

COVID-19 Third Sector Response Forum
Wednesday 19th January 2022
3pm – 5pm
Zoom Meeting

Present:

Lynsey Hansford (LH) (Chairperson)
Laura Jamieson (LJ) (Minute Taker)

CVS Falkirk and District
CVS Falkirk and District

Alan Grey (AlG)
Alex McClintock (AM)
Ania Sandland (ASa)
Carolyn Dick (CD)
Claire Bernard (CB)
Claire Houston (CH)
Dave Cameron (DC)
Donald Johnston (DJ)
Donald Park (DP)
Donna Laidlaw (DL)
Duncan Hearsum (DH)
Erin Fulton (EF)
Fiona Arthur (FA)
Fiona Welsh (FW)
Gemma Ritchie (GRi)
Geoff Reid (GRi)
Gill Wilson (GW)
Jessie-Anne Malcolm (JM)
Kelly Tulloch (KT)
Kerry Kennedy (KK)
Lorraine Love (LL)
Lynne Boslem (LB)
Margaret Coutts (MC)
Maria Ferrari (MF)
Martin Allen (MA)
Mhairi Prendergast (MP)
Miranda Wilson (MW)
Narek Bido (NB)
Richard McLennan (RM)
Roy Kerr (RK)
Sandra Lyon (SaL)
Sidra Tariq (ST)
Steve McQueen (SMc)
Steven Litts (StL)

Forth Valley Migrant Support Network
Andy's Man Club
Outside the Box
dates-n-mates Falkirk
CVS Falkirk and District
NHS Forth Valley
Avonbridge Hall
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Forth Valley Voluntary Sector Response Group
Strathcarron Hospice
Dial-a-Journey
Project Scotland and Volunteering Matters
SMART Denny
Christians Against Poverty
Falkirk Council – Adult Support and Protection (ASP)
SACRO Forth Valley
Epilepsy Connections
NHS Forth Valley
Healthcare Improvement Scotland
CVS Falkirk and District
Royal Voluntary Service Forth Valley
Tamfourhill Community Hub
Falkirk and Central Scotland Samaritans
Cyrenians
Forth Valley Sensory Centre
Career Ready
Falkirk Council
Addictions, Support and Counselling (ASC)
Falkirk Safebase
Scottish Seniors Computer Club Falkirk
The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) Scotland
Rainbow Muslim Women's Group
Sustainable Thinking Scotland CIC
Cyrenians

Apologies:

Scott Malcolm (SMa)

CVS Falkirk and District

Vivienne Malcolm (VM)

Solicitors for Older People Scotland (SOPS)

1. Welcome and Introductions

LH 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 8/12/2021)

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

- 5.1: Winter Pressures Project: DH provided an update on the project's activities over the festive period, and how it had changed from its anticipated focus to respond to the needs of the people awaiting discharge from Forth Valley Royal. He noted that the key to the project's success had been the Link Workers on the ground, and that they had been able to change and respond to this need quickly, and were well supported by Falkirk HSCP.
 - LH highlighted that everything the project has achieved has been a real success, and informed members that CVS Falkirk would be happy to promote any similar projects, or any activities in general, along with the suggestion that the Winter Pressures project could be an ideal fit for any group with volunteering offers they were struggling to accommodate.

3. HES Referrals Portal Training Update

Home Energy Scotland (HES) uses a portal system to receive referrals from organisations on behalf of individuals. To use this portal and make referrals, organisations and groups have to have completed specific training from HES. There is normally a cost for this training, but LH has managed to secure funded training for local groups, with a number registering their interest after discussion at the November meeting.

LH informed members that it looked likely the training would take place in the next 2 – 3 weeks, and that she is waiting for HES to confirm exact dates. HES is currently extremely busy with requests for support, but is very keen to expand the training's availability, as they know third sector groups can reach more people, and they want this support to be available to everyone struggling. LH will be in touch as soon as the dates are confirmed.

