



Voluntary Sector Children's Services Forum (VSCSF)

"Working together, sharing our knowledge skills and resources to support children, families and communities to reach their full potential."

Wednesday 1 November 2023

10am – 12pm

Zoom Meeting

Present:

Norman Philip (NP) (Chairperson)
Eloise Wilson (EW)
Kerrie Hoggan (KH) (Minute Taker)

Barnardo's
CVS Falkirk & District
CVS Falkirk & District

Diane Cairns (DC)
Martin Murray (MM)
Sandra Rankin (SR)
Mary Page (MP)

Transform Forth Valley
One Parent Families Scotland
Home Start
Aberlour (item 6)

Apologies:

Annabel Russel
Ian Dickson
Jennifer Sherlock
Shirley Maxwell
Laura Kemp
Justine Nicolson
Barry Jordan
Kim Wyllie
Angela Boyce

Go! Youth Trust
FDAMH
Committed to Ending Abuse
Epilepsy Connections
Youth Scotland
Strathcarron Hospice
LGBT Youth Scotland
Central Carers
Aberlour

1. Welcome and Introductions

NP introduced himself, welcomed all attendees to the meeting and invited them to introduce themselves and provide some background to their organisation. NP explained that the forum existed to provide an opportunity to meet on a quarterly basis to learn and develop, working towards a more consistent attendance.

2. Minutes of Previous Minutes and Action Tracker

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 August 2023 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. Updates were given as available on the actions assigned at the previous meeting. Attention was drawn to the following items:



- Item 1. A survey will be issued to gather ideas for future speakers, themes for discussion and meeting structure.
- Item 4. The option to join the Falkirk Corporate Parenting Group remains open, with all Forum members encouraged to consider this, please contact Norman for details.
- Item 5. Although the September Denny intake of the Pre-employment Parent Programme has ended. Future courses, across Falkirk and run by different agencies, will take place during January to April 2024. Dates will be shared once agreed and promotion left open on the action list.
- Item 8. All Forum members, who have not done so already, were encouraged to add their details to the Services Directory on the [CVS Falkirk webpage](#).
- Item 10. This item will remain open with the email address of the CVS Falkirk volunteer contacts, [Erin Sweeney](#) and [Beth Cowen](#), shared with the Forum members.
- Item 11. A discussion took place regarding the lack of civic meeting spaces in the Falkirk area. MM advised that St James Church on Thornhill Road had meeting spaces available.
- Item 12. A draft Action Plan for UNCRC Incorporation has been drawn up, which has been shared with the Strategic Leadership Group for approval and implementation. The partnership group is working hard to ensure that UNCRC Incorporation and the Children's Rights Agenda has a high profile across the workforce and promote awareness raising. We will continue to monitor UNCRC's progress and support our partners at the Council to share information about its implementation journey and progress.
- Item 13. Work was underway to investigate whether CVS Falkirk could offer a hub for listing potential student placements.

3. Chair's Update

NP drew attention to his presentation, the slide pack can be viewed or downloaded via the CVS Falkirk website [post meeting note: the slide pack and accompanying documents were circulated via email to Forum members on 1 November 2023]. The following points were noted under each heading.

- I. The publication 'Falkirk's Integrated Children and Young People's Services Plan' was now available in pdf format.
- II. The publication 'Delivering Children's Rights in Falkirk' is also available. NP took an action to check who was on the working group for the report.
- III. The 'Getting it Right for Every Child' ('GIRFEC') working group are running policy refresher sessions until January 2024, the dates and locations of which were highlighted on the slide. A new GIRFEC Child's Plan Practice statement had been published, the GIRFEC working group updated and the incorporation of the Pan Lothian chronology template has been adopted.



- IV. New posters had been produced by Child Protection Scotland with a request that these were made visible in public places.
- V. The 'Grangemouth Test of Change' initiative, as outlined in the minutes of 16 August 2023, was still underway and a fuller update would follow at a future meeting.
- VI. The Provost's Christmas Appear 2023 had been launched, donations from which would be used to purchase ASDA vouchers to support vulnerable children and families at Christmas. NP advised that local social work departments were the contact for the vouchers.
- VII. The '16 Days Against Gender-Based Violence in Forth Valley' calendar had been launched [post meeting note: this was attached to the email of 1 November 2023].

