

The Impact We Make The Potential We Have

A report into the impact of Scotland's 32 third sector interfaces



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Foreword

76,000 enquiries, 10,000 organisations receiving one to one support, training for 7,500 people and 14,000 young people accredited for their volunteering efforts. These numbers alone would demonstrate a considerable impact across Scotland for the Third Sector Interfaces (TSIs) but on their own don't do justice to the value that TSIs bring to communities across Scotland. One of the ways this shows up is in the concept of 'brokerage'. This report demonstrates a unique and highly valuable role in which TSIs broker engagement and activity across third, public and private sector partners with a focus on orienting local activity towards community priorities.

Whether it is through TSI involvement in reshaping the way care is delivered for older people or the TSI role in ensuring young people can access services that will enhance their life chances, Scotland's third sector infrastructure exhibits a value not measured in numbers but something much deeper. This report begins to evidence a story which Voluntary Action Scotland as the network body for TSIs wants to expand upon in the months and years ahead and begins to make tangible the stories we hear daily from our network. In a climate of ever increasing fiscal austerity, and at a time of public service reform, this report shows how now more than ever a well-supported, well run and accessible third sector infrastructure has the potential to be at the heart of stronger, more resilient, communities.

On behalf of VAS I would like to offer our sincere thanks to ODS Consulting for producing such a high quality report and to our TSI members for continuing to help tell this story and demonstrate our collective impact. We have learned a lot from this report and it will help shape a significant amount of future work for an organisation and network that has undergone a significant amount of change. This report is a major first step in helping us co-ordinate the practice development that ensures wherever you are you can expect the same high quality support from your local TSI. I hope you find this report as informative and worthwhile as we have and that it leaves you with a strong sense of the impact and potential of Scotland's TSIs.

Calum Irving
Chief Executive
Voluntary Action Scotland

Executive Summary

This report explores the role, impact and potential of Third Sector Interfaces (TSIs) in Scotland. It summarises information provided by TSIs across Scotland on their activities and outcomes during 2012/13.

Activities and Impact in 2012/13

Overall, most TSIs felt that positive steps had been taken during 2012/13 to move towards achieving the Scottish Government's vision:

"...for the third sector to be acknowledged and respected across all sectors, the Government and wider public sector, as an essential social partner in helping Scotland have a successful and fairer future."

TSI Survey 2012/13

Overall, there was clear evidence that TSIs have played a key role in:

- Building relationships between third sector organisations themselves; between public and third sector organisations; and with the private sector. TSIs have created opportunities for meeting and networking, sharing experiences and practices, and learning from one another.
- Encouraging new ways of working amongst community planning partners, third sector organisations, private sector organisations and social enterprises.
- Supporting transitions and new opportunities - for example, TSIs had undertaken significant activity to support third sector organisations to consider and work towards the new legal model for charitable organisations in Scotland – the Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO).
- Contributing to national approaches – particularly public service reform and the three 'Change Fund' areas around services for older people, early years and (to a lesser extent) reducing re-offending.

Volunteering

TSIs had supported over 25,000 volunteers in 2012/13 – with a third of these being unemployed, and over a third aged under 25. There is evidence that volunteers are seeing positive outcomes in terms of developing confidence, self esteem and wellbeing – as well as moving forward on the path to work. This includes developing new skills, finding ongoing volunteering opportunities, and moving into part or full-time work.

Most TSIs had systems in place to gather feedback from volunteers shortly after they had been referred for a placement (usually four to six weeks). However, some TSIs found it challenging to effectively track and gather feedback from volunteers, with some reporting poor response rates and others finding that volunteering opportunities had not progressed.

Social Enterprise

TSIs provided intensive support to kick start social enterprises or support them to further develop and expand. TSIs also supported social enterprises to access funding from other sources, and provided forums for social enterprises to network and share experiences and expertise. Some facilitated discussion around developing joint working around a particular area of social enterprise – such as pools of ‘micro providers’ around a key issue. TSIs also worked with public sector organisations to encourage procurement practices which provide opportunities for social enterprises and community benefit, and worked with the private sector to encourage joint working.

This resulted in new social enterprises being established, existing social enterprises expanding, the profile of social enterprise increasing, and new jobs being created. However, some TSIs reported particular issues around establishing and maintaining social enterprise networks – with concerns about the purpose and value of the networks, the lack of understanding within some third sector organisations about the term ‘social enterprise’ and the reluctance by some organisations to move in the direction of charging for services.

Supporting Third Sector Organisations

TSIs received almost 76,000 enquiries about support to third sector organisations in 2012/13, and had a potential client group of approximately 28,400 registered third sector organisations across Scotland. Over a third of these – almost 10,000 organisations – received one to one support. This is often intensive and ongoing support. TSIs also provided training for 7,500 people from over 3,600 organisations.

This activity resulted in the creation of stronger, more sustainable third sector organisations; enhanced joint working between third sector organisations; better governance and resolution of conflict; and better measurement of impact and outcomes. However, some TSIs felt that organisations came to them when in crisis, and that attempts to move to pre-emptive support were not working. Others had tried approaches to address this, with some success.

Community Planning

All TSIs indicated that they have a permanent place on the local Community Planning Partnership at the highest level. All were involved in signing off the Single Outcome Agreement, and almost all say that they are involved at all stages of decision making processes within the Community Planning Partnership. TSIs sit on a very wide range of partnerships and forums with and linked to community planning, across many different issues.

TSIs have played a key role in building links between the third sector and community planning partners. They report that local strategies and plans now better reflect third sector

priorities, volunteering and social enterprise; that there are improved relationships with local authorities and other public sector partners; and that funding for the third sector has been protected (in some cases).

TSIs are also directly contributing to the achievement of the local outcomes set out in Single Outcome Agreements. Some are directly delivering services which contribute to outcomes – such as delivering a youth employability programme. Others are contributing to SOA outcomes across the fields of health, early years, older people, equality, community safety, community learning and development and beyond.

There is also a strong connection between national outcomes and local outcomes, meaning that TSIs are supporting the achievement of national outcomes at a local level. They are also making a particularly strong contribution to the reshaping of public services through the three Change Funds around Reshaping Care for Older People, early years and reducing re-offending.

However, many TSIs highlighted issues around joint working. Some felt that the third sector was not treated as an equal partner and some found that there was some inertia in partnership working. In some cases, TSIs were working with community planning partners to review and improve the way the third sector was engaged in community planning.

Future Priorities

TSIs were keen to undertake activity to:

- raise the profile of the TSI and strengthen the TSI organisationally (particularly where a merger had taken place);
- influence policy and practice more widely around major policy drivers – such as welfare reform and public service reform;
- continue to build on positive relationships to shape and influence policy through community planning;
- support social enterprise development - including influencing public sector procurement, promoting partnership across the third and private sectors and supporting social enterprise development around specific themes;
- develop outcomes focused evaluation and monitoring systems; and
- target their activities proactively, rather than trying to do everything within existing resources.

There were many examples of new areas of work, new ways of working, new partnerships and joint working arrangements and new research which demonstrated the desire of TSIs to continue to change, adapt and contribute to both local and national outcomes and priorities.

Section 1 | About This Report

Introduction

1.1 This report explores the role, impact and potential of Third Sector Interfaces (TSIs) in Scotland. It summarises information provided by TSIs across Scotland on their activities and outcomes during 2012/13. It also provides commentary on the potential future role of TSIs, to maximise outcomes and achieve potential for the communities and organisations they work with.