DC asked if there was any advice for small groups on how to make referrals to HES, if they were too small to go through their system. LH offered to ask those who have been through the training, once it has been completed; another member volunteered to put through the referrals from DC in their own time, as they have been through the training but would need to keep separate from their professional work.

LH informed members that CVS Falkirk knows fuel poverty is an ongoing, wider issue, and the forum will continue to provide space for discussion. Anyone interested in the HES training should contact LH by email: lynsey.hansford@cvsfalkirk.org.uk

Action: DC to contact member regarding referrals in their own time.

4. Future of the Third Sector Forums

LH and KK informed members that the COVID-19 Third Sector Forum would continue meeting, and CVS Falkirk would continue to facilitate, for as long as there is a demand from the sector.

CVS Falkirk is also reviewing [the other forums it facilitates](#), in order to ensure they still meet the needs of the third sector and Falkirk's communities; some forums, like the [Voluntary Sector Children's Services Forum \(VSCSF\)](#) and the [Economic Resilience and Employment Forum \(EREF\)](#), have continued to meet throughout the pandemic. EREF has been meeting very informally, and as such will be one of the first to be reviewed – the next meeting takes place on Wednesday 9th February from 2pm, and all third sector groups with a link to employment are welcome to attend; anyone interested in doing so should contact LH by email.

5. Funding Updates

5.1 Falkirk Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund

CB thanked members and everyone who submitted an application, both for their applications and their patience in receiving decisions. The Falkirk fund was oversubscribed, with application amounts in excess of £600,000; as a result, there will not be a second round of this year's funding in Falkirk.

However, Scottish Government has confirmed Year 2 funding, which will be available in April 2022, though Falkirk's allocation is still unknown at this point.

Regarding Year 1 (the current funding):

- Small and Medium applications would be decided the next day, Thursday 20/1/2022, at the next meeting of the COVID-19 Co-ordination Group, with groups informed of the decision after the meeting, and the funds paid the following week; CB will let applicants know as soon as possible if this changes, and noted that they are trying to keep to a quick turnaround, in response to the third sector's quick response in submitting applications, while still completing due diligence.
- Large applications will be decided on Monday 31/1/2022, with funds awarded the following week.

CB is also working on putting together a partnership planning group, to ensure the fund and its projects are meeting the needs of local communities, and what's important to them.

A member asked how many Large applications there had been – CB reiterated that the fund was oversubscribed and so all applications would be looked at even more carefully, and noted that CVS Falkirk is only administering the fund, not making the decisions on applications.

5.2 Food Funding

The current Food Fund is coming to a close at the end of March; recipients have been made aware of this months prior.

As a result of conversations around the sustainability of emergency food funding, and Scottish Government's work in ending foodbank use, CVS Falkirk is encouraging groups to think about how to make funding sustainable, and to plan for when the Food Fund comes to an end. Amongst other resources and support, CB has been signposting groups to the CVS Falkirk Development Officer for Capacity Building, Tariq Mahmood, and highlighting the [Falkirk Funders Fayre](#) in March, as well as collaborative funding applications.

A question was raised for ASa regarding the food network previously set up; ASa confirmed that Food for All Falkirk looked at more than just emergency food, but after an event at the end of summer, the network hasn't been very active.

There was then discussion around the network and its history; one member raised concern about the focus on COVID-19 support, when costs of fuel and living are rising. CB noted that CVS Falkirk is keen to help groups be completely sustainable and move forward, and asked how they can best help. Members were encouraged to contact the CVS Falkirk team with any support needs, at any time.

6. YouthVIP Presentation: Erin Fulton, Project Scotland and Volunteering Matters

EF delivered a presentation on the [YouthVIP project](#) and the upcoming [Volunteering Summit event](#), with key points below:

- The Youth Volunteering Innovation Project (YouthVIP), made up of young people from across Scotland, met over the course of a year to share their stories and experiences, and as a result drafted a plan to make volunteering better and more accessible for all young people. They then submitted their recommendations to the Scottish Government as part of its "Volunteering for All" framework. All [13 recommendations](#) were agreed in principle and work began in 2020, in spite of COVID-19, to focus on recommendations 1 and 2.
- The project focuses on how to create a volunteering culture where young people are welcome – the benefits of volunteering, and its ability as a resource, are well known, and the project aims to highlight the value of involving young people as volunteers, encouraging groups to think differently so everyone receives these benefits.
- Project Scotland's role in YouthVIP is to work directly with the third sector on the ground, to help increase young people's volunteering (which they recognise has been heavily impacted by the pandemic).
- Volunteering Summit: the event in February has been designed as an opportunity for young people to get to know staff from various youth and voluntary organisations, get involved in collaborative activities and hear about the volunteering journeys and experiences of young people.

