**Note of meeting of the Third Sector Strategy Group (TSSG) – 16 February 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), David MacDonald (Whitburn and District CDT), Lesley Mount (Signpost), Brian Pringle (WLDAS), Stuart Barrie (Homestart), Mark Kennedy (Circle), Phili Wetton (ACOSVO), Jack Christine (River Kids), Marie Andreeti, Dawn Henderson (Families Outside), Rosemary McCabe (Children 1st), Silence Chihuri (FJSS), Beth MacLean (Safe Families), West Lothian Foodbank, Ann MacSween (Historic Environment Scotland).

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| **ITEM** | **KEY POINTS** | **ACTION BY** |
|  | **Apologies**  Joanna Van Den Berg (Firefly Arts), Alison Wright (Carers of West Lothian), Monica Mochar (Wellbeing Scotland), Angie Mason (WLSEN), Karen Nailen (Citizens Advice Bureau), Angela Weir (West Calder Community Hub). |  |
|  | **Welcome**  Raymond welcomed everyone to the meeting.  **Presentation from Phili Wetton from ACOSVO on the Leadership Exchange programme.**  **Previous minutes**  The action notes were accepted as an accurate account of the previous meeting on 19 January.  **Matters arising/review of actions from last meeting**  **Leader Support Group**  The latest meeting was held on 12 February. Raymond will create a specific mailing list for the Leader Support Group to prevent people from receiving information that is not relevant to them.  **Voluntary Organisations funding**  There has been a debrief to look at what worked well in the process and what lessons were learned. The key let down areas identified were the lack of communication and the time frame not being met by West Lothian Council. The transparency and the robustness of the assessment process went well but the council failed to communicate the outcomes before the Christmas deadline.  PDSP papers have been distributed and everyone is advised have a look at them. There is a paper, written by Alan, which highlights the lessons to be learned from the process. There is also a Council paper which details the findings of the recent assessment debrief and the plans for earlier communication and process timelines. This has also been highlighted by Diane.  The council executive has decided to fund the third sector an additional £285,000. It has been highlighted this will be for core costs. There are no further details on how this money will be distributed but there will be a discussion at the PDSP and the funding group to help move this forward.  There is a PDSP paper on council rents, this is a complex issue with no easy solution, but it is evident that a full consultation with the sector is required for them to make more informed decisions. This issue will be raised at the PDSP meeting.  **Sector updates/how are we all doing?**  **Children and Families Forum**  The main agenda item was the children and young people’s mental health money. The first partnership meeting has taken place with 12 sector organisations were in attendance. The second meeting will be tomorrow. P4P have been contacted to try and help best structure this partnership, they will give some advice and then it will be decided whether to bring them on board or not. There is a tight time scale as the council need an outline of how this money will be spent before the money is released in April.  There are 3 sections of this funding. The first needs to be taken out of the council’s expenditure budget by end of March. There is then a one off Covid fund of £383k which will cover April 2021 – March 2022. The largest section is reserved for organisations that the council wish to fund on the mental health supports but the hope is that the newly formed partnership will be able to help influence where the money is spent. Anyone who would like to take part, please contact Helen.  **Mental Health Group update**  The Mental Health Forum does not meet again until next week.  The council are funding £100,000 for a 2-year Mental Health Coordinator post. This is still with procurement but should be out to tender soon. This would be to facilitate referrals to third sector organisations, but the problem is there is no additional funding available to support an influx of new referrals.  **Race Forum/BME update**  A slave trade action plan has been sent to West Lothian Council to help them get things off the ground to address long standing concerns in West Lothian.  Diversity work is being carried out in conjunction with schools in West Lothian with a programme designed to help children with their diversity and equalities work. The book ‘The History of the Slave Trade in West Lothian’ is being used in high schools as a learning resource.  There will be a diversity and equalities workshop on 24th March which will focus on the legal profession. It is hoped that this will help to diversify this profession as BME participation stands at only 2%. Research is concluding that will give the BME outlook of the post Covid legal industry in Scotland.  Silence is looking for help from TSSG members and other organisations on some of these programmes. Raymond offered to help circulate any information.  Working with the Deputy Heads Forum to assist with diversity and equality in West Lothian.  **VSGWL update**  VSGWL has sourced a free online rota for volunteers to sign up for shifts at the vaccination roll out at the Pyramids in Bathgate. Volunteers are required in a meet and greet capacity. Within 24 hours of the rota going live, all shifts had been booked until the end of May. 4 volunteers will be required for each shift and there are 3 shifts per day, 7 days a week. Volunteer induction sessions will be held at the Gateway premises on the 18th and 22nd of February. It has been an amazing response from the community.  VSGWL is involved with Evaluation Support Scotland and another 5 TSI’s looking at what has worked well during the pandemic and where there are areas for improvement. Evaluation Support Scotland will be compiling an interim report to be submitted to Scottish Government in March with the full report being available in May. Trent University in Nottingham have been carrying out research on the impact of Covid 19. CEO’s are encouraged to take part. Further information can be found on VSGWL’s Twitter or from Alan directly.  A discussion meeting will be held on Friday 19 February at 10am to obtain feedback on the possibility of running a West Lothian Community Lottery. West Lothian Council would like to know if the Third Sector could play a part in this. Anyone interested should contact Joanna Anderson. No further information is available. Raymond will attend this meeting.  Alan will bring a paper to the next TSSG meeting in March regarding student placement opportunities through West Lothian College. Comments and thoughts will be sought on how the sector can play a part over the next year to 18 months.  **WLSEN update**  WLSEN have used some of their reserves to put together some mental health support through The Bridge for Social Enterprise leaders and staff but have so far had no one take advantage of this. Also looking to set up some business coaching sessions but need to know if this going to be of interest.  Pilotlight are available should any organisations want to take part in any development programmes.  Mental Health forum will take place next week. A leaflet has been produced for the public and will be issued once lockdown is eased. Diane and Declan (Smile) will be at the next CPP board meeting to update on what is happening around mental health.  **WLDAS**  WLDAS have a part time clinical psychologist working for them and would like to offer some free sessions to organisations who feel their staff would benefit from this.  **AOCB**  Silence enquired as to how many BME led social enterprises there are within the West Lothian network. There aren’t many in West Lothian, but the figure will be higher Scotland wide. It has been difficult attracting people with a BME background to social enterprises but there is a real focus on doing so. Diane will provide statistics for silence.  **Agenda item for next meeting:**  Talk on Naloxone: Reducing Drug Related Deaths by Thomas Oswald (WLDAS). | **Raymond**  **(FCDWL)**  **Raymond**  **(FCDWL)**  **Alan (VSGWL)**  **Diane (WLSEN)** |
|  | **Next meeting dates**  Next leadership support meeting will take place on 12 March.  Next TSSG is on 16 March.  Raymond thanked everyone and closed the meeting. |  |