

**Safer and Empowered Communities Forum**  
**Wednesday 23 August 2023**  
**10am – 12pm**  
**Zoom Meeting**

**Present:**

Lynsey Hansford (LH) (Chairperson)	CVS Falkirk and District
Kerrie Hoggan (KH) (Minute Taker)	CVS Falkirk and District
Allan Robertson (AR)	Social Security Scotland
Barry Jordan (BJ)	LGBT Youth Scotland
Carolyn Dick (CD)	Dates-n-Mates Falkirk
Nicola Bruce (NB)	Community Justice Co-ordinator
Claire Hughes (CH)	Transform Forth Valley
Alex Murrie (AM)	Victim Support Scotland
John Hosie (JH)	Tamfourhill TRO and Hub
Margaret Gardener (MG)	Hallglen Hub
Navneet Sandau (NS)	LinkLiving
Pauline Smith (PS)	Central Advocacy Partners

**Attendees:**

Sarah Thomson (ST)	Let's Be Heard, COVID-19 Inquiry
Catherine Evans (CE)	Let's Be Heard, COVID-19 Inquiry

**Apologies:**

Debbie Jupp	Committed to Ending Abuse
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**1. Welcome and Introductions**

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

**2. Previous Minutes and Action Tracker**

LH confirmed that the minutes from the meeting held on 23 May 2023 would be presented for approval at the next Forum meeting, to be held on 22 November 2023.

**3. Scottish COVID-19 Inquiry: Let's Be Heard: Sharing Scotland's Covid Experience**

LH introduced ST and CE, who attended the meeting to share their work and ask for feedback on the 'Let's Be Heard' workstream within the Scottish COVID-19 Inquiry. The core request was support in raising awareness of this work to increase the level of engagement and contribution.

ST explained that their task was within the public side of the inquiry, and they were looking to gather details of individual and group experiences from as many participants as possible. Specifically using a human rights based approach, to ensure that all demographics are covered and unequal impacts were assessed.

ST drew attention to the 'Let's Be Heard' presentation, which can be found on the [CVS Falkirk website](#). The following additional points were noted:

- i. Feedback can be given using an online platform or via a paper form. Translated and EasyRead versions of the documents were available, and versions adapted to be more accessible for children.
- ii. National engagement activities are due to conclude during Autumn 2023, with more focused engagement to follow.
- iii. The information gather was based around three core questions, which can be found on page 6 of the slide pack.
- iv. A Let's Be Heard [communications pack](#) is available for groups to use.
- v. Any expenses incurred as part of the information gather will be covered, these include venue hire, travel costs etc... and these must be pre-approved. Expenses could not be claimed retrospectively.
- vi. ST and CE welcomed invitations to present to other groups.

LH offered to share the information CVS Falkirk & District (CVSF) had gathered from its own COVID-19 experiences and BJ shared a link to a research document ['Life in Scotland for LGBT Young People 2022'](#) which contains reference to COVID-19.

**Action:** LH to share CVS Falkirk & District findings.

ST and CE thanked the group and left the meeting.

#### 4. CVS Falkirk & District Update

LH commented on the current funding landscape and the expected forthcoming funding cuts from local public sector partners. She encouraged all members to look at alternative sources of funding. In addition, she noted that from the 1 July 2023, any public sector grand holders must pay the living wage. SCVO and the TSI network had written to the Scottish Government regarding the 'No-one left behind' programme, in that funding did not cover reasonable costs related to employment, including sick pay. Therefore, placements are not able to do a full cost recovery.

LH encouraged members to contact CVS Falkirk for support and information regarding funding, also to consider attending the Funding Officers Network, which would cover the emerging picture and support available. The next meeting of the network is **Wednesday 15 November 2023**.

LH drew attention to the CVSF update. The slide pack can be viewed or downloaded via the [CVS Falkirk website](#). The following points were noted under each heading.

##### 4.1 Updated Guide to Self-Evaluation in Scotland

LH invited NB to share an update on the Care Inspectorate ['Guide to self-evaluation for community justice in Scotland'](#) which was published in July 2023. This was designed to enable community justice partners in considering how they contribute to improving the life chances and outcomes of people with living experience of community justice in Scotland. Groups were encouraged to self-evaluate as part of a continuous improvement journey. It was agreed to

share the document, which can be accessed via the link above, and an action was taken to invite third sector representatives to attend a meeting to cover this item.

#### **4.2 An Informed Choice: Community Asset Transfer Information Session**

On Tuesday 5 September 2023 at 1pm, an online information session will be held by CVSF, who will be joined by the Community Ownership Support Service (COSS), Development Trusts Association Scotland (DTAS), the Scottish Land Fund. This was part of the support offered in response to the Falkirk Strategic Property Review and the proposal to make 133 council-owned properties available for transfer to communities.

