



**COVID-19 Third Sector Response Forum**  
**Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2021**  
**3pm – 5pm**  
**Zoom Meeting**

**Present:**

Claire Bernard (CB) (Chairperson)	CVS Falkirk and District
Laura Jamieson (LJ) (Minute Taker)	CVS Falkirk and District
Scott Malcolm (SM)	CVS Falkirk and District
Alan Grey (AIG)	Forth Valley Migrant Support Network
Angela Smith (ASm)	Corra Foundation – Dawson Centre
Ania Sandland (ASa)	Outside the Box
Annette Tonner (AT)	Community Focus Scotland CIC
Barry Jordan (BJ)	LGBT Youth Scotland
Calum Renton (CR)	Cyrenians
Dave Cameron (DC)	Avonbridge Hall
Donald Johnston (DJ)	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Duncan Hearsum (DH)	Dial-a-Journey
Fiona Macgregor (FM)	PLUS Forth Valley
Janine Reilly (JaR)	Symington Drive Residents' Association
Jessie-Anne Malcolm (JM)	NHS Forth Valley
Julie Ryan (JuR)	Forth Environment Link
Mairi Wright (MW)	NHS Forth Valley
Margaret Coutts (MC)	Falkirk and Central Scotland Samaritans
Maria Ferrari (MF)	Cyrenians
Martin Allen (MA)	Forth Valley Sensory Centre
Pauline Simpson (PS)	Penumbra
Richard McLennan (RM)	Falkirk Safebase
Sandra Lyon (SL)	The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) Scotland
Susan Docherty (SD)	Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Carers Centre

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

CB introduced herself, welcomed forum members present and advised the meeting was recorded via Zoom. Introductions were made via the Zoom chat function.

**2. Review of Previous Minutes (Wednesday 28/4/2021)**

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the previous meeting, with the following updates:

- 5. "Action: The sector confirmed they would like CVS Falkirk to continue to pursue representing their concerns [on the Falkirk Plan and its engagement] via the CPP; SM to take forward."
  - SM has submitted a report collating the sector's concerns to the CVS Falkirk board, which will then be submitted (once approved) to the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) via the Community Planning Improvement Group (CPIG).



- The CVS Falkirk board is expected to discuss the report by the end of the week, though the next CPIG meeting has not been confirmed. SM will keep members updated.

### 3. Funding: Summer Activities

CB spoke to the forum about the [Summer of Activities for Children and Young People funding](#), and noted the deadline of 11am on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> May.

Grants of up to £10,000 were available to deliver holiday activities and experiences, integrating food and wider family support where needed, and targeted at children and young people particularly adversely affected by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The fund was aimed at those supporting and working with children and young people most likely to be experiencing continued disadvantage, including due to the pandemic.

CB asked if any members had applied, which led to discussion around attendees plans (either as individual groups or as delivery partners); a number pointed out the closing date was rather short notice and had prevented them from applying. CB confirmed that the tight deadline was a result of the local authority only recently having confirmation of the funding, and that it had been short notice for them too.

### 4. Employability and the Effects of Furlough

#### 4.1 End of Furlough Leaflet

CB spoke about the mental health and wellbeing community subgroup, which is now looking to ensure that communities have all the information they need regarding the end of the furlough scheme(s).

As a result, the group has created a new leaflet, which is available to view or download as a [jpeg](#) or [pdf](#) (both linked for your convenience) from the CVS Falkirk website.

**Action:** LJ to send leaflet as both jpeg and pdf to members, as some reported issues with sharing pdfs on social media.

**Action:** Any groups requiring a printed copy should contact SM by email: [scott.malcolm@cvsfalkirk.org.uk](mailto:scott.malcolm@cvsfalkirk.org.uk)

#### 4.2 Effects of Furlough

CB asked if attendees had experienced the effects of furlough and the scheme(s) coming to an end, and if so, what support did they need from CVS Falkirk as their TSI?

Members spoke about their own organisation and groups' experiences of furlough. Some had not used the schemes and had their full team working from home throughout the pandemic (or working in different ways), while others had noticed different impacts in different ways. Yet other organisations had taken a "blended working" approach, or had always done so.



AT informed the forum that Community Focus Scotland CIC was looking for new premises as the pandemic and rising rates meant they were having to leave their established office, where they had been for 5 years. AT noted that she and her team were proud of the work they had done and the people they had helped, but that their board would be meeting to look at the future of the business and how best to go ahead. However, they are hopeful that they will be able to continue the catering side of their work, and the projects linked to that.

