which the development of new, better, more equal and more productive partnerships between local authorities and local communities is key".

Sefton Council for Voluntary Service - CVS
Posted by WordPress (?) · January 15 ·

Have Your Say on 'New Realities' Partnership Agreement (deadline Monday 16th February)



Sefton Council  **Sefton CVS**
Supporting Local Communities

Have Your Say on 'New Realities' Partnership Agreement (deadline Monday 16th February)

New Realities: A can-do collaborative agreement for Sefton Council & Sefton's Voluntary, Community and Faith sector. "Local government and local..."


SEFTONCVCS.ORG.UK

23 people reached Boost Post

Like · Comment · Share

Sefton CVS
@SeftonCVS

Have Your Say on 'New Realities' Partnership Agreement (deadline Monday 16th February) wp.me/p3XPNc-183

RETWEET 1 

5:52 PM · 15 Jan 2015

Voluntary Sector North West **VSNW**

Accountability | Knowledge | Equality

Bulletin

#92
28th January 2015

- CONTENTS**
- [Chief Executive's update](#)
 - [Urgent Actions](#)
 - [VSNW News](#)
 - [News for the VCS in the North West](#)
 - [Events](#)

In the first of a regular series highlighting the work of the voluntary and community sector in the region, we look at the great work carried out by Sefton CVS, and the wider local voluntary and community sector together with the local authority, to work collaboratively and share expertise for the benefit of local communities

Sefton CVS had previously identified a need to update the old Compact agreement which had been in place for many years. This was further highlighted when they were contacted by a local group who made the CVS want to look again at how local arrangements could be made to work better for the sector and communities. A working group was formed, chaired by Sefton CVS Chief Executive Angela White, which included representatives from the local authority and VCS networks and forums with the aim of agreeing a new partnership agreement which enabled joint working for the benefit of local communities rather than holding them back. This has led to [New Realities](#), the new agreement that is currently out for consultation. It also contains case studies to show the real benefit of this approach.

This agreement also aims to reflect the changing environment for the local authority, the VCS groups and the communities they serve. It is intended to be a practical document that is used regularly by all parties and it has already been used by the local authority for their learning and development. A real benefit for the sector has been the opportunity provided to start conversations between the CVS, local partners, networks and groups.

If you would like more information about this work, please email communications@seftoncvcs.org.uk or call **0151 920 0726**.

Example of other VCF organisations cascading to their contacts:



www.fowsg.co.uk

SEAFROST GARDEN NEWS: Jan 2015

New Partnership with the Council

A draft agreement has been produced called "New Realities" which is a genuine attempt to enable the Council to be more responsive and more accommodating to working with groups such as ours. It also covers how we could work more effectively to improve the health and well being of our community. The draft is out for consultation prior to being rolled out over the year. For more details please contact us.

Feedback & Comments

1. Do you feel that the New Realities document provides a clear framework for both Sefton Council and Sefton's VCF sector to work within?

"General consensus was yes. The following areas could be further considered:

Networking/opportunities for working together are vitally important. A feeling that the council may need support rather than VCF in sharing success stories and communicating as it was felt the VCFS already do this well e.g. through the forums.

There are pockets of good collaborative working going on but having a guide of how we should be working and how we can demonstrate success stories would be helpful".

- *Every Child Matters (ECM) Forum – 18 representatives*
Thursday 21st January 2015.

"Providers agreed that this is a useful and user friendly document, which will be helpful to them in developing partnerships with LA services and each other".

- *Sefton Youth Provider Network- 8 Youth Service Providers*
Monday 12th January 2015

"It was agreed that it was a good document and hopefully would create transparent working models between Council and the Voluntary Sector".

- *Sefton Community Centre Network – 5 local community centres*
Wednesday 14th January 2015

"Sefton Equalities Partnership members felt that the framework was well written, clear and easily understood, communicating well the principles for both sectors.

In particular Sefton Equalities Partnership members felt the case studies were beneficial in supporting the framework. However the examples given did not represent any equalities projects and organisations working with minority groups / communities.

It would be nice to see the breadth and range of Sefton's communities represented".

- *Sefton Equalities Partnership – Two Equality representatives via phone discussion*
February 2015

“Faith representatives’ were supportive of the document overall and what it was aiming to achieve.

Will the language be openly understood by the wider public? Response- it was primarily a document for the Council and VCF, our role was to exercise leadership in explaining how it can be used within the community.

Evidencing the document is having an impact? Response- events, case studies.

