

**COVID-19 Third Sector Response Forum**  
**Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> February 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 Barker (AB)  
 Allan Robertson (AR)  
 Ania Sandland (ASa)  
 Carol Simmons (CS)  
 Dave Cameron (DC)  
 David Stewart (DS)  
 Diane Cairns (DiC)  
 Donald Park (DP)  
 Donna Laidlaw (DL)  
 Fiona Kennedy (FK)  
 Kelly Tulloch (KT)  
 Kirsty-Ann Slater (KS)  
 Lesley MacArthur (LM)  
 Lorraine Love (LL)  
 Margaret Coutts (MC)  
 Maria Ferrari (MF)  
 Martin Allen (MA)  
 Steve McQueen (SMc)  
 Steven Litts (StL)  
 Susan Docherty (SD)

Forth Valley Migrant Support Network  
 Ability Net  
 Social Security Scotland  
 Outside the Box  
 Food Train Connects (Falkirk)  
 Avonbridge Hall  
 Fedcap Employment  
 Transform Forth Valley  
 Forth Valley Voluntary Sector Response Group  
 Strathcarron Hospice  
 Stenhousemuir FC: Warriors in the Community  
 Healthcare Improvement Scotland  
 Maggie's Forth Valley  
 Falkirk Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP)  
 Royal Voluntary Service Forth Valley  
 Falkirk and Central Scotland Samaritans  
 Cyrenians  
 Forth Valley Sensory Centre  
 Sustainable Thinking Scotland CIC  
 Cyrenians  
 Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Carers Centre

**Apologies:**

Julie Ryan (JR)

Forth Environment Link

**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 19/1/2022)**

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

- 2: Winter Pressures Project: LH reiterated the successes of the Winter Pressures project, which had now attracted national attention, with other areas looking at how to use the model and work with partners in their area. Members extended their congratulations to all involved.



- 5.1: Falkirk Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund: LH informed members that those within CVS Falkirk involved with the funding were working to ensure applicants received their updates as soon as possible.

### 3. Bitesize Learning Session: “Digital Accessibility”, Alex Barker at AbilityNet

AB delivered a short presentation and learning session on “the whys and hows” of digital accessibility, and highlighted the range of support and resources [AbilityNet](#) could provide local groups and organisations. This included:

- technology built into devices, which are often free or low-cost
- [free resources](#), including [My Computer, My Way](#)
- help identifying suitable IT equipment and software
- the smart technology options available
- the benefits of technology, in general and to accessibility
- the importance of educating people on staying safe, online safety and scams, and how AbilityNet can help with this
  - they also work closely with Friends Against Scams on this, and have a range of [online resources and webinars](#)

AbilityNet also has a network of volunteers who can now conduct home visits again, although remote appointments are still preferred; AB spoke about the impact of COVID-19, and the increased need for technology and accessibility. He also stressed the importance of building digital accessibility into all work from the beginning, rather than trying to add it at a later stage.

Members took the opportunity to ask questions, and spoke about their experiences of big a difference digital accessibility could make to people’s lives.

**Action:** LH to share Chris from AbilityNet’s contact details with DC re: establishing an IT hub in their hall, and what to provide.

**Action:** DC to contact AB re: above.

### 4. Challenges, Opportunities and Useful Resources

#### 4.1 Update on Speaker from Falkirk Council re: Housing Allocation

LH informed members that Alan Christie and Dawna Chisholm from Falkirk Council’s Housing team will be attending the March meeting to speak with and hear from members.

They will not be able to answer every question in the time available, but they are keen to hear from the sector. LH encouraged members to look at this as an opportunity to open lines of communication on housing, in order to work together to support people. It is also an opportunity to inform the Housing team of the issues they have encountered, while learning how to refer people to the Housing team.

Members thanked LH for arranging this opportunity, and asked if it would be worth sending her their questions in advance. LH confirmed this, and noted they should include anything they believe Alan should know about.

## 4.2 HES Referrals Portal Training Update

LH reminded members about the Home Energy Scotland(HES) referrals portal and the upcoming training – this has now been confirmed for Friday 25<sup>th</sup> February at 10am.

