

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 17 September 2025

10am – 12pm

Via MS Teams

Present:

Kerrie Hoggan (Interim Chairperson)	CVS Falkirk & District
Laura Jamieson (Minute Taker)	CVS Falkirk & District
Beverley Isdale	First 4 Kids
Debbie Hamilton	One Parent Families Scotland (OPFS)
Janette Galloway	Dennyloanhead Community Hall
Jo McCorriston	Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Carers Centre
Lauren McGregor	Committed to Ending Abuse (CEA)
Lucy Jamieson	PLUS Forth Valley
Melissa Ryan	Self Directed Support Forth Valley
Safia Ali	RISE Forth Valley
Sam Jelf	Families Outside
Sharon Frederiksen	Home-Start Falkirk
Stephanie McCairns	GO Kids
Tanya Richards	Wellbeing Scotland

Apologies:

Eloise Wilson (Chairperson)	CVS Falkirk & District
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Guest Speaker:

Kathy Grant	Falkirk Council
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1. Welcome and Introductions

Kerrie introduced herself, welcomed all attendees to the meeting and introduced Kathy, GIRFEC lead and Partnership Co-ordinator at Falkirk Council.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 11 June 2025 will be circulated and approved via email, as part of the new process put into place by CVS Falkirk & District.

3. The Structure of and Representation Within the Children's Services Planning Partnership

Kathy gave an overview of [The Promise](#), the Children's Services Planning Partnership (CSPP), and her role as [GIRFEC](#) lead for Falkirk Council, along with how they link together. This included a summary of the CSPP's priorities and the working groups (all multi-agency) which are responsible for carrying out this work.

Key points from Kathy's presentation are noted below:

- The CSPP is required to submit an annual report to Scottish Government on how these priorities are being met, which the working groups feed into; this should be available to access online soon.
- Scottish Government has recognised that “[the CSPP] has more capacity to effect positive change via less priorities”. As a result, and following a multi-agency event earlier in the year, it was agreed that the priorities for Plan 2027 – 2029 will be:
 - 1. Alcohol and Substance use
 - 2. Mental Health & Wellbeing
 - 3. Gender Based Violence
 - with a focus on Childhood Poverty running throughout these 3 priority areas
- A new Integrated Children's Service Plan will be written soon to reflect these new priorities, and the working groups responsible for driving forward the work.

There was discussion around changes within these working groups as a result of the new priorities, with possibilities of reduction in the number of groups, alignment, or merging. If members are interested in being part of these working groups (or any short life working groups around specific pieces of work), they can contact Kathy by email: Kathy.Grant@falkirk.gov.uk

Questions included:

- What is the time commitment for sitting on the working groups?
 - The groups tend to meet approximately once per month, to every 6 weeks; they understand that people will submit apologies on occasion.

Kathy's presentation is available to view or download from the [CVS Falkirk & District](#) website (linked for your convenience).

4. Whole Family Wellbeing Fund and Proposed Service

Kathy also spoke about the possibility of the Strategic Leadership Group (SLG) submitting a bid to the [Whole Family Wellbeing Fund](#), to create an early intervention (multi-agency, co-designed) hub.

Kathy and her colleagues are aware that there is a lot of good work being done by the sector in early intervention. Instead of starting from scratch and replicating existing work, if their bid is successful, they are keen to work together with the sector and open the service to more people, while also reducing the financial costs on all providers involved. Kathy also noted that this will definitely be a co-designed piece

of work with both the sector and people who would use the hub, as she strongly believes that services and projects are more successful if they are designed by the people using them.

Applications for the Fund are due the week after the meeting, and Kathy will ensure the forum is kept updated on their progress.

Members asked the following questions:

- Are councils able to apply to the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund?
 - The fund is provided by Scottish Government for local authorities across Scotland, which have to submit bids. Successful bids will be judged by a funding panel.
- Is there a timeline for responses?
 - No, but previous communications have been returned quickly, and expect this to be the same.

5. AOCB

- **Wellbeing Scotland:** referrals are now open, with no waiting list at the time of the meeting.
- RISE Forth Valley:
 - new “Mummy & Me” group launched through NHS Forth Valley, for those pre- and post-natal who are feeling isolated. The group currently meets in the Forth Valley Royal Hospital community room, with the possibility of moving out into communities.
 - part of their Black History Month celebrations, the team is holding a **Cultural Sharing Event** on Saturday 25 October 2025, 11am – 4pm at Bailliefields Community Hub. The event is aimed at bringing together diverse communities in a spirit of unity, understanding and mutual respect, serving as a space to celebrate the richness of cultures, share stories, and foster meaningful connections across communities.
- Self Directed Support Forth Valley: offering sessions on “Know Your Options”, which are free, and cover what self directed support in Scotland should be, people’s rights under the scheme, and how to apply that to young people.

Date of Next Meeting:
Wednesday 28 January 2026,
10am – 12pm, via MS Teams