How will we use it? Response- use in our discussions with Council, take the document to meetings and in our dealings, highlight the principles and approach as being the expected way of working. It is currently being applied in discussions re Crosby Investment Strategy.

Clarity sought about where to escalate issues/concerns. Would frontline staff be empowered to adopt principles and work to them?”

- **Sefton Faith Network – 7 members**
Thursday 25th February 2015.

“Yes. I think it is strong and robust in its clarity”

- **Individual Feedback**
Thursday 21st January 2015.

“No. The document is needlessly verbose and scattered with cumbersome jargon and needless euphemisms such as “pre-loved furniture”. It is presented as a brochure with needless artwork rather than a straightforward concise document”

- **Gareth Thomas, Chairman, Blundellsands Bridge Club**
Submitted online, 1st January 2015

“Yes - there are so many positives. This has been needed for a long time”.

- **Sefton Parents Community Action Group**

“How do we ensure everyone knows about this?

“This should be happening anyway”

‘Meeting regularly’ – what does this mean? Could be useful to specify a time”

- **Sefton Young Advisors**
4th March 2015

2. Are the underlying principles appropriate?

“Yes generally covers everything – we may need to consider including:

- a) Cross local authority working e.g. Liverpool City Region
- b) Rather than using ‘risk aware’ having an emphasis on responsibility of ‘risk sharing’ - supports theme around mutuality”.

- *Every Child Matters (ECM) Forum – 18 representatives*
Thursday 21st January 2015

“Providers agreed with the 4 principles and did not think there is a need to add any more. Common Purpose was the area that providers felt was most important. Providers fed back that mutual respect and high quality solutions will develop naturally if VCF groups are involved in service shaping and project planning from the start, instead of solely as deliverers.”.

- *Sefton Youth Provider Network- 8 Youth Service Providers*
Monday 12th January 2015

“Members were feeling frustrated at hitting brick walls when it came to talking to Council Teams”.

- *Sefton Community Centre Network – 5 local community centres*
Wednesday 14th January 2015

“4 principles outlined are appropriate and members did not feel they wished to add or change them.

In particular members felt that a focus on mutual respect and partnership working is really important but must be respected and meaningful rather than tokenistic.”.

- *Sefton Equalities Partnership – Two Equality representatives*
February 2015

“Representatives felt the underlying principles were the right ones. ”

- *Sefton Faith Network – 7 members*
Thursday 25th February 2015.

“Yes. Particularly the principles of mutual respect and the strengthening of good will and trust. Perhaps also incorporating the principle(s) of sharing power (equal partnership) and responsibility for initiating and implementing change as far as is possible.”

- *Individual Feedback*
Thursday 21st January 2015.

“No. You should be seeking to involve members of the public rather than organisations which purport to represent them”.

- **Gareth Thomas, Chairman, Blundellsands Bridge Club**
Submitted online, 1st January 2015

“Yes – sharing skills, expertise etc. can only be positive”.

- **Sefton Parents Community Action Group**

“Should happen anyway – how can we make sure these aren’t just buzz words? How can we ensure these are actioned?”

“ ‘Solutions Focused’ - it’s important to make sure what is causing the problem is considered”

“Is funding a barrier to co-operation?”

- **Sefton Young Advisors**
4th March 2015

3. Are we trying to achieve the right objectives?

“General consensus of yes – The following areas recommended that could be further explored; a) Commitment of sharing learning and solutions e.g. after a piece of work/funding/project. B) Sometimes a project comes and goes and we don’t share the learning”.

- *Every Child Matters (ECM) Forum – 18 representatives*
Thursday 21st January 2015.

“Yes definitely. Establishing systems that enable staff to share skills and resources is the best solution to the challenges that we face. Supporting staff to collaborate and encouraging creativity are vital in helping all of us to look outwards as well as in.”

- *Sefton Youth Provider Network- 8 Youth Service Providers*
Monday 12th January 2015

“There was a recognition that the Council needed to shed another £52million over the next two years and it would impact on all of the VCF Sector.”

- *Sefton Community Centre Network – 5 local community centres*
Wednesday 14th January 2015

“The objectives are good – creativity and collaboration are key”.

- *Sefton Equalities Partnership – Two Equality representatives*
February 2015

“Yes”.

- *Sefton Faith Network – 7 members*
Thursday 25th February 2015.

“Yes”.

- *Individual Feedback*
Thursday 21st January 2015.

“No”.