Context

1.2 The Scottish Government recognises the important role that the third sector can play in building a successful Scotland. It is committed to developing an enterprising third sector, which can contribute to achieving outcomes for individuals and communities across a range of fields including health, the economy and public service delivery.

1.3 As part of this commitment, the Scottish Government has driven the creation of Third Sector Interfaces across Scotland, since 2008. The aim is to ensure that the third sector is effectively supported and represented at local level. One important aim of the creation of TSIs is to build a more effective mechanism through which the third sector can participate in community planning, to allow the third sector to contribute to achieving local and national outcomes.

1.4 TSIs have four clear functions at a local level:

- supporting volunteering;
- supporting voluntary organisations;
- supporting social enterprise; and
- providing the link to and engaging with community planning partners.

1.5 There are now 32 TSIs in Scotland. Each area has defined its own approach to TSI structure, governance and management. In some cases, new single agencies have been set up. In others, there are partnership arrangements in place – and different arrangements for meeting some of the four functions. Many TSIs also perform other roles and activities, developing their role to fit with the local context. Voluntary Action Scotland (VAS) has an important role in supporting, developing and representing the TSIs at a national level.

About the Survey

- 1.6 Each TSI is required to report on its progress for 2012/13, by way of completion of a survey monkey questionnaire. This is a requirement of grant funding for each TSI.
- 1.7 The survey explores the activities that TSIs have been involved in across the four functions they are required to undertake, and the outcomes which have been achieved as a result. It also explores wider issues around key successes, challenges, opportunities and lessons learned.
- 1.8 At the time of producing this report, survey responses were available from all of the 32 TSIs.

Analysis

- 1.9 This report was produced by ODS Consulting, an independent research and consultancy organisation. The survey responses were sorted into a matrix, and answers to quantitative questions (yes/ no and numerical responses) were analysed through formulas within Excel.
- 1.10 The majority of the analysis was, however, qualitative. ODS carefully read the responses to each question in detail, and used a system of 'manual thematic coding' to identify key themes and divergences. This involves identifying when similar issues arise, and grouping these together, and also identifying when unexpected or diverse views or experiences arise – and highlighting these. ODS also identified examples of the views and experiences expressed, to provide real life examples of activities and outcomes. These were identified to provide a real flavour of TSI activity and impact across Scotland.
- 1.11 This report is intended to provide a high level overview of TSI activity, outcomes and potential. TSIs are involved in vastly varied activity, and it is challenging to reflect the range and depth of activity and outcomes in an overview report. This report outlines the key activities and outcomes, with examples, but does not attempt to summarise absolutely everything that each TSI is doing. More detail is available in the individual survey responses, available to VAS and the Scottish Government.
- 1.12 The report generally uses the local names for the TSIs – some of which involve multiple organisations. For a list of TSI names and partners, please see Appendix One.

- 1.13 Third Sector Interfaces have their own names and branding, as developed locally. In some areas, TSI functions are delivered by partnerships of organisations, while in other areas a single organisation provides all TSI functions.
- 1.14 In the areas where a partnership of organisations delivers TSI functions, the report is clear – where possible – in quotes and case studies which partner organisation’s opinions or activities are being described. However, in some cases it has not been possible to determine from the survey responses which partner organisations opinions or activities are being described. In these instances the report refers to the TSI more generally, rather than identifying a single partner organisation.

Section 2 | Profile of Third Sector Interfaces

Introduction

2.1 This chapter sets out the profile of Third Sector Interfaces (TSIs) in Scotland.

Geography

2.2 The 32 TSIs cover each of Scotland's 32 local authority areas:

- 4 operate in an urban area;
- 20 operate in a 'mixed' area;
- 5 operate in a 'rural' area; and
- 3 operate in an 'island' area.

2.3 A small number of TSIs highlighted that the area in which they operated provided either challenges or opportunities. Some pointed to the challenges of rurality, isolation and deprivation in engaging communities and organisations across the local authority area. Others highlighted the changing demographics in their area of operation.

2.4 The size of population served by the TSI (the local authority area) ranged from 20,000 to almost 600,000. The average size was almost 165,000. The number of OSCR registered charities in each area also varied significantly. In total, TSIs indicated that there were over 21,000 registered charities in the areas they covered – an average of 700 for each TSI. However, this ranged from under 200 in one area to over 2,500 in another.

2.5 The TSIs estimated that there were approximately 49,000 third sector organisations in total operating in the areas they covered. Again, this ranged from 200 in one area to 5,000 in another.

Organisational Structure

2.6 There are 32 TSIs in Scotland. Each is organised in a different way, to suit the local context. Some are single organisations undertaking all TSI functions, others are partnerships, with partner organisations having different responsibilities in relation to meeting these functions, or covering different geographies. At the time of the survey:

- 19 were single organisations providing all four TSI functions;
- 11 were partnerships; and
- 2 listed their governance structure as 'other'.

2.7 Many of the single organisations indicated that mergers of existing organisations had been completed recently (often in 2011 or 2012) to ensure that a single organisation was undertaking all TSI functions.

2.8 The partnership organisations generally involved local organisations supporting voluntary organisations and the third sector; local organisations supporting volunteering; and local organisations supporting social enterprises. In a minority of cases local community trusts were partners in the TSI. All of the partnerships had slightly varied membership and operated in different ways, to reflect local circumstances.

2.9 One of the TSIs which categorised itself as 'other' indicated that during 2012/13 it operated as a partnership between six organisations, but had since created a single organisation in the form of a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation. The other TSI indicated that it was a partnership with one organisation taking the lead.

Business Planning

2.10 All TSIs had a one year operational plan in place, signed off by the Scottish Government. Most of the TSIs also had a three year business plan in place. In a small number of cases, this was nearing completion in 2013 and was being refreshed. A small minority of TSIs indicated that due to very recent changes in organisational arrangements, often through mergers, they did not have a full three year business plan in place for the integrated TSI just yet. But all of these were in the process of developing their plan.

Staff and Volunteers

2.11 At the time of the survey there were a total of 660 members of staff working for TSIs across Scotland. Of these, 350 were full time staff members and 310 were part time.

2.12 The number of full time staff working for interfaces ranged from one to 33. Most reported between five and 20 full-time members of staff. Very similar figures were reported for part-time workers. Again, most TSIs had between five and 20 part-time members of staff.

2.13 The TSIs also had just over 2,200 volunteers. The number of volunteers working for each TSI varied greatly, ranging from 5 to over 400. The majority of TSIs reported between 20 and 200 volunteers.

