**Note of meeting of the Third Sector Strategy Group (TSSG)**

**24 February 2022**

**Present:** Raymond Branton (Chair) - (Family and Community Development),

Alan McCloskey (VSGWL), Angela Moohan (The Larder), Billie Skene (OPAL), Brian Pringle (WLDAS), Collette Moran (West Lothian School Bank), Ellie ( Whitburn and District CDT), Helen Davis (West Lothian Youth Action Project), Jay Haston (Wave Trust), Joanna Van Der Berg (Firefly Arts), June Dickson (Environmental CIC), Karen Nailen (CAB), Katie Mullen (Braid Health and Wellbeing), Lesley Mount (Signpost), Linda White (WLSEN), John Murphy (Community Action Blackburn), Paula Lally (Health In Mind), Rosemary McCabe (Children 1st), Tracy Kerr (VSGWL), Tracy Murdoch (Kidzeko), Kathleen Neilly (West Lothian Foodbank)

Guest Speaker; Greg Stark, HSCP Programme Manager, Mental Health Services

& Workforce Planning

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| **ITEM** | **KEY POINTS** | **ACTION BY** |
| 1 | **Welcome and Apologies**Raymond welcomed everyone to the meeting.Apologies received with thanks. |  |
| 2 | **Guest Speaker**Raymond introduced Greg Stark, HSCP Programme Manager, Mental Health Services & Workforce Planning as the guest speaker. Copies of the slides for the talk will be forwarded by Raymond, Greg’s contact details are on the slides. Greg asked for an open discussion about the challenges in recruiting in the third sector asking1. What were the challenges?
2. Is there any way the sector can be supported?

Greg mentioned that recruitment for HSPC should not result in loss of staff from the third sector. Points raised* Salaries are higher in the public sector resulting in staff moving away from the third sector.
* Experienced staff leave third sector to move to higher paid jobs in public sector often around the age they are looking for reliable income for mortgages or to start a family.
* Is contract work a solution?
* A review in one organisation was carried out several years ago and brought staff in line with NHS however they are now out of line again. Third sector organisations have to promote benefits out with salaries to keep staff ie investing in staff with training.

Greg asked all to get in touch for any further information and to keep an eye for updates online <https://westlothianhscp.org.uk/workforceplanning>Questions asked* Angela asked Greg to get in touch with her to arrange to repeat the presentation to the employability forum.

Action Points* Raymond to circulate slides
 | **Raymond** |
| 3 | **Previous minutes of meeting held on 13th January 2022**One correction from Angela Moohan advising that the nominations for the chair of the employability forum were to be from the forum members and were to go to her and not VSGWL. The action notes were accepted.**Matters arising/review of actions from last meeting**All other actions are on agenda for today`s meeting. |  |
| 4 | **WLSEN report****Collaborate**West Lothian Wellbeing will be launching on Monday. The launch has already been shared through various organisations and will be being pushed out on social media on Monday. Linda asked that all retweet to raise the profile as much as possible on social mediaThe project has 9 partners who Linda thanked. Further organisations have been in touch to partner in the future. The first client has gone through the process and will be receiving advice from two project partners. WELSEN anticipates the number of referrals to spike on Monday after launch. The project will be working with Social Partner Lab understand the outcomes of the pilot project and how to best communicate and share information through WELSEN and the project partners. The work will provide better data for funding applications for all. Community enterprise have provided expertise on digital tools and West Lothian College designed the logo and the name for the project. The project has been a good example of cross sector collaboration. The link to the webpage is www.westlothianwell-being.org.uk WELSEN will also be looking at further funding opportunities. They were unsuccessful in their bid for the mental health and wellbeing funding but hope to reapply if the funding is available for March 2023. **Membership and Operations**There has been a 10% increase in membership over 2021. Linda is pleased there is recognition that WELSEN can help organisations grow.There are plans to look at how to provide peer support and are they are also finalising a handbook for members of WELSEN. The council have confirmed they will contribute to funding for the next financial year. Service Level Agreements are under discussion with the council and with VSGWL. They are still awaiting a decision from the Scottish Government on the outcome of a single intermediary in Scotland. The decision with have an impact on WELSEN work. Questions asked* Jay Haston asked to get in touch with Linda regarding Andys man club and Wave Trust.
* What is the referral process for West Lothian Wellbeing? It is self-referral for any adults to get support through the website landing page. Referrals from GP’s are not anticipated, but expect GP’s to make patients aware of the service.
* Is the new service signposting? Yes
* Who is the service aimed at?Adults in West Lothian and data will be being collected to look at who the main users of the service are.
* Can you clarify that the service is for early intervention in mild to moderate cases? Yes that is correct, if someone is in crisis, the appropriate action will be taken.