Members raised a number of questions and discussion points, including:

- How are young people referred to the project?
 - EF: YouthVIP is more about building organisation and groups' capacity to include young people, and focusing on how they reach out, rather than referrals.
- What is the criteria for a "young person" in this context?



- EF: Using Young Scot's definition, a young person is someone aged 12 – 24 years old; however, it is worth recognising that young people are very different, that different opportunities are appropriate for different young people, and identifying resources for that. (EF described the project as “an opportunity to think outside the box”.)
- How to break down barriers to volunteering for young people, and in general, with a number of members agreeing to contact EF in future regarding their group.

LH highlighted that youth volunteering has not always been a priority during the pandemic, due to the emergency responses needed, and how good it is to see resources available to resolve that, as young people have been through a particularly rough experience over the last few years. She also noted that volunteering, and the YouthVIP project, is a way to help young people get back into their communities and feel connected, repairing many of the issues caused by the pandemic's isolation.

Additionally, from CVS Falkirk's viewpoint, youth volunteering is very much a focus, which is why they included a Young Volunteer of the Year award at their 2021 Volunteer Award Ceremony. Members should feel free to contact any of the CVS Falkirk team with details on opportunities for young people, and they will promote them, as well as putting the group in touch with EF.

7. What Are the Emerging Issues and Needs in Your Community?

LH asked members how the forum, CVS Falkirk, and other members could help their group or organisation address the needs they identified as needs in their communities.

Action: CB to take forward the Forum's (anonymised) questions and concerns to public sector partners, while forming the new Fire Alarms Working Group.

7.1 Fire and Smoke Alarms

A number of members raised concerns around the changing legislation on fire alarms and smoke detectors, and concerns of the people using their services.

LJ spoke about a previous presentation she had attended, which consisted of background to the legislation (including the Grenfell Tower disaster in London, where alarms had not alerted residents to the fire adequately), and the basic standards of the legislation, available on the [Scottish Government website](#); she also directed members to the [SFRS website](#).

According to the Scottish Government website:

“Older and disabled homeowners on low incomes can get help with costs. ... Older and disabled homeowners on low incomes can also contact their local [Care and Repair service](#) which gives independent advice and help.”

Previously, there was a limited number of interlinked alarms at the Falkirk Fire Station, available to those who had been identified as at increased risk of fire, including older people. These could be fitted during [Home Fire Safety Visits](#), which can be booked with SFRS by phone: 0800 0731999, or by texting “FIRE” to 80800.



CB highlighted the importance of reassuring people, especially older people, that they would not be in trouble for not having new alarms fitted by February, and that there is support available. There will also be a working group to help people and organisations find this support.

Action: FW to clarify with CAB regarding available funding, and to report back.

Action: LJ to send CB details of presentation.

7.2 Housing Allocation

Members raised issues with Falkirk Council's housing allocation policy, with the request for a future speaker from Falkirk Council on this topic.

SMc noted that Falkirk Council's latest meetings are available on their Youtube, including [today's](#) with the Head of Housing.

**Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 16th February, 3pm – 5pm,
via Zoom**

DRAFT

www.cvsfalkirk.org.uk | 01324 692 000 | info@cvsfalkirk.org.uk | @CVSFalkirk

CVS Falkirk and District is a Company Limited by Guarantee in Scotland No. SC085838 | Scottish Charity No. SC000312 |
Registered office: Unit 6, Callendar Business Park, Callendar Road, Falkirk, FK1 1XR