



Connecting Volunteering Third Sector Forum
Wednesday 5th April 2017
10am – 12pm
CVS Falkirk and District Offices

Present:

Carolyn Dick (CD) (Chair)	CVS Falkirk and District
David Gardener (DG)	CVS Falkirk and District
Daniel Hunter (DH)	GO Kids
Laura Jamieson (LJ) (Minute Taker)	CVS Falkirk and District
Lynda Ross-Hale (LR)	Cyrenians
Morag Fullard (MF)	Falkirk and District Association Mental Health (FDAMH)

Apologies:

Helen Morrison (HM)	Falkirk Community Trust
Kay Wood (KW)	Make it Happen
Lesley Young (LY)	Re-Union Canal Boats
Sandra Garner (SG)	The Conservation Volunteers
Vicki Ferguson (VF)	Forth Valley Sensory Centre

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair CD welcomed forum members to the meeting and introductions were made. The apologies were noted as above.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting – 18.01.17

The previous minutes will be carried over to the July meeting for approval, as they were not published with enough time for forum members to review in detail.

2.1 Matters Arising

3.3 Impact Measurement Report

CD informed the forum that CVS Falkirk is now advertising with a specific university for an intern to complete the 2017 Third Sector Impact Measurement Report.

6.3 Forum Communications

DG updated the forum that group emails have now been phased out, and all forum information is available on the [CVS Falkirk](http://www.cvsfalkirk.org.uk) website and e-bulletin.

6.4 Community Engagement

LY will provide an update on the Aspiring Communities Fund criteria at the July meeting.

9.1 Forum Meeting Times

The point was raised about how holding forum meetings in the evenings could open the forum up to smaller, volunteer-led organisations in the Falkirk area. CD and DG highlighted that this was where the new online discussion boards would be used, as they allow people who cannot attend meetings to participate in forums. The benefits of face-to-face meetings were discussed, and DG informed members that for groups like Scouts and Guides, it was hoped that one person could attend as a representative of the organisation in Falkirk, rather than one person from each small group.

Members again raised the point of meetings being held at alternating times as opposed to additional ones. It was confirmed that no changes would be made this year and that the online discussion boards would remain the main method for those unable to attend meetings, but that the forum's comments about their specific needs were recognised.

Please see Action Log for related actions.

3. Community Planning & Strategic Outcomes and Local Delivery (SOLD) Plan

A presentation on the Strategic Outcome and Local Delivery (SOLD) Plan was delivered by DG. This presentation can be found on the [Connecting Volunteering Forum](#) webpage.

The following key points were noted:

- The new SOLD Plan is a replacement for the old Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) and sets out the commitment of the Community Planning Partnership in Falkirk.
- 4 key priorities and 6 outcomes, identified as significant issues in communities; crossover between them is key, along with partnership working.
- While there is no direct reporting line to this forum from the priorities, the issues discussed align closest with the “Maximising job creation and employability” priority.
- Amongst its key actions, the priority identifies that the focus around employability support must change from the current focus on young people to the whole working population, regardless of age.
- Issues discussed also align with Outcome 2: “We will grow our local economy to secure successful businesses, investment and employment.”
- The plan identifies risks and challenges for this outcome (such as austerity and the current funding environment, a growing population, and the local production rates versus Scotland’s).
- Douglas Duff is lead officer for both the priority and outcome; the Falkirk Employability Partnership is taking forward the work under employability.
- The forums facilitated by CVS Falkirk have been formally identified as the mechanism for the views, opinions and issues from the third sector to be fed into the community planning process.



- Key issues from this forum will feed into the other forums, and taken forward by them to the relevant SOLD priority and outcome groups.

Volunteering was identified during the presentation as a positive route to employment, as were [Community Jobs Scotland](#) placements, which are funded by the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) and for those who have encountered a disadvantage in life. It was highlighted that these are often promoted through [Goodmoves](#).

It was asked if the third sector will be able to see the workplans involved in SOLD activity; DG understood that they would all be available online as public domain documents, but would need to clarify this.

4. Updated Terms of Reference (ToR)

The new ToR has been uploaded to the [Connecting Volunteering](#) webpage. The main changes have been made in Section 4:

- Sections 4 and 5 of the old ToR have been combined into the new Section 4.
- The description of the third sector has been updated to reflect Scottish Government's description.
- Attendance is now limited to one representative per group or organisation.
- Public and private sector organisations, including Falkirk Council, can now attend forum meetings, but must inform the forum in advance.
 - It is acknowledged that many public sector organisations involve volunteers and may wish to attend as regular members.

Feedback should be sent to DG. The ToR will be reviewed at the last forum of the year, on Wednesday 4th October, and signed off at the first meeting of the new year.

Please see Action Log for related actions.

5. Discussion of Key Issues

5.1 Volunteer Awards Ceremony

CVS Falkirk will not be holding their annual Volunteer Awards Ceremony this year and for the foreseeable future, due to multiple factors, including the restrictions of the current funding and economic environments.

Instead, CVS Falkirk is happy to support organisations celebrate their volunteers, and have published a list of suggestions as to how organisations can hold their own celebrations. CVS Falkirk will also still process general Celebrating Volunteering certificates for organisations and provide them with long service badges for their volunteers.



The members expressed their disappointment and their understanding around why the event will no longer be held.

5.2 Guidelines to Volunteering on Benefits

DG spoke about guidelines recently released by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and Voluntary Action Scotland (VAS) with regards to volunteering while on benefits. These guidelines were released in February at The Gathering conference, and all DWP and third sector interface (TSI) staff should have access to a copy and be aware of the information within.

The guidelines state that those on benefits can volunteer, as long as all conditions of their benefits have been met. They also outline the support TSIs can offer volunteers on benefits, and that volunteers on benefits are allowed to claim expenses.

The guidelines are available to view on the [CVS Falkirk](#) website, as part of the [Volunteering FAQs](#).

6. Update from CVS Falkirk

Please see agenda item 5.1. No other updates were provided.

7. Forum Chair

LY has agreed to remain as the forum chair for the next year, though is on annual leave at the moment.

The matter will be raised again at the last meeting of the year in time for the first meeting of 2018; however, there is no limit to how long someone can be chair.

8. AOCB

DG informed members that the full SOLD plan is now available on the [Falkirk Council](#) website. Additionally, as part of the Community Empowerment Act (Scotland) 2015, the following had come into force:

- Participation Requests
- Community Ownership Scheme
- Asset Transfer

A brief outline of each of these was provided.

Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 5th July 2017, 10am – 12pm, CVS Falkirk.