



Chief Officers Group in the Third Sector

Minute of meeting – 30th of April 2024

Attendance In-Person: Helen Keron, Glenkens Community and Arts Trust (HK) (Chair)

Lauren Milligan, Independent Living Support (LM)

Craig McEwan, Inspired Community Enterprise Trust LTD (CM)

Heather Hall, Inspired Community Enterprise Trust LTD (HH)

Grace Cordozo, Sleeping Giants (GC)

Karen Ward Boyd, The Holywood Trust

Mhairi Ross, APEX (MR)

Roland Chaplain, Royal Meteorological Society (RCh)

Attendance Online: Robin Ferguson, D&G Befriending Project (RF)

Present In-Person: Alan Webb, Third Sector Dumfries and Galloway (AW)

Nadine Coltart, TSDG (NC)

Alan Hall, TSDG (AH)

Apologies: John Dougan, Relationships Scotland Dumfries

Beth Morrison, Just Breathe O2

Pamela Deans, Dumfries and Galloway Advocacy Service

Ed Forrest, Galloway and Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere

Carolyn Kennedy, Better Lives Partnership

Lisa Todd, Dumfries and Galloway Mental Health Association

Barnaby Fryer, Loch Ken Trust

Mark Smith, River of Life

Welcome and Introductions

HK welcomed members to the meeting and introductions were made. A range of roles and organisations were represented at the meeting and each attendee shared a recent win for their organisation. This provided a good networking opportunity. Apologies were noted as above.

Action Log Update

SoSE

HK: Believes Russel Griggs (RG) answered our question about social enterprise definition although we reserve the right to disagree. He is aware of our views that SoSE need to treat the third sector as a strategic partner if regional outcomes are to be achieved effectively. HK also noticed there has been changes to the SoSE website regarding what they publish surrounding funding, although more details would still be useful for the sector.

Action: Remove from action log for now.

Shared Prosperity Fund

AW: We would have little impact on the current round of the SPF. A better time to challenge the Chair of the DGC Economy and Resources Committee for a more inclusive and accessible process would be when the next round is announced.

Action: Keep on action log but HK and AW to postpone email to SPF.

Note of the meeting of 24th of January 2024

The note of the meeting of 24th of January 2024 was agreed as an accurate record.

HK: No update on REP meetings regarding community transport.

Key Challenges

RF: There has been an increase in referrals in Upper Nithsdale and Annandale and Eskdale therefore we are facing challenges around recruitment for volunteers in these areas. We have recently been engaging with voluntary groups to promote the organisation and as an attempt to recruit.

HK: There will always be a struggle to recruit in the third sector as we can't pay as much as the public sector.

RC: Following COP26 in Glasgow, young people, particularly in Brazil (host country for COP30), are keen for it to be a true 'People's COP'. Scottish Government should be working in an equal partnership to allow organisations like us feed into global events like this.

HH: There needs to be accessible communication for young people with additional needs so they can be involved in these conversations.

GC: It needs to be clearer how we are situated in these conversations, and we need to have access to information in a friendly readable language.

AW: TSDG's new action plan contains a strategy to understand our impact. This will kickstart that conversation about our responsibilities regarding impact on the planet.

GC: Intersectionality as it affects women and girls is a particular challenge that Sleeping Giants is supporting third sector and public sector bodies with. Lived experience panels are proving very effective – LM concurred.

COGITS Priorities for TSDG

These top issues are based on survey inputs and will help inform AW's plans going forward.

Fair Funding

COGITS supports the TSDG approach of working with partners to complement the Fair Funding Charter and moving to an investment / partnership model rather than commissioning and short-term grant awards.

Impact and policy influence

AW: Part of the new TSDG Prospectus is to develop policy. This applies to communities and the sector in general, influence externally and find mechanisms to inform a position. We need to assess our ability to do this and what we might need to provide in terms of training and support.

AW: Will be meeting with Scottish Government to discuss funding and delayed decisions regarding amounts and distribution. We will be implementing the Fair Funding Charter, which has 4 main principles.

AW: Conversations are taking place with NHS & D&G Council regarding commissioning and reviewing for services.

HH: A tender which focused on closing the disability and employment gap was created without involving anyone with a disability, making it impossible to bid for.

LM: Agreed with the challenges being made. NHS D&G cannot solve everything on their own, they need to use TSO's strengths and work collectively as a group.

HK: TSO's need the space to be able to make changes and be seen as a strategic partner.

GC: Small organisations can't complete the tenders due to the scale of them, bigger organisations are the only ones that can make the threshold therefore are always successful, leaving these small organisations behind.

MR: Noticed issues with employability procurement however has also seen some improvements.

AW: TSDG are already involved in the framework for employability procurement.

Action: TSDG to circulate the Fair Funding Charter within COGITS.

Staff Wellbeing

MR: Had good experience with an employee assistance app which led to a government scheme called Access to Work. This allowed a member of staff who required a taxi to get to work to have this expense paid for.

KB: What can the third sector do together as a workforce to ensure we look after everyone?

GC: There are various courses available, regarding a trauma informed workforce and compassion fatigue. These could be useful for members of staff to partake in.

HK: Would there be a space on TSDG website that would highlight where to access these resources? For example, contact details for Occupational Health.

LM: Peer support method could be implemented in some organisations; this is an alternative to counselling which sometimes people can find more beneficial.

Action: AW to send out TSDG Prospectus, welcomes any feedback from COGITS members.

AOCB

AW: Douglas Kirkpatrick is to stand down from his roles as head of Southwest of Scotland Transport Partnership (Swestrans) and Lead on Transport in DGC. TSDG will now be leading the programme for community transport in Dumfries and Galloway. We will focus on working with stakeholders and communities to create a model.

RC: Prompted the network to think about how they could contribute to the COP30 global events. GC concurred that we all have a civic responsibility to look above the parapet at these issues, no matter how busy we are. AW said that the TS contributions to the 'Green and Sustainable' outcomes of the RES would be part of the new TSDG Business Plan. HH updated they are working with the Crichton Carbon Centre and the Biosphere Climate Hub to see how young people with disabilities can better engage with the climate debate.

HK: A focus of a COGITS meeting later in the year should be on the new draft TSDG Business Plan, to solicit feedback from the network. **ACTION AH / AW.**

Date, Time and Venue of Next Meeting

- Tuesday 3rd of September
- 10:30am to 12:30pm
- Third Sector Dumfries & Galloway, Monreith House
Crichton Trust
Glencaple Road
Dumfries
DG1 4ZZ

Proposed Agenda – invite Dawn Roberts and Harry Hay of DGC to talk on how they see DGC / TS relationships / partnerships progressing. TBC dependent on their availability.