To book a place please email [info@cvsfalkirk.org.uk](mailto:info@cvsfalkirk.org.uk)

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, due to open on 1 September 2023 and managed by Falkirk Council, CVSF would share additional information as it becomes available.

#### **4.3 Autumn School Holiday Food and Activities Fund**

Applications are open until Friday 1 September for Falkirk Council's Autumn School Holiday Food and Activities Fund.

#### **4.4 Police Scotland – August Cyber Byte**

The Police Scotland 'August Cyber Byte' concentrated on social media considerations for parents and can be accessed [here](#).

#### **4.5 Challenge Poverty Week: 2 – 8 October 2023**

LH encouraged members to look at the work undertaken by [Poverty Alliance](#) in relation to Challenge Poverty Week.

#### **4.6 Human Rights Bill Consultation**

The Human Rights Consortium want as many civil society organisations as possible to make their voices heard on the consultation for the Scottish Government's Human Rights Bill. More details can be found [here](#).

#### **4.7 Trauma-Informed Training (Level 1&2)**

Falkirk Council has appointed a Trauma Informed Lead and are at the early stage of planning what this will encompass. Other resources are currently available, which include:

- i. A short animation titled ['Opening doors: trauma informed practice for the workforce'](#)
- ii. Resource for justice workers on [Turas](#)

NB offered to bring an update to a future meeting.

**Action:** Schedule in a future session on community justice.

## 5. Tamfourhill Tenants and Residents Organisation/Community Hub

LH introduced JH, Community Safety Engager for Our Place Camelon & Tamfourhill, to the group and drew attention his slide pack, which can be viewed or downloaded via the [CVS Falkirk website](#), along with the [Community Safety Strategy](#). The following points were noted.

- i. Our Place Camelon and Tamfourhill produced a Community Safety Strategy in April 2021 at the heart of which was to make Camelon and Tamfourhill a safer, happier and more attractive place to live.
- ii. Within this had been an desire to engage with young people in the area, to have their voices heard and increase the number of young people involved in projects and activities, with a corresponding impact on reducing anti-social behaviour. At its heart was working within the community, not doing things to it.
- iii. This project has experienced several successes, achievements, and setbacks.
- iv. The youth engagement key findings were noted on slide three. This information took time to gather, as the trust of the young people was gained slowly through relationship building in their own environment.
- v. During 2021, several activities were organised including environmental work, cook outs, alcohol & substance workshops.
- vi. Much of the feedback from the young people was pessimistic about the future and nostalgic about facilities that used to be available when they were younger.
- vii. Five key recommendations were made, outlined on slide 4. These recommendations had the support of the young people and also local police officers and fire and rescue.
- viii. Pilots took place with such as the Sport Programmes and focus groups were set up to drive the recommendations forward.

JH updated on the status of initiatives:

- i. The Twilight Sports Programme started in 2022 was embedded into Friday nights and is secured until April 2026.
- ii. TTRO secured 3-years funding to establish a Safer Communities Youth Action Project through the National Lottery Young Start Programme & Falkirk Community Schools Fund.
- iii. A Youth Action Group was established and successfully campaigned to maintain some of the number 6 bus service from Tamfourhill, which was scheduled to be cancelled.
- iv. The Youth Action Group also produced its own values and how it would deliver against them, see slide 6.
- v. Young people demonstrated better connections with the wider community; improved physical, mental and emotional wellbeing; improved consideration of risk and self-control; active citizenship as the impact of their voice was heard; increased participation; increased capacity for educational achievement; and improved aspirations for the future.
- vi. Lastly, the sense of belonging improved in young people – demonstrated clearly by their passionate attachment to the ‘cages’, a home for local play and sports equipment.

JH was thanked by the whole group for his passionate and inspiring presentation. A demonstration of the positive impact working in partnership with young people in the community can have. He was



asked by MG whether it was just young people who needed support in the area. He confirmed no, but often young people were not as likely to come forward if not asked, so a different approach had been taken. Plus, young people were keen to volunteer in a range of areas. Future steps included work on an arts project with an emphasis on interconnectedness.

JH closed his session by stating that Our Place had a job opportunity for a part-time youth outreach worker.

## 6. Discussion

LH invited the group to share their updates. The following was noted:

- i. An STV advert for Dates-n-Mates would premier on STV during This Morning on Tuesday 28 August 2023. Dates-n-Mates worked hard with STV to ensure that the ethos of it was fully understood and that the advert represented it in full.
- ii. LGBT Youth was recruiting for full-time officer in Forth Valley and BJ stressed the challenges experienced by it regarding recruitment and meeting space, although full support remained available online.
- iii. BJ informed the group of the [announcement](#) on waiting times from The Sandyford Clinic, related to gender dysphoria services.

## 7. Any Other Closing Business

There being no other business, LH thanked everyone for attending the meeting and encouraged everyone to follow up on the COVID-19 'Let's Be Heard' request.

**Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 22 November,  
10am – 12pm, via Zoom**