Linda gave her email for anyone with any other questions to get in touch **Linda@wlsen.org**  |  |
| 5.  | **Council Working Group: planning/focus****Update from Alan**The main discussion from the last meeting was around training needs and what they may look like moving forward. There was a previous survey sent out from VSGWL asking for feedback about the training needs for the third sector. VSGWL will be creating a training calendar from the results adding in training needs highlighted by applications to the council modernisation and improvement fund applications and look for the lead organisations to provide training.**Funding**The previous grant award from the Scottish Government was for 2 years and heading into year 2, the group are looking at a timeline for the applications for 2023 – 2024. After the council elections in May, they will be looking at plans for the funding future for the third sector highlighting the strategy must be to invest in the third sector. **Agenda Items** An agenda item was added about sharing resources between the third sector and the council as a result of a question from a member of the TSSG. Raymond encouraged all to continue to provide items for the agenda for the group. **Working Group Vacancy**There is now a vacancy in the group as Stuart has left his previous position. Raymond will send out the person specification and anyone interested should apply through him. If there was more than one applicant, an election will be held. Angela mentioned that she had applied the last time but due to an error in the process was not successful. Raymond and Angela are to meet separately to discuss. Questions asked* Angela asked how the survey from VSGWL was sent as she didn’t see it. Alan advised that this would have been emailed to TSSG before Christmas and added to the VSGWL website and social media.Angela asked that for sight of the survey.

Action Points* Alan to resend the survey to Angela.
 | **Alan** |
| 6.  | **Council Elections Hustings****Host -** As no further suggestions were made on who could host the hustings, the group will go ahead with Mhairi Harrington. **Date -** The council meeting agenda will be continuing so there are limited dates and times available. This will also need to tie in with the host and the venue. The dates suggested were Monday 11th pm, Tues12 am/pm, Friday 8th PM April however it was pointed out that the Friday afternoon isn’t suitable as anyone caring for children would not be available. Remaining possibilities are Monday PM and Tuesday AM or PM. **Third Sector Manifesto -** Alan has a generic, manifesto for change, template which has been created by the TSI network. This can be customised for West Lothian. The template identifies 5 areas which may be of interest along with looking at the relationship with the third sector, commissioning for longer term investment and empowering communities. A working group will look at making changes to the template to reflect the priorities of the TSSG. Members of the group will be Raymons, Angela, June, Helen,J ay and Paula. The first meeting will be online at 2.30pm on Thursday 3rd March. Anyone not able to attend should send their comments to Raymond who will share. There was some discussion around points that should be raised including key issues for West Lothian. * Mental Health
* Anti Poverty
* Food insecurity
* Building Confidence for people in disadvantaged communities
* Having a stronger partnership to make the deprived places in West Lothian are better places to live
* Early intervention and prevention agenda

Jay asked that everyone endorse the Wave Trust 70/30 campaign on social media. [www.wavetrust.org/7030](http://www.wavetrust.org/7030). Action Points* Working group to create manifesto.
* Raymond to pass on any comments from anyone unable to attend the working group meeting.
 | **Working Group****Raymond** |
| 7 | **VSGWL report**Alan gave an update covering**Funding****Communities MH & Wellbeing Fund** Round 1 is complete with over 50 applications seeking £1.3m from a pot of £470k. There is no news yet of next year’s funding but once there is VSGWL will share the information and plan to have some funding workshops. The focus was mainly on small grants although larger grants were offered to organisations that typically, but not exclusively, evidenced partnership or collaboration. £413k has nominally been allocated with £57K being kept available for round 2 which is currently live. The closing date is noon on 4 March. This round is open to new applicants for small grants applications up to £10K. **Council Long Term Unemployed Fund**There are still some places ringfenced for the third sector. Details are available from Claire Stewart. **Modernisation and Improvement Grant**Funds up to £7.5k are available on a rolling basis for around another 18 months. **Place Based Investment Fund**There is a £1M total available, £500K for town centre and £500K for community wealth building. The deadline for this is 22 April. **Social Isolation and Loneliness Fund 2022**Alan has just been notified of this and details will be circulated on the website. * The total fund value available is in the region of £30,000 and organisations across Scotland (with an annual income not exceeding £150,000) can apply for a micro-grant of up to £1,000 to enable them to tackle social isolation, loneliness or reduced wellbeing.
* The funding will be available to small, local organisations to enable them to support people (aged 16yrs+) who may be at risk of social isolation, loneliness or reduced wellbeing.
* Eligible activities must take place between 1st May and 30th September 2022.