Key Issues

2.14 TSIs were asked an initial general question about key sectoral areas of concern or areas of activity. There were great similarities in responses, with a number of issues clearly being priorities across most TSIs, including:

- **Contraction of public funding** – TSIs indicated that third sector organisations were seeing annual budgets reducing, and greater competition for funding. This was impacting on third sector ability to meaningfully contribute to achievement of shared outcomes, and was making some organisations very fragile with concerns about sustainability. TSIs were working to address this, as far as possible, through working with organisations to look at income generation, socially enterprising activity, securing additional funding, working together and looking at new ways of doing things. More broadly, TSIs were also working on raising the profile of the third sector, and improving the credibility and resilience of the sector.
- **Public sector procurement** – TSIs found that funders, particularly local authorities, were shifting towards a tendering and commissioning based approach to funding, as opposed to providing grant funding in blocks, or linked to Service Level Agreements. TSIs were supporting third sector organisations through building skills around tendering and charging for services; supporting joint working between third sector organisations; and building relationships and new ways of working between third sector funded organisations and funders.
- **Governance and sustainability** – TSIs found that many third sector groups were finding it challenging to recruit, support and train volunteers and board members. There were particular concerns about groups who were being encouraged to deliver services and own assets, without clearly understanding their legal responsibilities. TSIs were supporting third sector organisations to build capacity; understand community empowerment and asset transfer principles; understand roles and responsibilities; and train and support volunteers and board members.
- **Community planning** – TSIs were working to support third sector organisations to work more closely with public sector partners, and to take a co-ordinated and unified approach on specific issues and joint working between third sector. However, many had found that as their profile increased, so did requests for information, to attend meetings and to contribute to large pieces of work. TSIs

welcomed these opportunities, but highlighted that they were very resource intensive and that current approaches were unsustainable. Some TSIs were developing or facilitating 'Third Sector Forums' to facilitate engagement between third and public sectors.

- **National initiatives** – Most TSIs identified national initiatives – particularly the three Scottish Government Change Funds for older people, early years and reducing re-offending – as a high priority for them. Reshaping Care for Older People was a particularly high priority, alongside wider activity around health and social care including co-production, joint commissioning, personalisation, self directed support and discussions around integration of health and social care.
- **Economic context** – Many TSIs highlighted that the challenging economic context was increasing the need for more intensive activity around reducing unemployment and poverty. Many highlighted the need for work around mitigating the impact of welfare reform. Many highlighted the links between volunteering and supporting employability.

2.15 Some TSIs identified different specific local issues which were high priority, including:

- how to manage income from community wind turbines;
- supporting organisations to exist with poorly managed and irregular funding streams;
- transfers of community facilities into community ownership;
- providing practical support including finding accommodation and sharing backroom services; and
- supporting community planning partners and communities to understand and work together around the public sector equality duties.

2.16 The activities and outcomes that TSIs have undertaken and achieved during 2012/13, across many of these priority areas, are explored in later chapters.

Section 3 | Volunteering Development

Activities

3.1 One of the core areas of work which TSIs across Scotland undertake is the development of volunteering. In total, TSIs had received over 117,500 volunteering enquiries in 2012/13. TSIs had almost 25,000 registered volunteers, and indicated that over 19,000 of these had taken up volunteering opportunities. Overall, TSIs had almost 24,000 registered volunteering opportunities on their databases (either Vbay or Milo), and just over 3,800 opportunities had been registered in the past six months.

3.2 TSIs worked with volunteers with different life experiences and personal characteristics. A high proportion of volunteers were aged under 25.

Total number of volunteers who:	Number	Percentage
Were unemployed	8,036	32%
Declared a health issue or support needs	3,855	15%
Were under 25	10,202	41%
Were over 60	3,046	12%
Total volunteers	25,139	

3.3 TSIs identified the promotion of volunteering as a key area of activity in volunteering development. Many described how they had raised awareness of volunteering through presentations at schools, colleges and local community events. Some had also visited local Job Centres and ran outreach surgeries from libraries and community centres. Some of this work was tailored specifically for young people not moving into education, training or employment.

3.4 Respondents also referred to their attempts to attract volunteers through increasing the profile of the TSI. This was mainly done through the distribution of leaflets and through receiving coverage on local radio and in local papers. Many mentioned that online publicity – through websites, e-bulletins and especially social media – is increasingly important to TSIs as they promote volunteering. This is especially true of outreach to young people, with many TSIs finding that Facebook and Twitter can be the most effective ways to communicate with this group. Voluntary Action Orkney, for example, reported that 95% of regular communication with young volunteers is now conducted via social media.

3.5 Efforts to promote volunteering were often closely tied to efforts to reward those who had volunteered. All TSIs referred to the Saltire Awards, a nationwide scheme which rewards the volunteering efforts of those aged between 12 and 25. The awards are

divided into four categories – ‘Challenge’ for those who are new to volunteering, ‘Approach’ for those who volunteer more regularly, ‘Ascent’ for those who have made a long-term volunteering commitment, and ‘Summit’ for those who are considered to have made an outstanding contribution to volunteering.

3.6 The number of Saltire Awards presented across Scotland is detailed in the table below. There was a strong focus on the Approach and Ascent awards, for those who volunteer regularly or have a long term volunteering commitment.

Saltire Awards delivered:	Number	Percentage
Number of Challenge awards	2,037	14%
Number of Approach awards	4,274	30%
Number of Ascent awards	7,835	55%
Number of Summit awards	59	1%
Total number of awards	14,205	

Example: The Saltire Awards in East Lothian

Between August 2012 and March 2013, Volunteer Development East Lothian worked with 16 school pupils aged 15-16. The project was tailored for those with behavioural issues, poor attendance records or difficulty with literacy and numeracy. It aimed to boost participants’ confidence, self-esteem and communication skills by setting a target for each to achieve a 200 hour Saltire Ascent certificate.

Activities included conservation work, fundraising, painting and decorating and inter-generational work, as well as helping to improve literacy and numeracy in the classroom. One group were given training in presentation to prepare for a mock ‘Dragon’s Den’, which resulted in a £1,000 grant for the makeover of a local hospital cafe.

3.7 Many TSIs indicated that promotion of the awards within schools was an effective way in which to promote volunteering itself, and to help young people develop their skills.

“We have built on our early success with promoting the Saltire Awards throughout the islands, and are in contact with most of the schools and the local college, informing and supporting young volunteers... We have increased our work with social media such as Facebook and Twitter in order to raise our local profile.”

Co-Cheangal Innse Gall (Western Isles TSI)

3.8 Some TSIs also hosted their own award ceremonies alongside the Saltire Awards, such as the Shetland Youth Volunteering Awards and the Young Aberdeenshire Volunteer Awards.

3.9 The second main activity was skills development. Many TSIs discussed the importance of boosting employability, and referred to their efforts in developing clients' skills. For example, the Glasgow Council for Voluntary Sector reported that it seeks to "maximise the impact of volunteering on employability", while Voluntary Action South Lanarkshire runs an accredited training programme that provides volunteers with a mentor to support and motivate them. Similarly, Voluntary Action South Ayrshire is about to launch an "up-skilling" programme for volunteers, and the TSI in Inverclyde has worked with employers in the care sector to enable volunteers to build up more work experience.

3.10 The third main activity was capacity building for voluntary organisations. A number of TSIs reported regular contact with local voluntary organisations, assisting them in all aspects of good practice. There was a focus on assisting voluntary organisations to create and advertise volunteering opportunities, and on helping them to achieve Volunteer Friendly and Investing in Volunteers (IIV) status.

"We are in constant contact with local organisations: reviewing their current volunteering opportunities, discussing how we could develop new opportunities, as well as identifying one off opportunities for volunteers to get involved in."

