

**Funding Officers Network**  
**Wednesday 9 August 2023**  
**10am – 11.30am**  
**Zoom Meeting**

**Present:**

Tariq Mahmood (TM) (Chairperson)	CVS Falkirk & District
Alex Bewley (AB)	CVS Falkirk & District
Kerrie Hoggan (KH) (Minute Taker)	CVS Falkirk & District

Chris Gunn (CG)	Falkirk Community Football Foundation
Laura Kearney (LK)	PLUS Forth Valley
Stephen Sutton (SS)	Bailliefields Community Hub SCIO
Dave Cameron (DC)	Avonbridge Community Hall
Harrison Crawford (HC)	My Global Family

**Apologies:**

Kim Edgar	Freedom of Mind Community Choir
Peter Alexander	Laurieston Bowling Club
Nicole Forsyth	ENABLE Scotland
Richard McLennan	Falkirk Safebase
Carol Anderson	Birch Tree Farm
Laura Caldwell	Quiet Waters
Kirsty Nicolson	Grangemouth Community Care

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

TM introduced himself, welcomed forum members present and advised the meeting was recorded via Zoom. Apologies were noted as listed above.

KH and AB introduced themselves to the Network, having recently joined CVS Falkirk, and outlined their roles as Third Sector Engagement Officer and Social Enterprise Development Officer respectively. TM outlined that as a membership organisation, the voice of the community is vital to the work of CVS Falkirk & District and encouraged all Network members to join as a member, if they haven't already.

**2. Review of Previous Minutes and Actions**

After due consideration, the minutes of the meetings held on 23 November 2022 and 8 March 2023 were approved as an accurate record of each meeting.

The Network noted that the outstanding actions were completed, except for the completed Terms of Reference, which would be discussed under item 4.

**3. Network Background**

TM gave a quick overview and introduction to the Funding Officers Network for those who had not been present at previous meetings. The following points were noted:



- i. The Network would meet for two hours each quarter and was aimed at funding officers and those responsible for fundraising activity across Falkirk District's third sector.
- ii. The idea for the network developed from an equivalent operating within the national TSI network . This CVSFS network will focus at a local level, aimed at reducing silo working and acknowledging the multiple roles undertaken by smaller organisations including responsibility for fundraising
- iii. Part of TM's role is to lead in governance and fundraising support and participate in the national TSI network funding officers forum.
- iv. The Network offers an invaluable opportunity to meet with counterparts, local and national funders, and gain peer support around funding and income generation – not solely restricted to grant fundraising
- v. LK suggested that capital funding was identified as a key area for discussion and learning, together with tackling localised issues, such as recruiting sufficient sessional staff to maximise the use of funding. This was agreed by the Network.
- vi. The Network members were asked to submit further suggestions for topics to be covered at future meetings.

A discussion took place on the funding challenges facing smaller groups and rural communities, especially for volunteer fundraisers. SS shared the example of Bailliefields Community Hub SCIO and the hurdles encountered by its team of four volunteers, over the past two years, to generate funding for its initiatives. These hurdles included the unresponsiveness of key partners, despite this they have been able to significant funds to realise their plans.

DC asked whether it was possible to challenge the requirement to apply for repeat funding, such as school holiday meals, on an annual basis to build continuity and consistency into its offering, whilst at the same time ensuring fairness for all applicants. TM took an action to contact Fairer Falkirk to check this point.

**Action:** Network members to submit additional suggestions for network meetings to TM and KH.

**Action:** TM to speak to Fairer Falkirk regarding repeat applications for funding eg. holiday meals, to see if the process could be streamlined.

#### **4. Terms of Reference**

After due consideration, it was agreed that the structure of the Terms of Reference previously circulated was a suitable template for the Network. TM took an action to add specific Network responsibilities to this structure and circulate ahead of the Network meeting scheduled for 15 November 2023.

**Action:** TM to circulate updated draft Terms of Reference to the Network members.

#### **5. CVS Falkirk & District Activity**

TM provided an update on activity within CVS Falkirk & District (CVSF), the following points were noted:



- i. CVSF is a Third Sector Interface with a core role to support the third sector. As a charity, it faces similar challenges to other organisations, such as continuity, funding etc...
- ii. CVSF recently moved to a smaller premises and made other changes to increase its workforce and strengthen its support for the community. Recent appointments include KH and AB, together with Eloise Wilson as Partnership Development Manager and Meg Guy as Volunteering Development Officer.
- iii. In response to the Falkirk [Strategic Property Review](#), and the proposal to make 133 council-owned properties available to transfer to the community, Community Asset Transfer (CAT) was a key focus for CVSF. Investment had been made in 'Informed Choices' workshops to help third sector organisations understand what is involved in taking over a community asset, plus any funding support available. TM acknowledged the challenges involved in securing funding.
- iv. CVSF was actively recruiting a Development Officer whose focus would be to support the third sector on Community Ownership, providing capacity building support and helping organisations navigate the process with Falkirk Council. CVSF have been able to negotiate the delivery of funding through Falkirk Council to support organisations considering Community Ownership. At present, funding is understood to be in the region of £300,000 and managed by Falkirk Council, but no additional details are available at present.
- v. CG outlined that the Falkirk Foundation had undertaken an asset transfer when, pre-pandemic, it took over the Woodlands pitch and had recently received funding to renovate the adjacent sports hall. He offered his support in talking through his experience.

SS and HC left the meeting.

**Post Meeting Note:** the next CVSF hosted [“An Informed Choice: Community Asset Transfer”](#) information session will take place on Tuesday 5 September 1pm – 3.30pm. Joining instructions can be found via the link.

## 6. AOCB

TM suggested that it would be beneficial for the Network to meet in person and it was tentatively agreed that this would take place at the Avonbridge Community Café on 15 November 2023. Details to be confirmed nearer the time.

There being no other business, the meeting was closed.

### Dates of Next Meetings:

**Wednesday 15 November 2023, 10am – 12pm, Avonbridge Community Café**

**Wednesday 14 February 2024, 10am – 12pm, via Zoom**

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