



## **Midlothian Compact 2026 to 2031**

### **Report by Derek Oliver, Executive Director Children, Young People and Partnerships (Acting)**

#### **Report for Decision**

#### **1 Recommendations**

Midlothian Council is invited to formally approve, endorse, and actively celebrate the strengthened partnership with the third sector, as articulated in the updated *Midlothian Compact 2026–2031*. This renewed commitment reflects a shared vision for collaborative working and community-focused service delivery highlighting the eight shared benefits of the Midlothian Compact.

#### **2 Purpose of Report/Executive Summary**

This report outlines the joint partnership approach between Midlothian Council and the third sector, underpinned by the GAUGE approach - *Give out information, Agree a partnership approach, Undertake a collaborative decision-making process, Generate shared actions, Evaluate, Reflect and Learn*. It also reflects the shared commitment to the TRACK values - *Togetherness, Respect, Accountability, Creativity, and Kindness*, which guide the ethos and behaviours of this collaborative work. The Community Planning Partnership Board acknowledged the importance of the Compact as an enabler for effective partnership working.

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### **3.1 Background**

A Compact with the third sector represents a formal agreement between Midlothian Council and voluntary, community, and third sector organisations operating within the area. It sets out shared principles, values, and codes of practice to support effective and collaborative partnership working. The Compact builds on previous national guidance and aims to strengthen mutual understanding, enhance relationships, and improve community outcomes. It provides a framework for how public bodies and third sector organisations work together on key areas such as collaborate, consultation, innovation and service design.

The updated Compact (2026–2031) builds on the legacy of previous agreements from 2008 and 2020, which have contributed to significant collaborative achievements. These include the development of the Climate Change Hub, joint development of the Shared Prosperity Investment Plan, co-involvement in funding panels, maximisation of community benefit opportunities, creation of Living Well locality plans, improved shared monitoring and evaluation processes, voluntary sector summits, and positive joint outcomes in external inspections and scrutiny.

### **3.2 Purpose and Scope**

The Compact sets out the values that will underpin the relationship between the Council and the third sector, provides a clear overview of the legislative framework and current socio-economic context, and identifies a series of shared actions and outcomes to be achieved through strengthened cross-sector collaboration.

The Midlothian Compact 2026 to 2031 contains the following sections:

- Foreword
- Executive Summary
- Introduction
- Values and Approaches
- Compact Priority Actions
- Legislative Context
- Midlothian's Third Sector
- Volunteering
  
- Information about Midlothian Council and how it interacts with the third sector.

The key eight benefits of the compact are depicted below:



## 4 Report Implications (Resource, Digital and Risk)

### 4.1 Resource

Staff time across the third sector and the council is the main resource which supports adherence to the Compact through our approach and values to partnership working, it enhances our opportunities to maximise resources and ensure efficiencies across joint working and codesign. It also enables us to respond to collaborative opportunities where we can apply for funding from out with Midlothian for the benefit of Midlothian Communities.

### 4.2 Digital

Not applicable.

### 4.3 Risk

Adherence to the Compact values and approaches minimises risk of duplication, maximises opportunities for collaboration, collective gain and securing improved outcomes with communities.

#### **4.4 Ensuring Equalities (if required a separate IIA must be completed)**

A separate IIA has been completed and can be found on the following link:  
[Equality and Diversity reports | Impact Assessment 2026 - Compact](#)

#### **4.5 Additional Report Implications (See Appendix A)**

See Appendix A

## **APPENDIX A – Report Implications**

### **A.1 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan**

The Compact is a way of working and a statement of intent which is fundamental to delivering the joint priorities of the Single Midlothian Plan.

### **A.2 Key Drivers for Change**

Key drivers addressed in this report:

- Holistic Working
- Hub and Spoke
- Modern
- Sustainable
- Transformational
- Preventative
- Asset-based
- Continuous Improvement
- One size fits one
- None of the above

### **A.3 Key Delivery Streams**

Key delivery streams addressed in this report:

- One Council Working with you, for you
- Preventative and Sustainable
- Efficient and Modern
- Innovative and Ambitious
- None of the above

### **A.4 Delivering Best Value**

The Compact reinforces a shared commitment to partnership working as a means of delivering best value for the people of Midlothian. By promoting joint planning, collaborative funding approaches and coordinated service delivery, it enables partners to make the most of available resources while reducing duplication of effort.

This collective approach ensures that services are more efficient, better aligned to local needs, and capable of achieving greater impact. Through the Compact, partners are empowered to identify shared priorities, pool expertise, and maximise opportunities for innovation and improvement—enhancing outcomes for communities across the local authority area.

### **A.5 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders**

A consultation was conducted with both third sector organisations across Midlothian and Council staff. A range of comments and feedback was received from both groups. Positive feedback highlighted the value of joint partnership working, with several respondents referencing the previous Compact as a strong foundation—particularly noting the positive and resilient support it enabled. One response described the

Compact as an excellent example of best practice in fostering commitment to partnership and communication between statutory and voluntary organisations.

In addition, the Compact has been presented to the Community Planning Board who recognised the importance as an enabler of the work of the Midlothian Community Planning Partnership. The Compact has also been presented to the Elected Member Cross Party Elected Member group for the Children, Young People and Partnership Directorate. Most recently the Compact was presented jointly to a wider grouping of elected members and the third sector .

#### **A.6 Impact on Performance and Outcomes**

The Compact establishes a clear and collaborative framework that strengthens joint working and enhances collective accountability. By aligning shared values, priorities, and ways of working, it creates the conditions for improved performance across sectors and enables a more coordinated approach to delivering services.

This shared approach maximises the potential for achieving meaningful and measurable outcomes for local communities. It supports a culture of continuous improvement, where learning, innovation, and joint impact are prioritised. Through the Compact, partners are better positioned to pool resources, align efforts, and respond more effectively to the needs and aspirations of Midlothian's residents.

#### **A.7 Adopting a Preventative Approach**

Prevention lies at the heart of the values and principles underpinning the Compact. It reflects a shared commitment across sectors to proactively address the root causes of social challenges, rather than simply responding to their consequences.

Building on this foundation, further work is planned through the Compact to explore and enhance opportunities for collaborative investment in preventative approaches.

#### **A.8 Supporting Sustainable Development**

The Compact plays a vital role in supporting sustainable development across Midlothian by fostering collaborative approaches that align with environmental, social, and economic priorities. It provides a shared framework through which statutory and third sector partners can work together to address long-term challenges, including those related to climate change and community resilience.

A key success in this area has been the ability to attract new resources to support climate-focused initiatives within the third sector. Notably, the Third Sector Interface (TSI) has taken a leading role by hosting the Climate Change Hub, which has been supported through funding from the Scottish Government. This initiative exemplifies how the Compact can act as a catalyst for innovation and investment in preventative and sustainable action.

By embedding sustainability into its core principles, the Compact ensures that partnership efforts contribute not only to immediate service delivery improvements but also to the long-term wellbeing of communities and the environment.