Note of meeting of the Third Sector Strategy Meeting

Thursday 19 January 2023

1.00pm atVoluntary Sector Gateway and on Teams

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| Chair: | Raymond Branton (Playworks) | Note taker: | Tracy Kerr (VSGWL) |

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| Attendees: Alex Fleming (Spark), Caroline Millar (Children 1st), Collette Moran (School Bank West Lothian), Jocelyn Crawford (Safe Families ), June Dickson (Environmentalhealthcic), Monica Mochar (WellBeing Scotland), Alan McLoskey (VSGWL), Ann Holloway (WLVN), David McDonald (Whitburn CDT), Helen Davis (WLYAP)  Lesley Mount (Signpost), Tracy Murdoch (Kidzeco) |  |
| |  | | --- | | Apologies: Christine Jack (River Kids), Gail McNair Homestart, Alison Wright (Carers of West Lothian), Karen Nailen (CAB), Mark Vance (WLDAS), Traci Mackie (Blackburn Family Centre), Silence Chihuri (FJSS), Jock Kerr  Guest Speakers: Gillian Edwards & Katy McBride (West Lothian Council) | |  | |  |

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| Agenda Item | Decision/Action | Action By |
| 1. **Welcome and Apologies**  Raymond welcomed everyone to the meeting. |  |  |
| 1. **Guest Speakers**   A presentation was given by Gillian and Katy from West Lothian Council, Housing Strategy and Development, re. issues and priorities for the new Local Housing Strategy.  Gillian asked for feedback from the forum members about any specific issues to be considered.   * A suggestion was made that more imaginative solutions be used to adapt existing homes to make them more suitable for particular circumstances. * Alan suggested this may fit with community wealth building. * Any other suggestions or comments should be emailed to gillian.edwards@westlothian.gov.uk   A copy of the presentation will be circulated. | Circulate presentation | Tracy |
| 1. **Previous minute and matters arising**   Point 5 in the minutes refers to the COINS. A question was raised about what it was and where to access this. <https://coins.westlothian.gov.uk/coins/>  No other matters arising, and previous minutes were accepted as accurate. | Contact Elaine Campbell at West Lothian College about joining the employability forum | Tracy |
| 1. **Council Third Sector Community Support Fund**   The fund is now live. More information can be found on The Gateway and West Lothian council website. |  |  |
| 1. **Strategy Group and Council Working Group Updates**   **Working Group**  The most recent meeting of the working group discussed fundraising. West Lothian Council are keen for support to be given to the sector and are looking for feedback on what may be useful. Suggestions made included;   * + Free access to payable sites like funding Scotland   + Help with collecting relevant feedback and evaluation for funding applications   + A question was asked about training which was referred to as part of the application for the modernisation fund.   There was also discussion around the standard of applications and it was suggested that it is beneficial to speak to funders in advance of completing an application.  **Strategy Group**  Discussed engagement with West Lothian Council (WLC). The group will input into a proposed strategy to be implemented throughout WLC.  Seats on all but one PDSP representing VSGWL have now been filled. Someone has been approached for the remaining space. The representatives are;  a) Corporate Policy and Resources – Karen Nailen  b) Education – Raymond Branton  c) Housing - FJSS Group  d) Public & Community Safety – Helen Davis  e) Social Work & Health – Alison Wright  f) Environment & Sustainability – tbc  g) Economy, Community Empowerment and Wealth Building – Alan McCloskey | Report feedback to West Lothian Council and establish position on training referred to in modernisation fund application process. | Raymond |