CVS Falkirk and District

Example: Promoting Healthy Lifestyles

NHS Borders approached the TSI in Scottish Borders for assistance with a new healthy lifestyles project in March 2012. The TSI used its new website to recruit a Project Leader who developed the programme in conjunction with the Healthy Living Network. The Project Leader was then able to generate media coverage. This led to the recruitment of six volunteers who were trained in all aspects of healthy living – from healthy eating and exercise to building self-esteem. These volunteers are in the process of registering with NHS Borders and will go on to deliver the healthy lifestyles project to others.

One volunteer went on to promote the course as a Healthy Living Champion, and has since been named as 'Adult Learner of the Year' at the Adult Learning Awards.

3.11 Many TSIs also discussed how they had established links with local businesses, which allowed local organisations to recruit employees as volunteers for individual projects. Stirlingshire Voluntary Enterprise, for example, had assisted local organisations in recruiting staff from the local branch of Waitrose.

3.12 When asked how they had tracked volunteers after their placement, most TSIs reported that they gathered feedback from individuals via phone or email, usually four to six weeks after volunteers had been referred to a placement organisation. Some

maintained further contact, seeking updates from volunteers a year or more after initial contact. Some also circulated surveys and questionnaires among their base of volunteers, and there was further reference to social media as a more effective way of keeping in touch with young volunteers.

- 3.13 Sometimes TSIs would contact individuals and receive feedback that the volunteering opportunity had not been progressed by the organisation. In these cases, some TSIs saw this as an opportunity to provide the organisation with further capacity building on how to manage volunteer referrals.
- 3.14 A small number of TSIs reported that their efforts to track and gather feedback from individual volunteers had been met with a poor response rate. In response to this, some found that online communications could be more successful, while others gathered feedback from placement organisations as well as individuals.
- 3.15 When asked how they had supported organisations to improve the quality of volunteering they provided, the majority of TSIs focused on their work in helping organisations achieve Volunteer Friendly and Investing in Volunteers status.
- 3.16 Others referred to training and information provided on a range of issues, such as policy development, the Protecting Vulnerable Groups scheme and volunteer recruitment and management. For example, Engage Renfrewshire provided organisations with templates and examples of policy and hosts events detailing potential funding opportunities. Dumfries and Galloway Third Sector Interface and Voluntary Action Orkney hosted awards ceremonies in order to promote best practice.
- 3.17 Some TSIs also referred to their work with employer-supported volunteering schemes, discussing the benefits these brought to local communities. The TSI in Inverclyde, for example, recruited volunteers from the local branch of a national company to volunteer and provide training to increase the digital skills of over 65s.

Outcomes

- 3.18 In terms of outcomes for individual volunteers, many TSIs described their work in helping people gain new skills and improve their employability. Many reported that a significant number of their volunteers had since moved on to paid employment as a result of the skills they gained while volunteering.

“My previously uninspiring CV had become filled with newly acquired skills...I believed in myself again!”

Volunteer, North Lanarkshire

3.19 Some TSIs referred to their efforts in assisting people who had been made redundant, had suffered from ill-health, or who had stopped work in order to care for an elderly parent. In each of these cases, those whom the TSI had assisted viewed volunteering as a crucial step on the path back to work.

Example: Improving Employability

A local woman approached tsiMORAY as she sought new skills after being made redundant. tsiMORAY met with her to explore a range of options and found her an administrative role at a local community centre.

After quickly making a good impression on her new colleagues, she was offered a paid, part-time position at the centre. She was responsible for managing day-to-day tasks, taking care of finances and co-ordinating volunteers. According to the volunteer, the assistance she received from the TSI was invaluable. “I wouldn’t have been able to get a job in administration had it not been for my volunteering...what a great way to get that dreaded experience people always ask for”.

3.20 Many TSIs also discussed the benefits that volunteering can bring to individuals’ self-esteem, self-confidence and general wellbeing. Some reported findings from their own surveys of volunteers, such as the Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations’ Council, who reported that 87% felt their communication skills had improved, and 85% felt more self-confident. Voluntary Action Perthshire added that volunteering can help those who are new to the UK develop their English language skills.

“It is recognised at international level that volunteering provides not only therapeutic benefits but an excellent vehicle for building health, confidence and self worth that more often than not leads the volunteer on to bigger and better things in their private lives.”

Voluntary Sector Gateway West Lothian

Example: Finding suitable opportunities

CVS Falkirk and District was approached by a 16-year-old boy who was keen to volunteer but faced barriers to doing so. Having left school without qualifications and suffering severe epilepsy, he lacked self-confidence and was frustrated with spending all his time at home. After discussing his options with the TSI, he decided to pursue voluntary work in charity shops.

After approaching a few shops, CVS Falkirk and District found one that was able to support their clients’ additional needs. He has now been successfully volunteering there for a month. He finds that “everyone is nice and friendly and it’s going well. Help from the Volunteer Centre has been great, they’ve helped me so much in the past few weeks, I find myself happier and it’s great getting out of the house”.

3.21 In terms of outcomes for placement organisations, a significant number of TSIs discussed their efforts in helping organisations design volunteering opportunities and recruit volunteers. Attention was paid to each organisation’s needs, ensuring that volunteers are sent to placements where they can both offer and develop their skills.

“Our relationship with Volunteer Glasgow is one we value highly. The taster sessions give potential volunteers a safe and non-threatening means of trying out volunteering with us... As a result, six people joined our team in the last year, each one adding to the richness of talents and skills.”

Voluntary organisation in Glasgow

Example: Volunteer recruitment

An Aberdeen-based advocacy service which serves 750 clients approached the Aberdeen Volunteer Centre after its volunteer base dwindled to just one person. After initial contact, the organisation’s new volunteer co-ordinator submitted a list of new volunteer opportunities. These were uploaded to Volunteer Aberdeen’s website and included in the TSI’s e-bulletin – resulting in 40 new volunteering enquiries.

The co-ordinator also spoke on the Volunteer Centre’s Community radio programme to promote the new opportunities, leading the recruitment of eight new volunteers.

According to the volunteer co-ordinator, prospective volunteers who approached the organisation from the TSI website or Volunteer Centre were better informed than candidates who had approached them directly.

3.22 Many TSIs highlighted that through providing initial training on volunteering, this can encourage organisations to invest in further training.

Example: Volunteer Management Training

The TSI in Edinburgh, for example, reported that 419 people had attended volunteer management training, and that 40 of them had gone on to undertake training accredited by the Chartered Management Institute.

The feedback received from organisations was very positive: “[The training] gave us the confidence to handle volunteering challenges – we now have a procedure to deal with issues.”

3.23 Many TSIs discussed their work in helping organisations achieve Volunteer Friendly status and Investing in Volunteers accreditation. Responses tended to focus on the number of local organisations that had successfully achieved accreditation with the support of the local TSI.

Section 4 | Social Enterprise Development

Activities

4.1 Almost all TSIs referred to the advice, guidance and business support they had provided to local social enterprises. Many referred to support in the form of training sessions, meetings and events. These covered a range of topics, such as legal structures, sales and marketing, and market research. Many also offered bespoke training tailored to the needs of individual organisations.

Example: Flexible social enterprise support

Edinburgh Social Enterprise Network provides support to social enterprises using a flexible approach. It is designed to fill the gap in national support programmes. The support includes a funding pot for buying in specialist advice such as legal or tax advice. The business support programme is rated very highly by social enterprises.

