Third Sector Strategy Group

Action note for 22nd August 2024

1pm – 3pm

**At Voluntary Sector Gateway,**

**20-22 King St, Bathgate EH48 1AX**

Attendees:

Raymond Branton (Play Works, Chair) Alan McCloskey (VSGWL) Tracy Kerr (VSGWL)

Victoria Isbister (VSGWL) Collette Moran (School Bank) Tracy Murdoch (Kidzeco)

Hayley Burton (Xcite WL) Neil Barnes (WLCAN) Fiona Angus (MHWL)

Caroline Millar (Children’s First) Karen Nailen (CAB) Mike Niles (COWL)

Carole (Linlithgow CDT) Marcia Moreira (Health in Mind) Gareth McKenna (Broxburn Utd)

Helen Davis (WLYAP)

Apologies:

David Stewart (FEDCAP), Koen (The Brock), Alistair Shaw (CAB), Mark Vance (WLDAS), David MacDonald (Whitburn CDT), Alistair Shaw (CAB), June Dickson (Environmental Health CIC), Paula Mark (MOOD)

1. **Welcome & Apologies:** Raymond introduced himself and welcomed new members.
2. **Previous minutes & matters arising:** June 27th action note, approved.
3. **Feedback on Wellbeing Session & next steps**

A confidential session for sector leaders ran after the last TSSG by an external facilitator. The purpose of the event was to share support in the face of current challenges acknowledging resilience and burn out. It was well attended with people sharing experiences and how they were feeling in a safe environment. Next event: October 8th. Information to follow. Neil added that the challenge next was to find the time to follow up and talk with staff, and this has already been included in their business plan.

“Great session, really appreciate it.”

“Useful for me, especially at that time, valuable time. If people can fit it in, it’s worthwhile, opportunity to share…..look at ideas… can’t fix things easily…. Helpful to objectivity. Helpful for me that day, thank you for putting it on.”

“Leadership is lonely.” – any opportunity to share is valuable.

1. **Survey results and revised format for TSSG**

Previously discussed dropping attendance and participation at this (and all) forums. If TSSG continues, we need to make sure the group, which is an Umbrella forum for all groups, stays relevant and this means finding out what members want. Survey was sent out last week;

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=YggFvqR1_U2-YOP3XepBHGldKb-adRpGnR4Cwm2o4VFURDhWUVdNRkk0VTZRUjlEUEkyTlVFUk1LSy4u>

Alan said the meetings were important to him as he is representing sector at various meetings and the more feedback and information he has, the better he can report. The Gateway, in its role as Third Sector Interface, is a key tool to consult and represent with its membership in person. Various consultations and reports come through this forum.

* + - * Invaluable to someone just coming into region, introductions, development. “I think they are very important.”
      * As Development officer, I have had positive feedback from members and always tell people about the forum’s
      * TSSG is a good summary of all the forums, not everything is directly relevant to your role and you can’t go to them all.

Raymond asked for feedback on the agenda – no feedback given on current format. Variety of guest speakers would continue to be of interest. Members agreed general reason for non-attendance would be pressures of work.

1. **Election of new Chair**

Raymond is retiring end of the year. Not asking for nominations – yet. It is not an onerous task as The Gateway support administration tasks.

1. **Council/Sector Working Group updates & reps**

In the past it has been a challenge getting reps, 2 or 3 voices isn’t enough, important to have a mixture of voices. More recently David, Alistair and Donald Forest (formerly the Council, now The Bridge) have joined the group, each bringing a wealth of invaluable experience and looking at working better together for better outcomes and help shape policy decisions within the Council.

1. **Community Planning Partnership presentation on Sector (CPP)**

How do we extend our reach within Sector? 30min slot on Sept 9th – first time in 5 years that the third sector has had an opportunity to present. It is an influential group which include Police, Fire, College, HSCP, NHS. Alan and Raymond talked through the final draft of slides. The more we can showcase what we do, the better.

<https://scvo.scot/research/evidence-library/the-scottish-third-sector-tracker-wave-7-report-spring-2024>

1. **VSGWL report**

Community centre review: Alan advised that the Council had not reached out proactively to discuss closure of community centres and village halls as part of £1 million pound saving so at community request Alan has approached management committees and contacts. Currently there are three options for future (including falling under the management committee or community asset transfer) could really impact communities, especially as volunteers are often running these centres. The more that was uncovered, the more concerned The Gateway became about the timeline (early 25, maybe into 26). So many groups are based in community centres. The Gateway are keen to have a conversation and work with the council to have a say in this important matter. Raymond suggested The Gateway could be the collective voice of individual groups. There are 32 community centres and 40 village halls. Various local surveys and campaigns have sprung up to minimise the impact. Alan has included this in his report for Community Empowerment and Wealth building PDSP on 10th Sept.