JuR said there should be resistance to the idea that things are “getting back to normal”, and that there needs to be a transition period for those on furlough – especially staff who had been on furlough for 15 months, and were now facing going back to work full time. Other members agreed.

BJ also noted that LGBTYS’ blended working approach had been in practice for a while, but the pandemic had moved them to formalise it into a new “agile working policy”, which gave staff more control over their diaries. He is happy to share their new policy with other members.

**Action:** BJ to contact SL and MF via email regarding the new policy.

## **5. Restarting Services**

Discussion continued on from the previous conversation around blended working, with key points raised including the importance of a work-life balance and how that can be harder to ensure when working from home, especially when staff are often happier to work longer hours when at home.

### **5.1 Forth Valley Migrant Support Network**

Due to the [approaching EU Settlement Scheme deadline](#) on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> June, the Network has opened a new satellite office in Denny, which holds regular surgeries to offer support around settled status applications.

Surgeries take place Friday afternoons, 1pm – 4pm; to book an appointment, please contact the team by phone: 07563010656, or email: [info@fvmigrantsupport.com](mailto:info@fvmigrantsupport.com)

### **5.2 Penumbra**

The only thing Penumbra hasn’t yet brought back has been their in-person team meetings, but staff are still offering the same support package (if slightly adapted). They can now go into homes for people who are in low-risk COVID-19 categories (and they can meet outside with people in high-risk categories).

They are currently only accepting referrals from local authorities, and self-referrals.

### **5.3 Dial-a-Journey**

While the shopping centres have been closed, so has their shop mobility service. Looking at staff wellbeing, they have found an external resource for their team, and are working to make that available to all team members.

They are also trying to balance customer demand (despite council-run lunch clubs not yet restarted) with keeping staff safe, which DH admits has been difficult to find. CB noted that Falkirk HSCP is keen to ensure activities and groups are opening safely, with transport being a large part of that.



**Action:** CB will keep everyone informed of dates for lunch club reopening, once agreed.

#### **5.4 Outside the Box**

All local mental health groups are now meeting, both indoors (including at Forth Valley Sensory Centre, which has a large space suitable for social distancing), outside, and in public spaces. The fact that restrictions have eased to allow 8 people from 8 households to meet has made this much easier.

The only thing they aren't currently doing in-person is their cooking workshops, which are currently too complicated.

**Action:** ASa to send SM a list of all active groups.

#### **5.5 Scottish Fire and Rescue Service**

DJ noted that fire crews are still focusing on fire prevention and home safety visits, where safe to do so within guidelines. It will likely be September before non-crew staff return to their stations; however, as all staff meetings are being held via Teams, this has resulted in fuel and emissions savings.

#### **5.6 Avonbridge Hall**

Multiple groups are looking to use the hall for meetings again, including the local community council, and an individual who wants to start a community choir. DC and the rest of the hall committee are currently working on risk assessments with feedback from CLD. Though these are somewhat complicated, they hope to be reopening soon.

#### **5.7 Forth Environment Link**

JuR noted that people are keen to engage face to face, and that it is often still hard to plan as restrictions could change, along with impact from the weather. However, they have been in discussions with Forth Valley Sensory Centre and local schools on ways they can work together.

#### **5.8 Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Carers Centre**

SD reported that the centre still doesn't have a date for reopening, but that she has been focusing on (amongst other things) the young carers groups (which have restarted), and going into schools in some way to support and speak to young carers. This has been made more difficult in Clackmannanshire as schools close due to rising cases.

#### **5.9 Forth Valley Sensory Centre**

According to MA, the centre is looking to reopen fully in August – some groups (including outdoor and youth groups) have already restarted in the centre, which is good to see. They are keen to restart the choir, but this will have to wait until Falkirk is in Level 1. Additionally, they are aware that many centre users are older, with other health conditions, and may be more concerned about returning.

#### **5.10 LGBT Youth Scotland (LGBTYS)**

LGBTYS is currently based with Go Youth Trust in Falkirk, and working with them to look at face to face support for the most vulnerable young people (including LGBT youth).

In June, they are also running a [Pride Picnic](#) with merchandise (as a lot of Pride events have been cancelled again this year) to help with fundraising, and their “A Cup of LGBTYS” online event.