| 1. **VSGWL report**   **Funding news**   * £469k Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund to West Lothian`s Third Sector   + The fund was oversubscribed with 61 applications being received in phase 1,seeking £1.3m.   + Phase 2 will open on 1 Feb with a deadline for applications of 23rd Feb. This will only be for small grants with a total of £66k available * £30k (£70K) Unpaid Carers Fund   + £30K of the initial £70K fund is remaining for a phase 2 of funding. This will be open 3-20 February. * £21k Cost of living Fund (Rural Fund)   + This is for capital monies and ringfenced for organisations that are currently members newly formed Cost of Living Forum. This will be opening soon.   **Cost of living**   * The Third Sector Interface Chief Officers Network met with SCVO last week about cost of living concerns. SCVO are having a meeting with the Scottish Government on shared policy agenda. * SCVO published a survey today of Scotland's voluntary sector which found 93% of organisations that responded reported an increase in costs in 2022 - and 43% said these rises were negatively impacting their ability to deliver services. There are about 45,000 charitable organisations in Scotland and the SCVO warned a "conservative estimate" was that 1,300 would be unable to open their doors in a year's time. * The CPP cost of living short life group met last week. * West Lothian Council are putting on Cost of Living Crisis Support Awareness Sessions online on Monday 23rd Jan and Wednesday 1st February and face to face at VSGWL on Thursday 26th January. * The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) are running a local awareness session on the fire safety challenges that the Cost of Living Crisis has created in West Lothian.     **Events**  Two events are being held in The Gateway next week   * Mon 23 Jan at 1pm – West Lothian Council are holding an awareness session on their Third Sector Fund. * Wed 25 Jan at 3pm – VSGWL are holding a “Meet the Funder” with Marie Nicol from the National Lottery Community Fund. There are no remaining spaces to attend in person but there is still space to attend virtually.   **Third Sector / Council Annual Report 22/23**   * Case studies are requested to be submitted for the third sector report   **Staffing**  VSGWL have recruited a Community Volunteer Support Development Officer for a new role starting on 13 February.  A position has also been offered to fill a Volunteer/Governance Role.  A proposed role of Sector Support Assistant for admin support is planned to be advertised soon. |  |  |
| 1. **WLSEN update**   No update from WLSEN  Monica gave an update on the West Lothian Wellbeing project. This is currently being run by the steering group and has funding to run until March. It is hoped further funding can be secured to continue running.  A workshop is being planned to review the project. Once the date has been finalized, Monica will notify Tracy who will circulate to the forum members. | Circulate the date of the West Lothian Wellbeing workshop. | Monica/Tracy |
| 1. **Forum/sector updates, developments, or consultations**   **Cost of Living Forum**  A third sector cost of living forum has been created and met for the first time last week. Around 20 organisations have joined the forum and they plan to meet monthly.  **WL Food Network**  The Gateway has been asked to help support the Network. Alan is currently chairing Strategic Planning meetings and Full Food Network with a range of meetings in diary in coming few weeks to determine the way forward.  **Children and Families Forum**  The next meeting will be held next Tuesday.  Some of the forum members have arranged for families to meet with Linda Roddie who is carrying out an assessment for West Lothian Council in relation to the Children’s Services Plan.  **Employability Forum**  No meetings have been held since the last Third Sector Strategy Group. The next meeting will be held in February.  **WLVN**  The last meeting was held on Monday with 19 people attending. There was a presentation from Community Connections then discussions around forum membership, volunteer event, celebration event, links with Third Sector Strategy Group and brief service updates**.**  **Community Development Trust Forum**  The group met before Christmas for a catch up. A “growing” forum has been created with forum members sharing ideas and resources. Attendance includes community gardens and foodbanks.  **Anti Poverty Taskforce**  Consultations are ongoing to refresh the anti poverty framework. |  |  |
| 1. **AOCB**   The School Bank West Lothian are advertising a post for a project worker. |  |  |
| 1. **Next Meeting Details**   All were happy with the current timing and frequency of meetings. Future meetings will continue every 6 weeks on Thursdays at 1-2.30pm. No breaks required in the summer.  Dates suggested were 23 February, 6 April, 18 May, 22 June. Raymond and Tracy to liaise to send out calendar of dates and meeting invitations for the remainder of 2023.  Suggested future guest speakers are:  Police Anti terrorism  Community Connections  Cllr Sullivan | Establish all meeting dates for 2023 and send out to all. | Tracy/Raymond. |