Action: NP to confirm who sits on the working group for 'Delivering Children's Rights in Falkirk'

4. CVS Falkirk & District Update

EW provided an update from CVS Falkirk & District (CVS Falkirk). The slide pack can be viewed or downloaded via the [CVS Falkirk](#) website. The following points were noted:

- I. On 6 November 2023, CVS Falkirk & District were hosting an information session on the new Fairer Falkirk Anti-Poverty Strategy Consultation

[**Post meeting note:** This session has taken place. Eight attendees attended from the third sector and Fairer Falkirk have linked up with LGBT+ Youth Scotland to look at engaging with youth groups on the child/young person poverty element of the strategy. Wider conversations around engaging with children and young people took place, with a challenge raised that consultations are not engaging enough for young people, consequently best practice is to go to them and hold more informal sessions using creative approaches. Engagement information on Anti-Poverty Strategy was sent out to attendees and wider third sector via CVS e-Bulletin].
- II. The joint Adult/Child Protection Practitioner Forum took place in October 2023, the services had been brought together as part of a public protection approach. Tony McLaughlin, Lead Officer, Child Protection and Gemma Ritchie, Adult Support and Protection Lead Officer, would be invited to a future meeting to present how this connected to the third sector.
- III. The charity 'I Was Gonnae' was looking for third sector groups in Falkirk District to involve them in the basics of music. More details could be found on the slide.
- IV. A number of funding opportunities and national updates were listed in the slide pack, please refer to slides six to 10 for more information.



Action: EW to invite Tony Mclaughlin and Gemma Richie to a future Forum meeting.

5. Partner Updates

NP invited Forum members to share any resources and/or reports with him or EW so they could be shared with Forum members. A discussion took place regarding how to widen participation in the Forum. As per the existing action, it was agreed that a survey would be produced to gather ideas.

6. Launching Aberlour Falkirk Routes

EW introduced MP who outlined the background to the 'Grow Your Own Routes' programme in Falkirk, funded by Scottish Government following a successful three-year pilot in East and West Dunbartonshire. The core intention of the project was to provide a youthwork model for 12–26-year-olds impacted by family alcohol and drug use. The following points were noted.

- I. Scottish Government allocated £3.2m to extend the programme to six additional areas in Scotland, including Falkirk.
- II. The programme was designed to provide a space for 12- to 26-year-olds impacted by family alcohol and drug use, to get involved in activities, group work and 1:1s with the wider goal of creating happy memories and allowing these young people to have experiences they would otherwise miss out on.
- III. Core to the programme is that the young people have a voice in terms of the activities that were scheduled and their involvement in them, with staff listening closely to needs and wants and helping the young person to recognise that their current path does not determine their future route, they can grow their own routes.
- IV. The process to get involved in the programme was deliberately simple, contact form, email or phone call, and completely voluntary, it was anticipated that for older participants they would follow a drop in model.
- V. In terms of capacity, the goal is to have three full time members of staff, each with 25 -30 young people in their group.

A discussion took place regarding the challenges that may present with young carers, who might feel the emotional burden of leaving a parent, and school refusers. MP explained that parents will not be involved in the programme, it would be designed as a safe space for young people.

MP shared her email, mary.page@aberlour.org.uk, for follow up questions and potential referrals. She confirmed that information documents, such as leaflets, would follow.



CVS Falkirk
The Third Sector Interface for Falkirk and District



7. AOCB

It was noted that at least one meeting in 2024 would take place in person. More details to follow.

There being no other business, the meeting was closed.

**Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 28 February 2024,
10am – 12pm, via Zoom**

www.CVSFalkirk.org.uk | 01324 692 000 | info@CVSFalkirk.org.uk | @CVS Falkirk
CVS Falkirk and District is a Company Limited by Guarantee in Scotland No. SC085838 | Scottish Charity No. SC000312 | Registered office: Unit 7b, Callendar Business Park, Callendar Road, Falkirk, FK1 1XR