**Note of meeting of the Third Sector Strategy Group (TSSG) – 17 August 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), David McDonald (Whitburn CDT), Tracy Murdoch (Kidzeco), Karen Nailen (Citizens Advice Bureau), Angela Moohan (The Larder), Rosemary McCabe (Children 1st), Brian Pringle (WLDAS), Monica Mochar (Well Being Scotland), Bruce Henderson (CGNN), Alan Cunningham (CDT), Catherine Neilly (WL Foodbank), Stuart Barrie (Homestart), Linda White (WLSEN) Alice Mitchell, Susan Gordon, Naimh Bajai (all West Lothian Council)

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| **ITEM** | **KEY POINTS** | **ACTION BY** |
| 1 | **Welcome and Apologies**  **Welcome**  Raymond welcomed everyone to the meeting.  **Apologies**  Jay Haston (Wave Trust), Mark Kennedy (Circle) |  |
| 2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10  11 | **Previous minutes of meeting held on 15 June 2021**  The action notes were accepted with a minor correction – the date of the meeting was 15 June rather than 11 May.  **Matters arising/review of actions from last meeting**  All other actions on agenda for today`s meeting.  **Community Wealth Building (CWB)- Alice Mitchell**  Alice gave a presentation on developments surrounding Community Wealth Building (CWB). She explained that Joanna Anderson, who had leading on this for the Council, had recently moved onto a new position. Alice hoped that graduates and a seconded officer will soon be starting to take forward this work and the advert for a Business Networking Advisor has been re-posted. Alice added that one of graduates would map out requirements and agree the approach, including the establishment of a Working Group. This would include opportunities for 2 or 3 third sector reps. Angela and Silence indicated that processes and timelines should be put in place to ensure there are opportunities for all to be considered. This would allow for new ideas and approaches to be considered that are fully inclusive. Possible representatives for this Working Group to be established in due course.  Alice explained that there would be 5 key pillar anchor organisations. Alice explained that the Council would be looking closely at local spend and how this can be protected. Raymond asked about the potential role of third sector as anchor organisations and how local spend might be managed. Silence highlighted that BAME led groups can play an important role in providing input into the process.  **Action:** Alice to pick up separately with FJSS Group.  Alice explained that Council Executive had approved the new Job Creation Grant in response to changes in the economy last month. She added that Young Persons Guarantee agreed today which supports 16-24 year olds into employment.  Alan C asked for details about the Place based Investment Programme. Alice advised that the Regeneration team can assist with applications. Angela asked if monies could be carried forward into future years however Alice explained this had not been possible previously, but this would be clarified with the Scottish Government.  **Action:** Raymond to circulate slides from today`s presentation to TSSG.  **Sector/ Council Working Group updates**  Alan M reported that the Council will reopen the Modernisation and Improvement Fund in September 2021 to allow the final £134K to be made available. In line with our request, this would be on a rolling / open basis. The cap on awards would be reduced to £7.5k to allow more orgs to apply. Alan explained that up to £15k would be ringfenced to help with any identified training or business to meet the needs of the sector  **Action:** Survey to be carried out into future needs of sector.  Alan advised that the Working Group had agreed to produce an Annual report for the Voluntary Orgs PDSP with Council Official. The joint report would focus on Covid-19 reflections and consider future partnership opportunities. It was agreed that an event to formally launch the report would take place towards the end of October. The event would build on the success of the summit held last September and provide a further opportunity for the sector to showcase its work and value.  Alan asked for help with the planning for the event. Karen, Silence, Joanna, Linda and Stuart agreed to work together to assist.  Angela asked that work be developed to highlight the real impact the sector brings to West Lothian. Alan explained that further work would be progressed this year on the further development of the Service Locator tool. This would also need info from all third sector orgs to better capture the collective value of the sector. Brian commented that VSGWL could led on this. Alan agreed that further work should be developed and progressed in future years, led by VSGWL, to illustrate this work. Brian offered to be part of a small working group to support this work. Joanna advised that previously only 7 orgs had contributed to this and progressing this further would be effective in aiding future reporting.    