**Note of meeting of the Third Sector Strategy Group (TSSG) – 11 May 2021**

1. **Present:** Raymond Branton, Chair (Family and Community Development), Helen Davis (West Lothian Youth Action Project), Alan McCloskey (VSGWL), Lesley Mount (Signpost), Joanna Van Den Berg (Firefly Arts), Sylvia Forshaw (Cyrenians OPAL), Jay Haston (Wave Trust), Angie Mason (WLSEN), Lisa Drinnen (Blackburn Family Centre), Alison Wright (Carers of West Lothian), David McDonald (Whitburn CDT), Tracy Murdoch (Kidzeco), Brian Jeffrey (Citizens Advice Bureau), SImon McGowan (Children 1st), Cllr Sullivan, Alice Mitchell (West Lothian Council).

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| **ITEM** | **KEY POINTS** | **ACTION BY** |
|  | **Apologies**Karen Nailen (Citizens Advice Bureau) |  |
|  | **Welcome**Raymond welcomed everyone to the meeting. **Previous minutes of meeting held on 11 May 2021**The action notes were accepted with a minor correction – the MH Forum is being taken forward by the new Coordinator` rather than June Dickson.**Matters arising/review of actions from last meeting**All other actions on agenda for today`s meeting.**Sector catch up with Cllr Sullivan and Alice Mitchell**Cllr Sullivan welcomed the opportunity of meeting with sector reps again. She highlighted the ongoing impact of covid-19 on communities as well as the third sector. She paid tribute to the agility of the sector in continuing to respond to the needs of communities and the overall agility of the sector in supporting those in need.Cllr Sullivan advised that following the recent Vol Orgs PDSP, a report would be presented to the June Council Executive seeking agreement on the proposal to roll over funding into 2022/23 for those organisations that received funding in 2021/22. She added that the Council still had multi-year funding aspirations but noted the challenge resulting from receiving annual awards from the Scottish Government.Cllr Sullivan advised that a joint Annual Report highlighting the role and value of the sector alongside the Council`s support was being developed. It is expected that the report will be submitted to the August Vol Orgs PDSP meeting. Cllr Sullivan touched on developments with Community Wealth Building (CWB) which would be a key WL Council commitment moving forward. She explained that the purpose of CWB was to generate and keep wealth locally. It was a collaborative approach aimed at longer term sustainability. The approach would centre around a number of key anchor organisations and provide opportunities for local businesses, social enterprises and the third sector. See link to recent Council paper - <https://coins.westlothian.gov.uk/coins/agenda.asp?meetingid=8245>Alice added that the model had five pillars at its heart. Alice agreed to give a presentation on CWB at a future TSSG meeting.Alice also mentioned recent paper on Community Renewal & Levelling up funds - Link to Council papers on Community Renewal & Levelling up funds - <https://coins.westlothian.gov.uk/coins/submissiondocuments.asp?submissionid=48794>Alice also highlighted the ongoing work of the Weekly Economic Recovery group, the work of the Regeneration Team involved in the Town Centre Fund and plans to develop a skills centre with the College.Angela asked for details on the third sector Funding review and on how the third sector could feature role in the Local Employability Partnership and in the development of the skills centre. Alan agreed to update Angela separately.Raymond asked how Community Choices was progressing. Alice advised that a paper on the Blackburn pilot would be tabled to the June Council Executive and would provide a briefing. Raymond thanked Cllr Sullivan and Alice Mitchell for their comprehensive updates. Alice stated she would be content to provide regular updates to TSSG and attend every 2nd TSSG meeting, as required.**Sector/ Council Working Group updates**Raymond confirmed that Stuart and Alison had been appointed as third sector reps to the Working Group and had met with Officials from the Council in the recent meeting. Raymond advised that that Linda White, WLSEN, would also be included in future meetings once appointed. He added that the purpose and Terms of Reference for the group had recently been refreshed. Alan added that minutes of meetings were now routinely taken and dates for future meetings had been identified.Alison commented that she had enjoyed her first meeting and was surprises at the wide remit of the Group.**Forum updates and developments**Helen provided an update on the Children & Families Forum meeting held last week. The group had received a presentation from Louise Henry, WL Council, about developments with The Promise. Helen advises that Denise Arbator had been appointed as the formal link into WL Council. Helen added that Terms of Reference and purpose had been agreed. Next meeting of the Forum is 10 August.Angie advised that WLSEN had been award the tender to further progress the Mental Health Forum. A new Coordinator would be appointed. Angie added that the next meeting of the Forum was on 13 July and that Linda would be taking this forward with June supporting.Raymond advised that the Race Forum were developing new initiatives.Angela advised that there was an opportunity for the third sector to sit on the Developing Young Workforce (DYW) Steering Group. She asked to be considered to represent the sector on this steering group. Alan to advise Chair of the Group, Stuart McKay.**VSGWL report**Alan advised that he had planned to consult with the sector on proposals for a local Community lottery scheme. He would provide a paper for the August TSSG meeting.Alan advised that the Scottish Government`s Connecting Scotland programme – had recently been extended. The new phase included opportunities for those in most need to have access to ipads and Chromebooks, along with 24 months of broadband access. Applications invited from the third sector welcome. Closing date is 5 July. Details on the VSGWL website - <https://www.voluntarysectorgateway.org/connecting-scotland-phase-3-now-live/>**WLSEN report**Angie advised that she was sad to be leaving WLSEN after 3.5 years. She confirmed that Linda would be taking over as Network Manager on 21 June and would be making arrangements to meet as many people as possible in the weeks ahead.Raymond thanked Angie for all her work and all wished her well.**Future speakers**Alice Mitchell – Aug meetingLorna Maise – Illegal Money Laundering – Sept meetingAlan to make arrangements.**AOCB**Tracy asked for an update on the formation of a third sector Climate Change Working Group. Alan confirmed this would be revisited. There was a discussion on how we might improve communications across the sector and map areas of work, along with any gaps. Raymond to include as future agenda meeting item.Angela highlighted concerns around short timescales for recent funding opportunities circulated from the Council. Helen commented that this is often driven by the short deadlines imposed by Scottish Government, such as Summer of Play fund. **Date of next meeting** Tues 17 August at 1pm. Zoom invite to follow Raymond thanked everyone and closed the meeting. | **Action: Alice (WLC)****Action: Alan (VSGWL)****Action: Alice (WLC)****Action: Alan (VSGWL)****Action: Alan (VSGWL)****Alan (VSGWL)****Raymond****(FCDWL)** |
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