

Terms of Reference

Background

The Voluntary Sector Gateway West Lothian (hereafter “The Gateway”) is West Lothian’s Third Sector Interface (TSI), and one of its remits is dedicated support for social enterprises. The Gateway previously worked in partnership with the West Lothian Social Enterprise Network (WLSN) to deliver this as standalone function, but following positive discussions with WLSN, The Gateway have agreed to bring this important support service back in-house.

This Social Enterprise Forum is one of the channels that facilitate The Gateway’s engagement with the Sector and to encourage enterprises’ engagement, networking and peer support.

Membership

- Membership is open to all social enterprises operating in West Lothian: a social enterprise is an organisation that is trading and has an asset lock

The role of The Gateway

- To organise a regular cycle of Forum meetings, to Chair these meetings and to provide secretarial support
- To bring social enterprises together through meetings, networking events and training opportunities, to facilitate development and support opportunities
- To provide regular information and communications to the local Sector on the latest Policy developments, funding opportunities, partnership opportunities and local news
- To enable the Sector to engage meaningfully with other Third Sector Forums, strategic partnerships and local and national Government structures
- To represent the interests of the Social Enterprise Sector when appropriate

The role of the Social Enterprise Forum

- To engage with The Gateway, the Forum and with Sector colleagues, to share information, needs and good practice, to network and contribute to a supportive structure
- To contribute to meeting agendas, discussions and activities, and to be supportive of peers, avoiding self-interest/competition in the spirit of partnership and wider benefit
- To facilitate communications both up and down, and across, various Sector forums
- To influence Policy and planning, locally and nationally, across the sector
- To act as a sounding board on The Gateway's strategies, plans and priorities

Meetings

- Meetings will be held every 6 weeks (depending on holiday periods) and venues will alternate between The Gateway, in Bathgate, and members' sites
- Meetings will be themed/segmented according to participants' interest/choice
- Agenda /theme suggestions should be submitted to the Chair up to 10 working days before the next meeting
- The agenda and any papers will be issued one week prior to the meeting. The action notes will be issued within one week of the meeting
- These TOR will be reviewed annually