Third Sector Forum: Children and Families

Tuesday 1pm: February 18th

**Action note**

Present: Helen Davis (WLYAP), Tracy Kerr & Victoria Isbister (VSGWL), Simon Henderson (Play works), Fiona Brown (WLDAS), Collette Moran (School Bank), Douglas Guest (Circle), Garry Walker (The Larder), Karen Nailen (CAB), Hazel Tyson (Circle), Wilma Murray (Carers of WL)

Apologies: Charlene Boyd, Dorothy Terhune (NCT), Zoe Brown (NSPCC)

1. **Welcome and Apologies (Helen)** – Introductions from all. Douglas advised this would be his last meeting as Promise Development manager with Circle as he is moving onto another opportunity.
2. **Agency Presentation: Ian from Thrive.** A voluntary group of early year workers and parents have got together in the Fauldhouse, Greenrigg and Blackridge area. There is less provision in rural areas and often it is one parent who runs a group then when their child goes to primary school the group can struggle / fold. Thrive is a support organisation to train up parents to take up or run it long term if that is what parents want. Focused on smaller areas. They are working now on getting known! Surveys out in Blackridge – is the service needed? (informal surveys say yes!). Board are doing this in their spare time. Collette spoke about the School Bank and Ian said he is looking to provide a holistic service and has liaised with Food Network (Ray, VSGWL).

Thrivecharityscotland@gmail.com, registered as charity.

1. **Action note from previous meeting, actions and matters arising.** Agreed
2. **In work poverty project update: Karen Nailen (CAB)**

Last year, CAB were involved in Cost-of-living support with NHS Project, 90% people who contacted CAB were not eligible for financial support, which led to thinking what other ways can we help people? Advisors have also reported a significant rise in customers struggling pay day to pay day. A lot of support available is targeted to people on benefit. CAB applied to Robertson Trust who awarded funding, and the project is now just about to launch. Project worker appointed and will be looking at ways to make contact with employers and improve relationships. This will be targeted work, perhaps with employers who pay lower wages. Intend to be preventative service - when customers engage with CAB, many are already at crisis point so trying to engage with families earlier. FORT referral system. Customers struggling to get time of work to get advice so CAB extending their opening hours. Happy to come and speak to people about the project.

1. **Feedback from other meetings**
2. Children & Families Strategic Planning group meeting – 17th March. Information circulated by email.
3. Alcohol Drug Partnership – This covers different levels of support and it’s a big field, impacts on so many people. This agenda item is for anything with any substance abuse links in. Limited admin support from NHS and Council. Lauren Fraser has picked up from Barry (who left). Members who work in this area will pass on information as and when.
4. Community Safety group: PDSP is happening now, Silence is attending on behalf of Helen.
5. Food Network: Ray is currently off, all emails to food network email. Funding has been confirmed for Q4. May have a small reserve going into 2025 session, no further funding – which may affect some pantries. Uncertain future. The amount of people in food poverty has been raised to the Council. Child poverty round table discussion Thursday 2pm led by Councillor Kirsteen Sullivan (MSP), supported by Raymond Branton (Civitas). Varied representation inc Gateway, Food Network, WLYAP, CAB – feed in day-to-day issues from advisors.
6. Climate Action Group – Conference on Friday Howden Park. Contact WLCAN directly if you are interested in a stall. Small funding grants have just been awarded. School bank received £750 for uniform hub kit in schools to support recycling uniforms in 2 high school and 2 primary. [New Eco Fund - apply now - West Lothian Climate Action Network](https://wlcan.scot/new-eco-fund-apply-now/)
7. Child Poverty Steering Group (Karen, CAB) – Minutes circulated. April onward strategy in progress.
8. **The Promise (Douglas):** [Promise Learning Collaborative - Family Tickets, Thu, Mar 27, 2025 at 10:30 AM | Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/promise-learning-collaborative-family-tickets-1207196440049?aff=oddtdtcreator) WL event – venue unknown. Douglas spoke about funding – 32 different streams. [The Promise](https://thepromise.scot/) Would be good to find out what WLC are progressing. <https://oversightboard.scot/>  Some frustrations about progression in this area.
9. **Mental Health Oversight Group:** Revamping thematic groups & reviewing breakout groups – one of which is Westspace. Lots of discussions with young people about the information – how it’s presented, how it’s advertised, the quality of the details (is what’s there useful?). [West Space | Six ways to wellbeing](https://westspace.org.uk/self-help/tips-and-advice-to-boost-mental-health-and-wellbeing/six-ways-to-wellbeing/). Discussion surrounding format – electronic and paper: everywhere! Resources still going in, lots on there. Hopefully it will continue to be updated. Anna at West Space good at updating at request.
10. **Whole Family Wellbeing Fund:** Projects are progressing. Pre-Christmas networking event was cancelled. No word on rescheduled dates. Not been together as a network. Another year funding 25/26 yet.
11. **Third Sector Strategy Group**: Louise Crozier (CAB) chaired meeting for first time. Alan will take forward Third sector budgets and request put out for case studies for PDSP’s to Alan (VSGWL). Good networking with MD from Race Forum.
12. **Voluntary Sector Gateway West Lothian:** Tracy updated about disclosure changes, please see [Home - Volunteer Scotland](https://www.volunteerscotland.net/) PfP 2-4pm drop in. Networking event tonight 5-7pm. Zero tolerance free training March 4th “under pressure”. Service Locator will be live from April 1st, currently gathering feedback from focus group on pilot website. Members will then be contacted asking if information we hold is correct. Orgs can do this themselves via a form or if additional support is needed, we have a school resource at the Gateway who can help.
13. **Members updates**
* School Bank: School camp funding, clothes packs, 22 schools, referred by the school, focusing on areas of deprivation i.e. walking shoes and sleeping bags. Looking for new treasurer for board. Accountancy experience preferred. Looking to expand community rails in community – where can we put uniforms and jackets. Email Collette with any ideas. collette@schoolbank-westlothian.org
* Circle – Funding for 18-hour Role. 21-year anniversary celebration event – April 3rd Armadale office 12-2.30pm.
1. **Date of next meeting**: 1-2.30pm \*Hybrid\* at the Gateway: Tuesday 15th April
2. **AOCB**
* COSLA Suicide prevention Tuesday 25th 10-12 (Helen going and can share notes after)

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| Email / publicise in work poverty project | Karen |
| Children’s MH week: Vaping, major issue. During this week ASH Scotland will put on a webinar about drug vaping. | Will share details |
| Share West Space resources – posters, bookmarks, cards  | Helen |
| Share Anna’s email, West Space  | Helen |
| Anything new you have been involved in for Children services annual report – case studies to  | Victoria / Helen (by April) |
| Any vacancies: Gateway: Volunteer Scotland: <https://salesforce.123formbuilder.com/form-6733157/volunteer-opportunity-form-new> | All members |