“I would like to say how critical Bridgend community centre is.  It really is the only place in this town for the community to gather. “

Event: Income maximisation Wed Aug 28th 3pm

Social Enterprise – Will be taking on additional resource to support the next stage of work.

Funding: MHWB Y4 open to applications September 30th to October 31st, £465,000 available. Panel will meet in November with decisions communicated in December. For projects running April 25 – March 31st 26. Guidance 10 pages. Will host online Q&A session beforehand.

Stakeholder survey – In the process of compiling questions around what you think of The Gateway.

1. **Forum/sector updates**
   1. Progress update on allocation of representatives: Ongoing (Tracy)

<https://www.voluntarysectorgateway.org/working-together/third-sector-strategy-group/>

* 1. PDSP Reps’ updates/feedback: The Gateway will circulate papers ahead of meetings.
  2. WL Food Network

Trustees have met twice following award of the SCIO. They will take forward ideas and drive the network forward before the money from WLC ends next year. Board currently considering a proposal and will meet again 13.09.24. SCIO offers opportunities to fundraise and external funding applications. The Gateway will continue to support this.

* 1. Children and Families Forum

Now meeting 8 weekly following member survey. Hoping for increased participation. Organising guest speakers for next 3 meetings. Awaiting Children services inspection date would like third sector representatives. Gap in recognition of substance use, good to see. Updated terms of reference, ensure still relevant. Some disappointment in slow pace of The Promise, would like to see wider representations of young people. Mechanisms could be better.

* 1. Employability Forum

Met on Tuesday. Alan mentioned the LEP, a strategy session running next week at Deer Park to reignite partners as representation has dropped off. Less people present narrows discussions. Alan is looking forward to seeing the facilities and will find out if there may be hire rates for Third Sector.

Partnership for Parents – contract previously extended 3 months to end of Sept. Two weeks ago The Larder was invited to bid on 9 month contract Oct – June. Tender was submitted Monday following tight 8 working day timeline which put all partners under pressure. None of the other partners are on DPS (?). Extension was asked for and refused.

* 1. Community Race Forum

Cultural event Saturday in Whitburn, everyone welcome. Next meeting September 10th. Huge turnover in engagement and positive drive by new chair.

* 1. Third Sector minority forum: On pause due to success of above
  2. Volunteer Network
     + - Guest speaker Leighann Bishop (Ageing Well Coordinator)
       - Volunteer fayre held: June 5th in Bathgate: 11 services attended. Next event January 2025.
       - Celebration volunteer event planning 2025 – first meeting of subgroup Tuesday 27th. Looking to gain feedback from volunteers about what they would like.
       - Service updates from Team Jak, VSGWL, CAB, Xcite, HCL, Social Security, WLC, Home Start.
  3. Social Enterprise Network/Forum – No update
  4. Climate Action Network – Tracy attends TSI Climate forum online monthly & liaises with Neil (WLCAN).
  5. Older Peoples’ Provider Forum
     + - Copies of What’s on Where Guide available from The Gateway.
  6. Any others?...

1. AOCB
2. Xcite shortlisted for awards, Avril, nominated to service for sport, team also shortlisted for leadership award. <https://www.ukactive.com/ukactive-awards-2024-stage-2-public-vote/>. Any questions: [hburton@westlothianleisure.com](mailto:hburton@westlothianleisure.com). There hasn’t been a Scottish winner last few years.
3. Broxburn Utd – Have developed a survey with management from a facilitated session and would appreciate feedback as they finalise strategy: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DJ7JWTP>
4. Health in mind – would like to share information about services. Marcia agreed to be a Guest speaker at a future meeting.
5. Next meeting details: Thursday October 3rd (6 weekly)

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| Send out survey reminder | Victoria (done) |
| Get in touch with Raymond if interested in chairing Forum | All members |
| Working group – if interested to be a rep get in touch | Alan |
| PDSP reps, please get in touch if interested rep / vice rep | All members |
| Get feedback on TSSG website logo | All members |

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