4.2 Support was provided both to start-up groups and to established organisations, although responses tended to focus on TSIs' work with new initiatives. Some TSIs operated targeted programmes to support particular types of social enterprise or social entrepreneur.

"Argyll Voluntary Action has supported a new initiative to grow new young social entrepreneurs giving the opportunity to develop their own business whilst being mentored and to have experience of delivering services in social media on a paid basis...This is part of commitment to targeting support where it is needed and to developing new enterprises"

Argyll Voluntary Action

Example: CraftHub Orkney

A group of people sought to set up a co-operative of local residents and craftspeople, with the aim of setting up a retail outlet. Voluntary Action Orkney arranged a planning session, at which they provided information about legal structures and gave contact details of similar projects. Voluntary Action Orkney also advised on business planning, resulting in a £1500 start-up grant from Business Gateway, and £12,500 salary costs for a part-time manager from the local development trust.

The enterprise registered as a Community Interest Company and was named 'CraftHub Orkney'. It continues to receive support in day-to-day running from Voluntary Action Orkney.

- 4.3 Many organisations approached TSIs for support with funding to kick start new organisations or activities. Many TSIs referred organisations to potential sources of funding, while others directly secured funding for particular projects.
- 4.4 When asked how many organisations they had referred to social enterprise funding, answers from TSIs ranged from none to almost 100. Overall, almost 700 organisations had been referred. Some TSIs mentioned that their mailing lists and e-bulletins also raised awareness of funding opportunities.
- 4.5 TSIs highlighted the wide range of support programmes and funding sources to which they signposted social enterprises. This included national programmes and organisations including Just Enterprise, First Port, Social Firms Scotland, Development Trusts Association Scotland, Social Enterprise Scotland, the Supplier Development Programme and the Enterprise Academy. Aspiring social enterprises were also referred to local sources of support including Business Gateways and local authority support and start up funds.
- 4.6 Many TSIs also discussed their role in providing forums for discussion and networking, and developing markets for social enterprise. Many TSIs were supporting the development of Public Social Partnerships, and working with third sector organisations and local authorities around procurement and contracting. Some were encouraging key approaches, such as the use of community benefit clauses or the use of subcontracts to support small and medium sized organisations. For example:
- tsiMORAY had encouraged the development and adoption of community benefit clauses in public sector contracts, and supported the development of mutual understanding between third and public sectors around the management and review of commissioned services.
 - Midlothian Voluntary Action and Social Enterprise Alliance Midlothian had worked in partnership with others to run a seminar increasing awareness and understanding of community benefit options.
 - The TSI in Scottish Borders had worked with Scottish Borders Council procurement to look at issues around tendering, including community benefit clauses. It worked with the Council to develop a policy for buying from social enterprises, which has been accepted.
- 4.7 Others were supporting pools of 'micro-providers' around particular issues – such as Self Directed Support. Many were hosting networking forums and events, such as:
- Edinburgh Social Enterprise Network ran a Social Enterprise Summit, which focused on developing skills such as customer care, sales and marketing.

- Voluntary Action East Renfrewshire has established a Support Providers Forum to clarify referral routes to enterprise support between East Renfrewshire Council, Chamber of Commerce, Ready for Business, Development Trusts Association Scotland and others.
- Voluntary Action East Ayrshire has been working closely with local social enterprises to develop the Ayrshire Social Enterprise Network and Training Group (AScENT) which supports pan Ayrshire working, skill sharing and training delivered by social enterprises.

Outcomes

4.8 The most commonly referred to outcome was the creation of new social enterprises, and the resulting increase in job opportunities - for young people in particular. Those who recorded an increase in the number of social enterprises reported a figure between 10 and 20 new projects. Others referred to enterprises which had expanded their activities and therefore been able to create new employment opportunities. For example during 2012/13:

- Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire supported 20 new social enterprises, with 127 jobs created at these.
- In Highland, the TSI supported 13 organisations to be more enterprising, creating 14 new jobs.
- Fife Voluntary Action supported eight new social enterprises, creating 17 jobs.
- Volunteer Development East Lothian supported 11 new social enterprises, creating 12 new jobs.

Example: Job creation in South Lanarkshire

Voluntary Action South Lanarkshire reported a total of 17 new projects, and detailed a number of existing enterprises which had expanded their activities. The Hamilton Youth Project was one such organisation, which the TSI supported through the process of securing funding. This resulted in the creation of six new jobs.

4.9 Some also referred to their success in raising the public profile of social enterprise within the broader community. Stirlingshire Voluntary Enterprise, for example, hosted an awareness day at Stirling University which gave local social enterprises the opportunity to showcase their work, and which was attended by local politicians and media.

“Our development work has raised the profile of social enterprise in Moray and encouraged many new ideas to be generated and supported.”

tsiMORAY

4.10 Related to this was the expansion of social enterprise networks. tsiMORAY, for example, reported that membership of the local network has tripled from 19 to 60 organisations, while the TSI in Dundee reported that the Dundee Social Enterprise Network which worked specifically with start-ups has been well received and attended. Others noted the benefits that social enterprises can bring to one another as part of a network.

“By the development of the social enterprise network we have enabled a sharing of information and mutual support for small local social enterprises. They as a body have been able to sustain each other”

Aberdeenshire TSI

Section 5 | Supporting Third Sector Organisations

Activities

5.1 Providing support to third sector organisations is the third main area of work for Third Sector Interfaces (TSIs). In total, TSIs received almost 76,000 email or telephone enquiries. The TSIs indicated that they had 28,400 third sector organisations registered, ranging from just over 230 in one area to over 3,300 in another.

5.2 Overall, the core areas of work were support with:

- **Funding** – this included support with sourcing, applying and developing funding strategies.
- **Legal status** – including organisational options, charitable status, regulatory requirements and dissolution of organisations.
- **Governance** – including options for governance, committee skills, developing or reviewing constitutions, recruiting Board members, defining roles and responsibilities and running AGMs.
- **Finance and financial management** – including independent examination of accounts (often at crisis stage), problem solving, payroll and accountancy.
- **Volunteer and staff management** – including HR, pensions, absence management and redundancy.
- **Training for staff and volunteers** – on aspects like PVG, social media, health and safety, impact of welfare reform, data security, first aid, equalities, community engagement, community planning and outcomes focused planning.
- **Organisational issues** – including organisational health checks, support with the EFQM and/or PQASSO third sector quality standards, reviewing, updating or developing policies and procedures, change management, set up assistance, development planning, assessing risks and business continuity, and support with monitoring and evaluation.
- **Communications** – including promotion, web presence and use of social media.
- **Provision of services** – many TSIs provided free or subsidised services such as room or equipment hire, administrative or secretariat support, payroll services, financial management, advertising space, desktop publishing, ring binding, photocopying, etc.

5.3 Generally, TSIs highlighted that funding, legal, finance and governance issues made up a high proportion of their work. Some were finding that issues around governance, policies and procedures were being highlighted this year as funders moved increasingly towards Service Level Agreements. Others found that these were the

most immediate issues which would encourage third sector organisations to approach the TSI, but could then lead to significant further work with these organisations.

“Funding remains one of the biggest ‘hooks’ in terms of getting organisations in the door for us. We use our funding support as a mechanism through which we can help organisations more broadly.”

