**Note of meeting of the Third Sector Strategy Group (TSSG) – 13 April 2021**

1. **Present:** Raymond Branton, Chair (Family and Community Development), Diane Cameron (WLSEN), James Penman, Minute Taker (VSGWL), Helen Davis (West Lothian Youth Action Project), Alan McCloskey (VSGWL), Lesley Mount (Signpost), Joanna Van Den Berg (Firefly Arts), Monica Mochar (Wellbeing Scotland), Sylvia Forshaw (Cyrenians OPAL), Jay Haston (Wave Trust), Angie Mason (WLSEN), Julia Boardman (National Lottery), Karen Nailen (Citizen’s Advice Bureau), Stuart Barrie (Homestart), Rosemary McCabe (Children 1st), Margaret Bryson (The Larder).

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| **ITEM** | **KEY POINTS** | **ACTION BY** |
|  | **Apologies**  Brian Pringle (WLDAS), Simon McGowan (Children 1st), Mark Kennedy (Circle), Matt Pearce (West Calder and Harburn CDT), Alison Wright (Carers of West Lothian), Lisa Drinnen (Blackburn Family Centre), Jack Christine (River Kids), Kathleen Neilly (West Lothian Foodbank). |  |
|  | **Welcome**  Raymond welcomed everyone to the meeting.  **Speaker: Julia Boardman from the National Lottery.**  **Previous minutes**  The action notes were accepted as an accurate account of the previous meeting held on 16 March 2021.  **Matters arising/review of actions from last meeting**  Any matters arising are already within the agenda for the meeting.  **Sector/Council Working Group update**  The working group has lobbied for multi-year funding and the Council have taken this on board and may extend the current funding grant to 2 years instead of the previous 1 year. This is a positive step forward and would allow organisations more time to prepare for reapplying after such a stressful application process last time. The hope is that this would allow the modernisation monies to be utilised and would help organisations with planning. There is £150k earmarked for the sector for this year and next year. It is open for discussion in the sector and there will be further discussions at the next Council Working Group meeting.  The council Working Group seems to be helping to grow communication between the council and the sector and it looks like the sector are finally being listened to.  It was asked if there was a possibility of the modernisation fund being partially used to help support Arts in the community. There was a grant available to support individual families to have access to the arts activities, but this grant has ended leaving a need for something to fill the gap left. This will be raised by the Council Working group at a future meeting.  It was suggested that the modernisation fund should become a rolling, open fund where organisations could apply when needed, at any time throughout the year, with reviews being made monthly, until the fund is used up. Further discussion will take place at the next TSSG meeting ahead of information being relayed back to the Council Working Group.  If anyone is interested in joining the Working Group, Raymond will send out a personal specification/role description, please get in touch as there is a need for new members to make sure the sector is well represented.  **Sector/Forum updates and developments**  **Children and Families Forum**  There is a Mental Health Partnership meeting on Thursday to pull together a draft of how the partnership will operate which needs to be submitted to the council soon after. Any new information and any updates will be given at a future TSSG meeting.  The next Children and Families Forum is on Tuesday 4th May at 1:30pm. Invites for this meeting will be distributed. There will be a more in depth update next time as there are some changes happening in the Social Policy and Education departments.  There is a survey circulating for the Champions Board with the information collected being sent to Scottish Government. Helen will update everyone on progress.  **Mental Health Forum**  The Mental Health Forum have met again, with West Space joining to look at web resources which is under development. This is funded by NHS Lothian.  The Mental Health Forum, under the umbrella of WLSEN have been invited along with 2 other organisations to tender for a Mental Health Network Coordinator post. There is a very quick turnaround for this which is making it difficult to tender to the usual high standards, but it is believed that there will be a tender ready to submit by the deadline on 29th April. It was asked that if either of the other organisations invited to tender were present to let Dianne know as it might be in everyone’s best interests to develop a partnership working approach to get the best out of this resource, rather than working against each other. WLSEN are doing the initial tender with a view of it becoming a cooperative model linked with the Mental Health Forum.  It was suggested that the Mental Health Advocacy project may be one of the organisations invited to tender and it was pointed out that it would be beneficial to reach out regardless to try and get them to join the Mental Health Forum.  **VSGWL update**  The UK Government have launched a community renewal fund. Further information on this has been posted on the West Lothian Council website. There are 4 strands to this fund, one of which is to directly support communities. It is 1 year funding, and the money must be spent by March 2022. The deadline for applications is 10 May. If you would like further details, please contact Alice Mitchell at West Lothian Council.  The new VSGWL website has been launched and thank you to everyone for their contributions. The website will be expanded and developed where required and further refined as the organisation moves forward.  Hopefully, it will be more user friendly be easier for VSGWL staff to update.  Alan reminded everyone of the ‘Org in the Spotlight’ feature. This is where organisations can showcase what they do. Anyone interested please contact VSGWL.  **WLSEN update**  Mental Health Week will be taking place 10-16 May. There will be a push on social media with the theme this year being ‘Nature’. This covers the broader mental health picture and can include community garden’s etc. Angie will be leading on this.  With Diane leaving, there is a network co-ordinator post vacancy at WLSEN. Everyone is urged to share and circulate the vacancy details as widely as possible.  It is all change nationally in Social Enterprise just now. The new Social Enterprise action plan is out and will be in the WLSEN newsletter.  At the moment, there are 2 Social Enterprise intermediaries. Senscot represent grassroots and communities based social enterprises and the other is much more about the larger organisations. According to the government, they will now no longer be separate entities. Once the election is out the way, there will be only one social enterprise intermediary. The possibility of the intermediary that deals with larger organisations being funded is worrying as its mainly smaller grassroots social enterprises in Scotland. Diane will share any further information that comes out through the action plan.  Keep checking the Social Enterprise Academy if anyone is interested in training.  Social Enterprise start-ups should contact First Port.  There is loan funding available through Social Investment Scotland.  A big thank you was given to Diane for all her hard work, commitment, enthusiasm and for the skill and knowledge she brought to her role with WLSEN, TSSG and the Sector in general. All the best for the future.  **AOCB**  **Digital Candle**  Digital Candle are an organisation who provide free digital advice for charities. You ask a question online and they match you with a volunteer who can help. Please see link below for further details.  <https://www.digitalcandle.org.uk/> | **Alan**  **(VSGWL)**  **Raymond (FCDWL)**  **Helen**  **(WLYAP)**  **All** |
|  | **Next meeting dates**  Next TSSG is on Tuesday 11th May at 1pm via Zoom.  NextLeader Support Group meeting is on 23rd April.  Raymond thanked everyone and closed the meeting. |  |