

Politicians asked to pledge support for the sector

Councillors, MPs and other politicians across Yorkshire and the Humber are being urged to commit to supporting the Voluntary and Community sector in the region.

The Regional Forum launched the VCS Manifesto for Yorkshire and the Humber at its Annual General Meeting on 19 January 2009. Produced by the Forum following consultation with its members, it outlines how political support can enable VCS organisations to make an even bigger contribution to the region over the next couple of years.

Its purpose is to influence and shape the policies of political parties for the next general election and to build relationships, understanding and support for the VCS amongst Councillors, MPs and Prospective Parliamentary Candidates in our region. The commitments in the Manifesto will create an environment for a thriving Third Sector, which is included as an indicator in many of this region's Local Area Agreements.

Specific commitments that politicians are being asked to sign up to include:

- 100% of Big Lottery Funding goes to the VCS
- Government to continue the provision of publicly funded advice centres
- The government retains independent funding for VCS representation and advocacy work
- An induction in the VCS for public sector workers who are involved with the sector
- Commissioners use the 8 intelligent commissioning principles described by the Office of the Third Sector
- Consistent financial support for volunteer centres

Over the coming months, the Manifesto will be promoted throughout the region to politicians and public agencies. There will be sub regional events to publicise the document and to encourage VCS organisations to use it to support their local work. The Manifesto will be reviewed in summer, to ensure that it is still reflecting the views of the sector and the commitments contained within it are still relevant and current.

Printed copies of the Manifesto can be obtained from the Regional Forum on 0113 394 2300 or downloaded in pdf format from its website:
www.regionalforum.org.uk