Inverclyde TSI

5.4 Many found that the recent introduction of a new legal form for Scottish charitable organisations – the Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) – was resulting in significant, intensive work. Most TSIs indicated that they provided intensive support, advocacy and guidance through the process of applying to be a SCIO, and also supported with appeals if organisations were unsuccessful. Many TSIs indicated that a significant number of third sector organisations were interested in this new legal form and that this was a big area of work for them.

“Often organisations will come to us with one issue and then need assistance on a range of other issues.”

Voluntary Sector Gateway West Lothian

5.5 TSIs used many different methods to provide this support. Often, support was provided on an intensive, one-to-one basis with each organisation. TSIs provided almost 10,000 third sector organisations with in-depth consultancy, development or on-to-one support. Often this support can be ongoing for many months, or throughout the whole year. Most organisations need bespoke or one-to-one training which is specific to their circumstances. A minority of TSIs highlighted that they were considering introducing chargeable services for clients requiring ongoing support, particularly when support was ongoing beyond one year.

Example: Packages of support

West Dunbartonshire CVS set up an ‘entitlement package’ for third sector organisations. This set out the core services the organisations could receive, based on their size and stage in their life cycle. This saw an increase in engagement across the sector, particularly with organisations less than 18 months old. West Dunbartonshire CVS also provides a range of chargeable consultancy style services – and introduced this idea through providing organisations with vouchers to redeem against the services they required.

Example: Ongoing bespoke support

Voluntary Action South Ayrshire has worked with three organisations looking to regenerate their communities through purchasing existing assets and/ or building new community venues. It begins its work through community engagement, governance and planning, through to ongoing business plan development, project management, funding searches and skills analysis; to sales and marketing and operational policies and practice. Typically these relationships will extend across several years.

- 5.6 TSIs also provided support in other ways – including running larger training events, networking events, surgeries and forums, and producing written materials including e-bulletins, briefing papers, newsletters, handbooks and service directories. In total, over 3,600 organisations sent staff or volunteers on training provided by TSIs – and a total of just over 7,500 people took part in this training.

Example: One off bespoke support

Fife Voluntary Action facilitated an interactive workshop providing an essential guide to the legal requirements of running a sports club for committee members. This covered:

- the legal status of the club
- responsibilities of committee members
- governance options and charitable status
- insurance options
- paying volunteers
- HMRC requirements in terms of casual workers and self employed people.

Example: Training events

In Glasgow, the TSI provided a series of learning and briefing events on topics such as:

- social media for social good;
- engaging the third sector in health improvement planning;
- reshaping care for older people;
- benefits of volunteers
- consultation event on the Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill Consultation
- learning about Glasgow’s Single Outcome Agreement
- equalities and links between the third sector and the public.

- 5.7 Many TSIs were undertaking work to collectively build the capacity of the third sector around key issues. Some supported organisations to make collective funding applications. Others supported joint work between similar organisations – such as local Community Councils. Others facilitated networking events around key issues to build skills and awareness. Many co-ordinated discussions around key consultations – such as the Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill Consultation undertaken by the Scottish Government to inform the development of a draft Bill in 2013. Some

acted as Chairs or leads for forums or partnerships; and others had undertaken desk research and consultation with members of the public to inform local and national debate on key issues.

Example: Research

Midlothian Voluntary Action carried out a three month research project exploring how the informal voluntary sector supports fit older people. The research will be used at local and national level to feed into the Reshaping Care for Older People agenda. The local authority has invited the researcher to present the findings to the Older People’s Planning Group. The researcher is now employed to offer support to small groups across Midlothian.

5.8 Many TSIs mentioned their work with the third sector around ‘Reshaping Care for Older People’. Many had been involved in creating or supporting networks, and sharing best practice with the aim of building collaborative working. This included facilitating events around early intervention, reshaping care, co-production and joint commissioning. Some felt that in this area of work, the TSI had to work hard to encourage third sector organisations to work together, and put aside historical tensions around competition for funding.

Example: Collaborative Working

In Edinburgh, the TSI supported third sector organisations in receipt of the Change Fund Innovation Grant to collectively articulate and quantify the outcome and impacts which would come about as a result of their work.

Outcomes

5.9 The Third Sector Interfaces provided examples of the difference that their support had made to third sector organisations locally. The key outcomes were:

- enhanced governance structures;
- increased organisational sustainability;
- new approaches to tackling disadvantage or inequality;
- enhanced joint working across the third and public sector;
- strengthened links with funders;
- greater understanding of context, needs and strengths;
- enhanced organisational and community capacity;
- better measurement of impact and outcomes;
- resolution of conflict between staff and management committee; and
- establishment of new groups to address disadvantage, inequality or community needs.

5.10 TSIs provided many examples of how their support had made a difference to third sector organisations. Most examples focused on strengthened governance.

Example: Strengthened governance

Stirlingshire Voluntary Enterprise supported a local organisation to develop a new structure which would streamline their governance and reporting arrangements. The TSI supported the organisation to become a SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation), and the organisation became the second company to achieve SCIO status in the country. The trustees now have in depth knowledge of their constitution and governance arrangements, and use it to inform all of their procedures in relation to governance. Accounts are also now simpler to prepare.

Example: Strengthened governance

Voluntary Action Shetland supported an organisation that provided an airstrip for one of the outer isles. The only remaining trustee had died, and the community presented the TSI with “a mixed bag of paperwork”. Voluntary Action Shetland called an Extraordinary General Meeting to form a new committee, and worked with them to secure funding, submit OSCR returns and put policies and procedures in place. The trustees are gaining in confidence, and the community is pleased that this ‘lifeline service’ in one of the most fragile areas of Shetland will continue.

Example: Strengthened governance

Skye and Lochalsh CVO (partner in Highland TSI) helped an organisation in a crisis situation – they had no Directors, the project funding was in jeopardy and an employee had not been paid. With ongoing assistance from the TSI they now have a new board, funding for the employee and all projects are on track.

Example: Strengthening links with funders

In Argyll and Bute, the TSI is supporting a community group which runs a community centre – but is unincorporated and without a constitution. The TSI is supporting the organisation to enter into a management agreement with the local authority to operate the centre, with the Council maintaining and repairing the building in exchange for a reasonable rent. The group is concerned about their liabilities, and the TSI has supported them to understand their responsibilities; to strengthen their governance; and to attract new members. The management agreement has been adapted to reflect these changes; and this has resulted in the community centre continuing to be a resource for the local community, run by the community through a well informed Board of Trustees.

5.11 TSI organisations also highlighted that their work with third sector organisations contributed more widely to a significant range of local and national outcomes. Many

listed the national and local outcomes they contributed to. Overall, the main areas in which TSIs highlighted broader outcomes were:

National outcomes	Local examples
We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people	Examples included supporting joint work around the growth of the local economy and reducing income inequality
We are better educated, more skilled and successful	Examples included up-skilling the voluntary sector workforce and undertaking community capacity building activity
We live longer, healthier lives	Examples included facilitating joint discussion around how to collectively tackle issues, and supporting development of local activities to promote healthy living such as food co-ops
We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society	Examples included facilitating joint discussion and planning around embedding equality and tackling inequality.
We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk	Examples included delivering training or co-ordinating discussion around Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)
We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others	Examples included work to increase pride and satisfaction, and community asset ownership
Our people are able to maintain their independence as they get older	This was mentioned as a core and increasing area of work, particularly through the 'Reshaping Care for Older People' agenda

“We sit on Glasgow’s Youth Employability Partnership and support third sector employability e.g. through supporting an interface Employability Working Group.”
Glasgow Council for Voluntary Sector

Example: Tackling health inequalities

Fife Voluntary Action facilitates the involvement of the third sector in the Fife Health and Wellbeing Alliance, the lead partnership for reducing health inequalities in Fife. It also supports the projects delivering outcomes through the Reshaping Care for Older People programme, providing opportunities to learn how to reduce the health inequality gap.