Linda commented that there would be opportunities to use digital to help with impact reporting. Tools could be used to align to performance indicators. Data capture and analysis was key for both sector and for reporting on success.  Linda highlighted that resourcing and capacity would be a challenge. Alan highlighted that following an internal review, additional resource would be recruited into VSGWL to better meet the needs of the sector. This resource would help support this important work and other strands of work covered earlier in the meeting.  **Action:** Working group to be established over the coming months.  On a wider point, Angela suggested that third sector representation on groups should be included for discussion at the next meeting  **Action**: Raymond to add to include on agenda  **Consultation papers** CLD Plan; Draft Violence Against Women and Girls  Strategy; Strategic Needs Assessment presentation on Children & Young  People’s Mental Health; Community Ownership Fund; Race Forum Action Plan  Raymond highlighted the consultation papers that had been circulated previously and asked everyone to consider and respond.  **Action:** All to consider  **Forum updates and developments**  No updates provided.  **VSGWL report**  Alan reported that Career Ready urgently need third sector organisations to join us in supporting young people in West Lothian. They are looking for groups to mentor a local young person in S5/S6 for around an hour a month. Financial support is available through a 4-week paid internship in summer 2022. Details available from <https://careerready.org.uk/scotland/> . If anyone has any queries on the initiative, Larissa Russell is the regional manager for Career Ready in West Lothian. [Larissa.russell@careerready.org.uk](mailto:Larissa.russell@careerready.org.uk)  Alan advised that as part of VSGWL`s partnership with WL College and the Skills Alignment project, opportunities were available for groups to offer placements for students - [**https://forms.office.com/r/JzyHNpZxrE**](https://forms.office.com/r/JzyHNpZxrE)  In return**,** the College was running a series of Skills Boost Programs in various subjects. The aim of the Skills Boost Courses is to help those affected by the economic downturn and upskill them for a specific industry sector, to enhance digital skills or to refine the individuals employability and core skills to maximise their job opportunities. If this type of course was of interest to members, the College could put together a ‘digital skills and sustainability course’just for TSSG members. There are usually about 20-30 people on each course which is run virtually via Teams over 4 weeks.  **Action:** Groups to consider and advise of interest.  Alan advised that the Scottish Government had launched a £3.3m fund to help support individuals into volunteering. Up to£30k per organisation is available of over 3 years - 2021-2024. Deadline for applications is Fri 27 August - <https://www.impactfundingpartners.com/open-applications/volunteering-support-fund-2021-24>  Alan had previously circulated a consultation paper on the feasibility of VSGWL to operate a local community lottery. Karen and Brian expressed concerns about the ethics of operating the scheme and the possible impact on those with low incomes and individuals with addictions. Alan advised that Gatherwell could attend a subsequent meeting if required. It was agreed that holding a separate event just with the sector to discuss further would be helpful.  **Action:** separate consultation event to be set up  **WLSEN report**  Linda explained she would be taking a strategic approach to developing WLSEN. Linda said that that making connections with key partners in the coming weeks. She added that she would be talking to members on how WLSEN might better meet needs moving forward. Linda advised that progress was being made to appoint the new Membership Coordinator and hoped to have the post filled by mid-September.  Linda explained that a Development Worker to help take forward coordination of the Mental Health Forum would be recruited in Quarter 4.  Silence asked how individuals and groups from BAME communities might be better represented in social enterprises. This could be themed or approached geographically.  **Action:** WLSEN to discuss further with Silence.  **Future speakers**  Lorna Maise – Illegal Money Laundering  **AOCB**  No items discussed.  **Date of next meeting**  Survey will be sent round to set date for future meetings and arrangements.  Raymond thanked everyone and closed the meeting. | **Alice**  **Raymond**  **Alan**  **Alan**  **Raymond**  **All**  **Alan** |
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