Third Sector Reference Group

Minutes

13/8/26

Present: Stephanie-Anne Harris, Bruce Crawford, Sarah Van Putten, Debbie McLachlan, Biddy Kelly, Steve Lawrence, Laurene Edgar, Charlie Cumming, Kimberley Swan, Shelly-Ann Brown

Apologies: Paul Wilson, Johnathan Ssentamu, Helena Richards, Ranajit Majumder, Benjamin Napier

AGENDA:

1. Third Sector Connects (TSC) survey results

- TSRG members received the survey results,
- Feedback was generally excellent,
- Will use the feedback to plan for the next TSC meeting in November 2026.
- Demand for the TSC to be in person

2. Policy and Sustainability Committee 18/8 – reports

Chris Adams - Strategy Manager, City of Edinburgh Council joined the meeting to answer questions on the report entitled 'Living Well Locally: Prevention, early intervention and mitigation in Edinburgh'

- TSRG had questions regarding: Local Improvement Plans, the Neighbourhood Partnerships plans, governance around all of this and the role of the Edinburgh Partnership; Place Plans and how all of this links to existing localised networks and city wide thematic fora; whether or not the Visitor levy could be a funding source for the 3rd sector; how the voices of children and young people would be heard in the NPPs

3. Funding Steering Group - update on members and plans for co-production

Work of the steering group was started a few months ago, with the first task to recruit - five additional members. This is complete now: Aala Ross Regenerative Futures Fund, Victoria Nyanga-Ndiaye Project Esperanza, Gary Dewar Dean and Cauvin Young People's Trust, John Halliday Community Renewal, Pauline Nicol-Bowie LIFT Low Income Families Together.

- A workshop of all who applied will be held on the 31st of August 2026

- A separate session would likely be held with the TSRG and all other networks/fora across the city. Bruce will update the TSRG on this at each of our meetings.

- The Co-design phase will run between now and March 2027, thereafter the steering group will agree a report for March 2027's Policy and Sustainability Committee which will outline the process, aims objective and timeline which is expected to be broadly as follows:

Applications will open spring time 2027; late summer applications will close and assessments begin; between September and December, there'll be an announcement of awards that will be disbursed from the 1st of April 2028.

4. Community Transport

· Representatives from the newly merged Handicabs Lothian (Handicabs and SEAG) have been in touch with S-AH to raise issues re their contracts/SLA which have been in place for a long number of years, since 2003, without any financial uplift. The contracts are due to expire in June 2027 and unless renewed and the contract reviewed to reflect current day costs, many 3rd sector organisations and their service users may not have access to transport to and from their buildings, leaving many services at risk. One such group would be daycare providers. This issue is being raised at Full Council on 27th August; thereafter the TSRG will offer help, support etc. work with Handicabs to try and find a way to get additional resources for community transport.

5. TSRG - Sub groups update

· Prevention – Biddy Kelly – first draft of a terms of reference and have submitted to TSRG members for review. Currently exploring with Ran who should sit on the group.

· Adult protection – Marion Findlay – provided a short summary of the purpose of subgroup. Next meeting to be held on the 8th of September at 3pm

· Change management – Stephanie Anne Harris – exploring the next topic/s of the IJB and what the third sector can do to play a part in that.

· Ethnic Minority Issues – Johnathan Ssentamu - apologies submitted. Update at next meeting

6. TSC November meeting

18th November, in members' diaries

7. AOCB

8. Date and time of next meeting

Sept. 7th 2.30-4.30pm - hybrid