Example: Tackling health inequalities

East Dunbartonshire Voluntary Action supported the transfer of East Dunbartonshire Food Co-op to community ownership (from the NHS). It supported the group to develop a new business model with long term sustainability.

Example: Reshaping Care for Older People

CVS Falkirk and District has supported a local organisation to develop a new service for older people to fit with the Reshaping Care for Older People agenda. It supported the organisation to apply for funding; set up appropriate monitoring and reporting systems; promote the service and create a bespoke work placement which has in turn become a Modern Apprenticeship.

“It does wonders for the old people: it brightens up their day as well as mine. My apprenticeship has not only shown me what I want to do but it has also kept me grounded and focused.”

“The growth of health and integration agendas has led to [the TSI] increasing its support to third sector organisations who have secured change funding.”

Voluntary Action Angus

Section 6 | Community Planning

Activities

6.1 TSIs are involved in community planning in a range of ways. TSIs currently have a formal role in all Community Planning Partnership in Scotland.

- All have a permanent place on the Community Planning Partnership at the highest level.
- Almost all say they are involved at all stages of the Community Planning Partnership decision making process (The TSIs in Glasgow and Dumfries and Galloway were the only two TSIs who did not feel this was the case).
- All are involved in signing off the SOA.

6.2 TSIs are involved in a range of strategic partnerships at a local authority level – such as the Community Health Partnerships; Community Safety Partnerships; and Public Partnership Forums. TSIs are also involved in a very wide range of partnerships or forums which focus on specific topics, strands of work, or geographical communities. Such partnerships are seen as an important means of connecting the third sector in community planning and wider developments.

“Through our involvement in these groups we act as two way conduit for consultation and discussion with the sector.”

East Dunbartonshire Voluntary Action

6.3 Many TSIs are involved in partnerships which focus on:

- **Health and wellbeing** – including Community Health Partnership, Public Partnership Forums, Adult Support and Protection Committees as well as a range of related groups focusing on health, disability, mental health, drugs and alcohol.
- **Early years and young people** – covering topics such as children’s services; looked after children; “More Choices, More Chances”; and Getting it Right for Every Child.
- **Community safety** – including Community Safety Partnerships, Drugs and Alcohol Partnerships and other groups such as Antisocial Behaviour Officer’s groups.
- **Older People** – many TSIs are heavily involved in forums which focus on the Reshaping Care agenda and the Change Fund. They are also involved in partnerships or groups focusing on dementia, home safety and support services.
- **Employability** – often focusing on young people and “more choices, more chances”.

- **Disability and long term conditions** – including local Access Panels, and partnerships focusing on topics such as Self Directed Support.
- **Community Learning and Development** – including partnerships which focus on adult learning, community capacity building and community engagement.

Example: Involvement in community safety

Volunteer Development East Lothian is involved in a range of partnerships or groups relating to community safety. It represents the third sector on the Community Safety SOA Theme Group, the Mid and East Lothian Drug and Alcohol Partnership, and the Mid and East Lothian Violence Against Women Partnership. It is also involved in a number of groups which focus on specific community safety issues including fire and home safety; antisocial behaviour; and road safety.

Example: Reshaping Care for Older People

Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector has had an important role in influencing the approach to Reshaping Care for Older People within the city. It has worked to effectively represent the third sector and ensure appropriate engagement structures are in place. The TSI has undertaken research to review the contribution of the third sector in Reshaping Care for Older People and negotiated the creation of a £700k ring fenced fund to support demonstration projects. Importantly, the TSI has a responsibility to “sign off” the Joint Commissioning Strategy and Plan for older people in the city.

6.4 Some TSIs are engaged in a range of other specific groups and structures which relate to:

- Equalities
- Economic development and social enterprise
- LEADER funded projects
- Volunteer support and management
- Homelessness
- Financial inclusion
- Welfare reform
- Patient or public involvement
- Biodiversity and climate change.

6.5 Many TSIs are involved in partnerships at a more local or community level. These often relate to local developments, interests and priorities.

Example: Strategic and Local Partnerships

The Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations’ Council is involved in a range of partnerships at a City wide and local level. Their work includes:

- Representing the third sector on city wide strategic partnerships – such as the

Community Health Partnership and the Community Safety Network;

- Supporting third sector involvement in other partnerships – such as the Children’s Partnership and Climate Change Partnership; and
- At a local level, engaging with (and supporting third sector engagement in) the twelve Local Neighbourhood Partnerships.

6.6 A number of TSIs are involved in making decisions about or monitoring funding schemes. For example, TSIs have been involved in the review of the integrated grants system in Glasgow and a grants scheme for community safety in Dundee. Many are involved in the delivery of the Change Fund in their area.

Example: Involvement in funding schemes

Voluntary Action Perthshire is involved in a range of partnerships and groups which relate to funding decisions. It is involved in both the Change Fund Board and the Change Fund Operational Group. It sits on groups for the Local Action Fund (Youth justice); Cash 4 Communities (an NHS scheme), the Cashback Funding Award Panel; and the Inverlay Social Investment Fund.

6.7 Many TSIs have undertaken a range of work to build relationships between the Third Sector and community planning partners and structures. Often, they provide a means for community planning partners to communicate, consult and engage with the wider third sector.

“The members of the Third Sector Interface have individually and collectively ensured that the sector’s voice is present, heard and acknowledged around the strategic, policy and community planning tables over many years.”

Edinburgh TSI

6.8 TSIs regularly communicate information about community planning among their members, particularly by email. Websites and publications are also used to communicate new developments.

Example: Promoting third sector engagement in community planning

Co-Cheangal Innse Gall (Western Isles TSI) actively works to advertise, promote and circulate information, consultations and funding opportunities from CPP partners to the third sector by email, through websites and publications.

Example: Using traditional publications and social media

Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations uses a wide variety of traditional social media tools to communicate news. It issues an e-bulletin (with 2000 subscribers) and a Third Sector Aberdeen magazine (published quarterly). The TSI also has a Facebook page (which

2020 people have “liked”) and a Twitter feed (which is followed by 264 people).

6.9 A key role for TSIs is in bringing together the third sector to discuss issues which relate to CPP. In many areas they are involved in delivering and promoting events which engage the third sector on key community planning topics or issues.

Example: Welfare Reform Summit

Stirlingshire Voluntary Enterprise led a Welfare Reform Summit on behalf of the Community Planning Partnership. The event was attended by 150 people.

Example: Connecting with Community Councils

Voluntary Action Shetland held a Community Council Conference and workshop in partnership with the Council.

6.10 There are good examples of occasions when TSIs have encouraged and supported the third sector to pro-actively identify issues and bring these to the Community Planning Partnership.