**Community Wealth Building**Three sessions have been held in last week with CLES who are rolling out the concept of community wealth building. It is about* Strengthening 20 minute neighbourhoods,
* Addressing climate crisis
* Better quality jobs
* Connecting people
* Building capacity /confidence in most deprived communities

The group are aware of need to properly engage and resource third sector and recognise as equal partner. CLES will create an action plan which should be available around May/June. **No One Left Behind / Young Person Guarantee** Alan has had verbal confirmation that Council have agreed to allocate £200k to third sector from Young Person Guarantee monies, before Scottish Government have confirmed grant offer to the council. Alan will circulate details when he knows more and will share with the employability forum. **West Lothian College offer**A reminder that the college can offer a Skills Boost programme. Contact Elaine Campbell if interested. The college are also looking to place a couple of HND business students in an organisation for work placement. They are looking for a total of 3 days which could be online but preferably in an office environment. The timing would be the 3 weeks after the Easter Holidays. Students must undertake a small project- their interests are finance/marketing and business in general. If anyone interested, please let Alan know and he will share details.**Community Planning Partnership Meeting**Alan has circulated information on the meeting attended. There was a very detailed discussion on wide range of topics. * Economic recovery
	+ Stats on labour markets /employability
	+ Info on skills and training
	+ Salary levels
	+ Living standards and impacts of cost of living
	+ Vacancies and shortages in West Lothian
* Thematic forum updates
	+ Community Safety Partnership
	+ Health and wellbeing Partnership
	+ Economic Partnership and Job Task Force
	+ Climate Change Strategy
	+ Anti Poverty developments
	+ Locality plans
* LOIP and links to Community Wealth Building agenda

**Census**This is happening on Sunday 20 March. There will be a digital approach this year. Alan has circulated information. **Staffing / office reopening** VSGWL are hoping to reopen to the public in the coming weeks. **West Lothian counter terrorism**Alan has been contacted and advised that there are concerns about extremist right wing groups looking to hold events in premises in West Lothian. Alan will circulate further information once he has it. **COSVO survey Results/Peer support**Raymond raised the COSVO survey results about third sector burnout. Raymond previously held a third sector leaders support group which was a safe place for heads of organisations to get together for peer support. Raymond asked if anyone was interested in starting this again. Feedback* One member is leaving their post due to this issue.
* Helen, Tracy and June would support the group.
* Angela offered Strathbrock café for a regular slot to meet in person.

As there was interest in this restarting, Raymond will send out a communication to the wider group about this. Action Points* Raymond to send out information about peer support group.
 | **Raymond** |
| 8 | **Forum / sector updates, developments and consultations**1. Children and Families Forum

No update1. **Race Forum**No update
2. **Employability Forum**

From 1 April the employability fund and community job Scotland will cease to exist. The money will be moved to no one left behind fund and awarded to local authorities. The forum has been working on what impact this will have on the 3rd sector. This will mainly have an impact on the larger National organisations who deliver the employability fund. The council have recognised the gap in the transition period and released the £200k mentioned by Alan. West Lothian Council are likely to have a grant scheme in October. There is no indication of how much will be in the pot. The forum will be meeting again and have more organisations wanting to join the forum. A consortium bid has been made for funds to do a consultation with the third sector on employability and find the gaps in the third sector delivery. Key themes are that the third sector deal mainly with young people and less adults. There is also a gap in additional supports training. A report will be circulated once finalised. If anyone wants to participate in the consultation, please get in touch with Angela or Douglas at community enterprise Ltd. Angela asked Alan about a meeting she had attended a developing young workforce steering group and asked about other sub groups of the economic recovery group which were mentioned at the meeting and why the third sector had not been invited to these. Alan is attending a sub group but is not aware of any further groups. Angela asked Alan to share the gaps that have been identified in the sub group to be used for funding applications. Alan will explore further and send this to Angela to share with the employability forum. CDTs Forum1. **Anti-Poverty Task Force/Child Poverty Reference Group**
2. **Mental Health Forum**

Action Points* Alan to share information from the sub group of the economic recovery group with Angela.
 | **Alan**  |
| 9 | **AOCB****No AOCB.**  |  |
| 10 | **Date of next meeting**The next meeting is 1-3pm on 7th April in person at Carers of West Lothian, Livingston.  |  |