

16 October 2013

Dear Colleague,

This information pack presents information about Fife's Third Sector Strategy Group and our current plans to seek new members for the Group.

In this pack you will find:

- Background to the Third Sector Strategy Group (TSSG);
- Role of the TSSG;
- Current membership;
- Membership refresh process and timeline;
- Member role specification;
- Expression of interest form.

We hope that you will find the enclosed information helpful in finding out more about the TSSG and that you will consider expressing an interest in joining the Group.

If you have any queries or would like to discuss any aspect of the TSSG and potential membership then please do not hesitate to contact either me (using the contact details below), or the TSSG's Chairperson, Tom Bain, who can be contacted by e-mail in the first instance (see below).

Best wishes,

Kenny Murphy
Chief Executive
kenny@fifevoluntaryaction.org.uk

Tom Bain
Chairperson, Third Sector Strategy Group
tc.bain@btinternet.com

Dunfermline:
29A Canmore Street,
Dunfermline KY12 7NU
01383 732 136

Kirkcaldy:
10 St. Brycedale Avenue,
Kirkcaldy KY1 1ET
01592 645 540

Buckhaven:
23-27 Randolph Street,
Buckhaven KY8 1AT
01592 567 001

Cupar:
Volunteer House, 69 Crossgate,
Cupar KY15 5AS
01334 654 080

Background to the Third Sector Strategy Group

The TSSG was developed a time when CVS Fife, VONEF and Volunteer Centre Fife were coming together to form a third sector interface for the Fife Council area. FVA is the result of that journey and is recognised by Scottish Government, the Fife Partnership and key stakeholders as the third sector interface for Fife.

The TSSG was established at a time of considerable change within the third sector infrastructure in Fife, emerging towards the end of 2011 and early 2012.

Following agreement amongst CVS Fife, VONEF and Volunteer Centre Fife, it was decided to consult on proposals for forming the Group at a CVS Fife event held in September 2011 - Future Directions for the Third Sector. At this event, attended by over 60 representatives from voluntary, community, social enterprise and charitable organisations, delegates provided the following guidelines in relation to forming the Group:

- Role Profile needed for members of the group - Needs to be clear that members are there to represent the wider interests of the Third Sector, not simply their own organisation;
- Important to get a spread of thematic interests covered but more important to have members who will commit to the group and be prepared to contribute;
- If possible try to have people who are drawn from smaller, more-locally based organisations and larger Fife-wide groups;
- Connections in to Fife Partnership are important.

At the September 2011 event, delegates were asked to complete an Expression of Interest Form if they were interested in joining the group. Thereafter, an online survey was issued to all the main contacts for organisations held by CVS Fife also seeking Expressions of Interest.

Appointments to the new TSSG were made not just on the basis of individual experience, but also taking into consideration the need for the group as a whole to have a balance of interests in terms of themes covered, organisational size and geographical focus. The appointment process also considered the links candidates had to other voluntary sector and multi-agency forums.

The TSSG was initially chaired by CVS Fife (now FVA) but around a year ago they elected from amongst their membership a new chairperson, Tom Bain - chair of Youth 1st. The establishment of FVA led to some disruption for the TSSG but the Group now meets regularly and is developing forward plans which include engagement events and campaigning.

Role of the Third Sector Strategy Group

The TSSG is a group of representatives drawn from the third sector in Fife, covering a range of thematic interests and also having links to other voluntary sector and multi-agency forums and networks. The members are also diverse in terms of the type of organisations they come from – some are from smaller, locally-based groups and others from large Fife-wide charities.

The aims of the TSSG are to:

- strengthen the connections between the Third Sector and Community Planning - enhancing partnership working;
- provide a mandate and a two-way communication channel for those playing a representative role on behalf of the sector;
- advocate and campaign on behalf of the sector and to grow the sector's influence and profile.

Since the formation of Fife Voluntary Action (FVA) in 2012, the TSSG and FVA have enjoyed positive discussions and agreement on the complementary role that they can each play in achieving positive outcomes for the third sector in Fife. The following, key agreements have been reached:

- FVA is a full member of the Group and will also provide secretariat support;
- FVA will use the TSSG as a sounding board and take policy direction from the Group;
- FVA will commit resources to implementing the decisions of the Group;
- the TSSG can appoint a Director to the Board of FVA;
- FVA and the TSSG will combine forces on campaigning and seeking to influence policy;
- FVA should be held to account by the TSSG.