- *Gareth Thomas, Chairman, Blundellsands Bridge Club*
Submitted online, 1st January 2015

“Yes, I think working together has got to be the way forward”.

“Most definitely”.

- *Sefton Parents Community Action Group*

“More communication and transparency”.

“Understand what we are all doing behind the scenes”.

“ ‘Enabling Culture’ – this will take a lot of work (and costs) to achieve”.

- *Sefton Young Advisors*
4th March 2015

4. Are the ways in which we are going to do this appropriate?

“General consensus of yes – be good see how this will be practically applied on going along the way”.

- **Every Child Matters (ECM) Forum** – 18 representatives
Thursday 21st January 2015.
-

“Yes – providers fed back that the ideas listed are all effective and straightforward ways of creating and strengthening local relationships”.

- **Sefton Youth Provider Network**- 8 Youth Service Providers
Monday 12th January 2015
-

“A concern from Centre Managers was the cost of managing and maintaining the Centres. Buildings need money and none was forthcoming neither were longer leases in order to apply for funding”.

- **Sefton Community Centre Network** – 5 local community centres
Wednesday 14th January 2015
-

“Yes”.

- **Sefton Equalities Partnership** – Two Equality representatives
February 2015
-

“Yes. Suggested that the document form part of staff induction”.

- **Sefton Faith Network** – 7 members
Thursday 25th February 2015.
-

“Yes”.

- **Individual Feedback**
Thursday 21st January 2015.
-

“No”.

- **Gareth Thomas, Chairman, Blundellsands Bridge Club**
Submitted online, 1st January 2015
-

“Yes. It would appear so – all positive”.

- **Sefton Parents Community Action Group**
-

“ ‘Meet regularly’ – what does that mean?”

“Time – it will take time to achieve this”

“Who is championing it and leading on it?”

“How can this work if communications isn’t addressed?”

- **Sefton Young Advisors**
4th March 2015

5. Do you think the case studies provided help to demonstrate a need for a partnership document such as New Realities?

“It would be good to have more case studies represented to celebrate. People can suggest offering these from their areas now the document is out to consultation or maybe through wider focus group sessions”.

- *Every Child Matters (ECM) Forum – 18 representatives*
Thursday 21st January 2015.

“Yes – providers agreed that the case studies highlight what is possible from effective partnerships but also what can put people offlong delays, feeling that your group has no control, reputation at stake.... New Realities will hopefully provide a framework that can reassure staff and organisations that collaboration and partnership can produce fantastic results.”

- *Sefton Youth Provider Network- 8 Youth Service Providers*
Monday 12th January 2015

“It was noted that communities had disengaged from activities and it needs communities to come together to create change but unfortunately it usually takes a crisis before something happens

How can Community Centres turn this around and encourage a ‘can do’ attitude?”

- *Sefton Community Centre Network – 5 local community centres*
Wednesday 14th January 2015

“Yes, although as mentioned above it would be nice to see the whole of Sefton’s population and VCF sector reflected in examples and work presented to demonstrate the broad range of organisations and communities engaged”.

-*Sefton Equalities Partnership – Two Equality representatives*
February 2015

“Yes. Example given of a good outcome when an issue was accelerated re: Formby Children’s Centre”.

- *Sefton Faith Network – 7 members*
Thursday 25th February 2015.

“Yes. But perhaps it could also include a case study demonstrating how partnership working supports / works with hard to reach groups with protected characteristics”.

- *Individual Feedback*
Thursday 21st January 2015.

“No”.

- *Gareth Thomas, Chairman, Blundellsands Bridge Club*
Submitted online, 1st January 2015

“Yes – of course. Once we all start working together a lot more will get done and it will be a lot easier – as there are that many individuals with different skills”.

“Good case studies”.

- *Sefton Parents Community Action Group*

“Useful but maybe a bit long”.

“Identify common themes - time and money”.

- *Sefton Young Advisors*
4th March 2015

Additional Comments & Feedback

“Positive reaction in most discussions regarding the New Realities agreement.

Two parties who have both been involved in buying vacant garages or dilapidated, redundant buildings from the council in the past had experienced downright obstruction not just unhelpful responses. Both parties wanted to know if our agreement would make any difference for them”.

- **Nick Thompson, Chair, Crosby Housing**
Submitted by email, 20th February 2015

“The Healthwatch Sefton Board acknowledged the importance of the document and agreed that Healthwatch Sefton would sign up to the principles and adopt them”.

- **Maureen Kelly, Chair, Healthwatch Sefton**
Submitted by email, 90th March 2015