### **5.11 PLUS Forth Valley**

PLUS offers support to children and young people with disabilities (aged 5 – 17 years old) and their families.

They did run activities while the schools were closed during lockdowns and school holidays; FM noted it was difficult to find buildings to host them, but they were able to use Forth Valley Sensory Centre during the Easter holidays, and for their upcoming summer activities. They are trying to look at different ways of delivering support and activities going forward.

### **5.12 Corra Foundation**

ASm confirmed that Corra Foundation has published their Annual Update on their work in Langlees during 2020; further information is available via the [Corra Foundation](#) website (along with [all other 2020 updates](#), under “Impact and Annual Reports”).

### **5.13 Cyrenians**

While their café at Arnotdale House has now reopened, Cyrenians has been running all activities throughout the pandemic, if somewhat adapted.

## **6. CVS Falkirk Updates**

LJ and SM reminded members that the digital 2021 Volunteer Awards Ceremony would drop during Volunteers’ Week on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June at 7pm, via [YouTube](#) (linked for your convenience), and would be available to watch at any time after that point.

Anyone who hadn’t requested Celebrating Volunteering certificates for their volunteers before the deadline were advised to contact either LJ or SM by email:

- LJ: [laura@cvsfalkirk.org.uk](mailto:laura@cvsfalkirk.org.uk)
- SM: [scott.malcolm@cvsfalkirk.org.uk](mailto:scott.malcolm@cvsfalkirk.org.uk)

## **7. AOCB**

### **7.1 COVID-19 Vaccines for 18 – 29 Year Olds**

CB reminded members that people aged 18 – 29 years old can currently register for their first COVID-19 vaccine online.

For further information, including how to register, please visit the [CVS Falkirk](#) website.

### **7.2 SCDC: Supporting Communities Safely**

MW posted a link to the chat for the Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC)’s guide for community groups, organisations and volunteer networks during COVID-19: [Supporting Communities Safely](#).



The guide has been produced by SCDC and Public Health Scotland, and was last updated in May 2021. It has been designed to be accessible and clear for people without medical or scientific knowledge and backgrounds, and now includes specific advice on restarting services safely with new sections on planning COVID-19 safe spaces (including how many people can safely use them), and clear advice on the importance of ventilation.

Other areas include:

- promoting your service
- making sure volunteers are safe
- getting help with complex care needs
- keeping things you collect and deliver as COVID-free as possible
- cooking and transporting hot meals

For further information, please visit the [SCDC](#) website.

### **7.3 Community Choices**

A number of members asked if the Capital Grants applications for the [Community Choices initiative](#) had been decided on yet, as they hadn't had any response to their applications. CB explained that this would be the next step; as full proposals for the Capital Grants are due on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> June, she expected they would be contacted soon.

### **7.4 UK Community Renewal Fund**

A member asked if there was any information on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which is due to replace the EU Structural Funds.

LJ and SM explained that applications are currently open for the [UK Community Renewal Fund \(UKCRF\)](#), which aims to help areas prepare for the Shared Prosperity Fund, and is administered locally by Falkirk Council.

The deadline for applications is 12pm on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May.

For further information, please visit the [CVS Falkirk](#) website.

### **7.5 Henry Duncan Grants Open for Applications**

Via the chat, ASm informed members that Corra Foundation's Henry Duncan Grants are now reopen for applications, with £1 million available for Corra Foundation has announced a £1m Henry Duncan Grants fund for community-based mental health and wellbeing support.

The fund has 3 strands:

- Organisation Grants: open to charities with an annual income up to £500,000 and a core focus on supporting people of any age who experience mental ill health
  - maximum of £8,000 per year granted up to 5 years
  - deadline for application is Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> July



- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Grants: open to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic led charities with annual income up to £500,000, delivering projects that support people of any age who experience mental ill health
  - maximum £8,000 per year up to 3 years
  - deadline for application is Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> July
- Micro grants: one-off grants of a maximum of £1,000. Open to small charities and voluntary groups with an annual income up for £50,000 supporting communities experiencing disadvantage to improve mental health and wellbeing by reducing isolation and loneliness
  - rolling application programme with no closing dates

For further information, including how to apply, please visit the [Corra Foundation](#) website.

**Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 3pm – 5pm  
via Zoom**

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