Key benefits of having a TSSG here in Fife include:

- A strategic, cross-cutting forum to discuss issues affecting the third sector;
- An opportunity to develop a single, clear voice on issues;
- Strengthens third sector representation across a range of forums and partnerships;
- Opportunity for third sector leaders to share information and learning and access peer support.

The TSSG is still relatively new and continues to develop. The information above presents a summary of the thinking and developments to date. The Group commits time to reviewing structure, membership and plans at least annually and will always seek to remain current, and effective and ambitious on behalf of the wider third sector in Fife.

Current membership

The following 17 people are currently members of the TSSG:

Alan Boyle, West Fife Enterprise
Andrew McDaniel, Kingdom Housing
Bill Wood, Sense Scotland
Billy Lynch, Frontline Fife
Duncan Mitchell, FEAT
Frank Chinn, Fife Cultural Trust
Jackie Morrison, Disabled Persons Housing Service
Kenny Murphy, Fife Voluntary Action
Laura Crombie, Clued-Up
Lynn Gillies, Barnardo's
Ninian Stuart, Falkland Centre for Stewardship
Norma Philpott, Citizens Advice & Rights Fife
Pauline McGee, Safe Space
Phyllis McIntyre, Fife Shopmobility
Rhona Cunningham, Fife Gingerbread
Tom Bain, Youth 1st (Chairperson)
Trish O'Brien, Gilven House - Scottish Christian Alliance

From October 2013, both Lynn Gillies and Trish O'Brien will stand down as they move to new organisations. That takes the membership to 15.

The Group is therefore seeking to recruit 7 new members.

Experience and demand on peoples' time would suggest that a membership of 22 should mean an average meeting attendance of around 15 people which will ensure a good mix of experience, thematic interests and opinions to inform debate and decisions.

Membership refresh process and timeline

The following process and timeline has been agreed by the TSSG:

What	By when
Advertise for new members (up to 7 new members being sought)	Wednesday 16 October
Seek expressions of interest	Friday 08 November
Expressions of Interest assessed by subgroup	Friday 22 November
Recommendations made to TSSG	Tuesday 03 December
TSSG meeting to take membership decision	Tuesday 10 December

Member role specification

The Third Sector Strategy Group aims to bring together representatives from across the third sector in Fife, ideally covering a range of thematic interests, organisation type and size, and geographic coverage.

At the time of writing, the Group is keen to secure membership from the following areas:

- Health and wellbeing
- Equalities
- Social care and welfare
- Social enterprise
- Community development
- Sports and leisure
- Education and training
- Community safety.

However, this is not an exhaustive list, and equally the group will not be constrained by the need to cover all of these themes.

Role Profile

Members of the group will be asked to work to the following principles:

1. To step out of organisational roles and consider the wider interests of the third sector;
2. To observe the Chatham House Rules, i.e. to ensure a free-flowing discussion, members will agree not to discuss specific contributions made by individuals outside the meetings;
3. To demonstrate links to wider networks (these can be thematic networks, voluntary sector networks, partnership groups or community networks).

In addition to working to these principles, members are expected to:

- Commit to attending* and preparing for meetings (around 5 or 6 per year);
- Use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they may have to help the Group to reach sound decisions that will benefit the third sector in Fife;
- Prepare brief reports on key issues that they come across within their thematic area and/or other networks and partnerships that they sit on to represent the third sector;
- Volunteer for occasional short-life working groups if required;
- Demonstrate strong partnership working skills;
- Show the ability and commitment to feedback to the wider third sector through appropriate mechanisms;
- Cover one or more of the thematic areas outlined above or identify another appropriate theme;
- Show a general commitment to fundamental principles of third sector, e.g. democracy, non-profit making, social aims etc.

* Please note that it is the individual who will join the Group and not their organisation. Therefore, it would not be appropriate for members to send substitutes to meetings.

Expression of Interest Form – Fife Third Strategy Group

Name: _____

Organisation: _____

Your Position/Role: _____

Telephone number: _____

E-mail address: _____

Please state why you would like to join Fife's Third Sector Strategy Group:

Please provide a very brief description of what **your organisation** does and the geographic area it covers:

Please indicate **your areas of experience and expertise** (e.g. children's services, housing, community work, employability, health & wellbeing etc.):

Please list any forums/partnership groups that you are a member of:

I have read the Third Sector Strategy Group role profile, understand the commitment to prioritise attendance at around 5 or 6 meetings per year and would like to express an interest in joining the Group.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Please now submit this form by e-mail to corinna@fifevoluntaryaction.org.uk
or by post to Fife Voluntary Action, 23-27 Randolph Street, Buckhaven, KY8 1AT