In order to make referrals to HES, groups and organisations must have undergone this training; anyone interested in taking part should contact LH by email: [lynsey.hansford@cvsfalkirk.org.uk](mailto:lynsey.hansford@cvsfalkirk.org.uk)

LH also noted that this training will not be a one-off, as HES is keen to widen the support they offer and engage with more groups across Falkirk.

## 4.3 Upcoming Third Sector Events

CVS Falkirk is holding 2 different events for the third sector in the next month:

- [Forth Valley Third Sector Conference 2022](#): running Monday 21<sup>st</sup> February – Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> February, in partnership with SVE and CTSI, and closing remarks from Deputy First Minister John Swinney. Tickets are £10, and available via the Eventbrite page.
- [Virtual Falkirk Funders Fayre 2022](#): the second time the event has been held online over multiple days, running Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> March – Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> March with sessions from 9 different funders, including those who have never attended before. The event is completely free, and places can be booked via the Eventbrite page.

## 5. Funding

### 5.1 GCVS “Creating Your Case for Support” Guide

Glasgow CVS (GCVS) has produced a series of [Fundraising Quick Guide videos](#), which cover a range of topics; the most recent introduces key points to consider when creating a case for support for your group, and give practical examples.

The video is available to view via the [SCVO](#) website.

### 5.2 Business Ventilation Fund: Eligibility Expansion

Scottish Government’s Business Ventilation Fund’s eligibility criteria has been expanded, and now includes even more third sector organisations.

The fund provides funding to help small and medium sized businesses and organisations improve their ventilation and reduce the spread of COVID-19, with up to £2,500 available per eligible premise.

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

### 5.3 People’s Postcode Lottery New Programme and Criteria

People’s Postcode Lottery (PPL) has announced an increase in the amount organisations can apply for, in response to the role the third sector has played in supporting their communities.

Registered charities, Community Interest Companies (CICs) and community benefit societies can now apply for up to £25,000, while other types of non-profit organisations can apply for up to £2,500. In addition, the PPL is now seeking applications for unrestricted funding from eligible organisations.

Rounds will open on the first day of each month until October. Organisations may apply up to three times in 2022.

For further information, including all dates, funding themes, and how to apply, please visit the [PPL](#) website.

#### 5.4 Workplace Equality Fund

The Workplace Equality Fund (WEF) is now accepting applications.

Designed as a source of financial support for Scottish businesses and organisations striving to improve equality-related outcomes for priority groups, the fund endeavours to promote and embed principles of inclusivity and fairness within Scotland's workplaces.

Projects can apply for a maximum of £75,000 per year (ie. an overall total of £150,000 across a 2 year period). Funded projects will operate over a period of up to 2 years, commencing in late April 2022.

The deadline for applications to this first round of the fund is Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April.

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

#### 6. Members' Updates

LH invited members for updates on their own work, and any points they wanted to raise or issues they had encountered. This resulted in offers of support and collaboration amongst members; key points and actions are noted below.

- Falkirk and Central Scotland Samaritans: MC officially received her BEM the previous week, at an afternoon tea ceremony in Callendar House with another recipient. Samaritans are currently looking for more volunteers, as many are currently going through training.

**Action:** MC to send LH volunteer recruitment details.

- Stenhousemuir FC: Warriors in the Community: FK is new to post; her role focuses on "everything but football", and how to branch out support the needs of local communities. They also received funding from the Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund for 4 new projects, and are looking to take a collaborative approach and work with other groups to deliver them; they are also still in touch with all their volunteers from during lockdown, and FK offered to put anyone who needs volunteers in touch with them.
- Strathcarron Hospice: DL is currently dealing with a number of referrals around housing, and has someone looking for free wifi; members suggested different solutions.

**Action:** LM to contact DL around possible support.



- Forth Valley Migrant Support Network: in addition to their work on Universal Credit and EU Settled Status, they are working with the Human Rights Commission on a number of workshops over the coming weeks.

**Action:** AG to send workshop details to LJ for promotion.

**Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> March, 3pm – 5pm,  
via Zoom**

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