Example: Gathering views on important topics

Voluntary Action South Lanarkshire has encouraged the third sector to inform and influence public sector delivery through a series of networks. The network discussions are leading to the development of a number of papers to bring before the CPP on topics such as community transport; commissioning and procurement; consultation and communication; external funding, carers respite and Community Benefit Clauses.

Example: Community Transport Symposium

In Edinburgh, the TSI has delivered a wide range of “thinkspace events” for the third sector. This includes a Community Transport Symposium which brought together all stakeholders to evaluate the capacity, need and sustainability of community transport and agree next steps.

Example: Community Issues Surgeries

In Highland, the TSI has begun to hold “Community Issues” Surgeries which gather views on community planning issues.

6.11 TSIs in many areas facilitate or support meetings between the third sector and public services. Some of these meetings are attended by senior representatives from public services.

Example: Regular meetings with public sector partners

Members of the Third Sector Forum in Glasgow meet with the Executive elected member for communities and the Chair of the CPP Executive Board every two years. Representatives also meet monthly with the Council manager responsible for the relationship between the third sector and the Community Planning Partnership.

6.12 Many TSIs are playing an important role in delivering community planning priorities. In some cases they are involved in the actual development and delivery of programmes or projects. In other cases they have supported other third sector organisations to develop new initiatives.

Example: Delivering a youth employability programme

CVS Falkirk and District is delivering a youth employability programme with the Council's Employability Training Unit. The programme, "Broadening Your Horizons", supports the Community Planning Partnership to deliver provide appropriate opportunities for young people and reduce youth unemployment.

Example: Supporting the third sector to secure external funding

Engage Renfrewshire led a successful joint bid to the Scottish Legal Aid Board for funding for the local Citizens Advice Bureaux and Law Centre. This supported the delivery of the CPP's review of advice services.

6.13 Some TSIs are working with community planning partners to review and improve the way the third sector is engaged in community planning. In some cases, this has involved advising on how to improve the way the third sector is involved and represented. In other cases, the TSI has lobbied for a stronger role for the third sector. Some TSIs have carried out research to help the third sector and the CPP understand the role of the sector in service delivery.

Example: Shaping third sector involvement in community planning

Voluntary Action East Ayrshire led a process to redesign the way the third sector activities are covered in the Community Plan and SOA. It established and chaired the Third Sector Single Grants sub group for the CPP and has lobbied for representation of the third sector on the grants panel.

Example: Mapping third sector provision

Fife Voluntary Action undertook research to map third sector provision in the areas supporting two military bases in their area.

Example: Measuring impact

Voluntary Action South Ayrshire has delivered a Third Sector Impact Measurement Report. The Report highlights the impact of the third sector on delivering the SOA. Sixty organisations, groups or projects contributed to the report.

6.14 In addition to running one off events and consultations, many TSIs facilitate structures and forums to hear from and feed back to the third sector. This includes Third Sector Forums (which bring together a diverse range of third sector members in the area) as well as more topic based groups and structures. Many TSIs have established their engagement structures to reflect the number and diversity of members they have, and the nature of the geographic area they cover.

Example: Engaging organisations of different sizes and interests

Voluntary Action Orkney has an established Third Sector Forum which meets eight times a year. It has 52 members. Community Planning Partnership issues are a standing item on the Forum agenda. At the meetings, members hear about community planning developments; raise issues that they wish the TSI to pursue or clarify with appropriate CPP partners; and hear from regular guest speakers.

The TSI also facilitates a Third Sector Working Group. It focuses on issues relating to public service reform – such as commissioning, partnership working and peer support. It has ten members who are all larger organisations with an interest in major reform. The group meets monthly and reports to the Third Sector Forum and the TSI Board. It engages statutory partners at meetings and meet quarterly with the Head of Orkney Health and Care.

Example: Involving the voluntary sector on community planning issues

In Perth and Kinross, there is a Voluntary Sector Community Planning Network which meets quarterly to discuss community planning related issues. It has 130 members from 75 organisations. Emails are sent to the group on a daily basis, providing information on community planning meetings and developments.

Example: Reflecting community planning themes in third sector engagement

Voluntary Action South Ayrshire facilitate six “Mirrored Theme Groups”, which reflect the six theme groups within South Ayrshire Community Planning. The groups engage a total of sixty-eight third sector groups of different sizes and roles. They are all involved in developing or delivering services to local people within the community planning themes. The groups meet quarterly to discuss current issues affecting the third sector and agree joint actions. Each group has an elected representative who attends the relevant CPP thematic group.

Example: Engaging the third sector across a diverse geographic area

Aberdeenshire Voluntary Action holds Forums in the Spring and Autumn to provide feedback to the third sector, and share experiences. The events are open to everyone registered with the TSI. Because of the large geographical area covered by the TSI, forums are held in different locations. In 2012 ten Forums were held which engaged 92 participants.

6.15 In many areas, TSIs run topic specific forums or networks. These bring together organisations and groups with a similar interest.

Example: Community care and health, social enterprise and children's services

CVS Falkirk and District facilitates and supports three forums or networks which focus on community care and health; social enterprise; and voluntary sector children's services. Each Forum has between 12 and 50 organisations as members, ranging from small community groups to national charities.

Example: The Children and Young People's Voluntary Sector Provider's Forum

Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations runs The Children and Young People's Voluntary Sector Providers Forum. There are twenty members who meet every eight weeks. The Forum encourages third sector organisations to work together and with partners in other sectors. An e-update is circulated every two weeks, and there is a dedicated website to Children's services and GIRFEC.

Outcomes

6.16 Through their work to promote, engage and support the third sector in community planning, TSIs indicated that they had brought about a number of changes to the way the public and third sectors work together. In particular, their work has led to:

- **A much better reflection of third sector priorities, volunteering and social enterprise development within local strategies and plans.** These include the Community Plan, SOA, The Change Plan and Joint Commissioning Strategy.
- **Improved relationships with Council and other public sector partners.** There has been particular progress at an officer level, with key staff better understanding and appreciating the role of the third sector. This in turn has led to better involvement of the third sector in decision making.
- **Protected investment in the third sector.** By raising the profile of the sector and supporting community planning partnerships to review their approach to funding, TSIs have improved access to funding for third sector organisations.

Example: Recognising the role of the third sector in local strategies

Engage Renfrewshire has influenced the content of the new Community Plan. In particular,

it now includes a commitment to an Empowering Communities Theme and the development of a Renfrewshire Community Forum (which will be chaired and driven by the third sector).

Example: Recognising the role of the third sector in local strategies

Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire has worked to ensure the inclusion of “Developing Partnership” as a key theme in the 2013-16 Community Plan and SOA. This requires all partners to review their contribution to the partnership at a strategic and local level.

Example: Improved relationships with the public sector

In Midlothian, the TSIs’ work to engage the third sector in community planning discussions about welfare reform has led to a much better knowledge and understanding of the third sector. The sector is now actively involved in allocating funding to mitigate the impact of welfare reform and working in partnership to deliver changes.

Example: Improvements to funding processes

In Glasgow, the TSI feels it had its biggest impact in relation to the Integrated Grants Fund (the main method for funding the third sector within community planning). By effectively representing the sector, the TSI has successfully secured two years of funding for many organisations which were previously funded on an annual basis. The grant application process has also been improved.

Example: Stronger relationships with the public sector

Through its work on Reshaping Care for Older People and the Joint Commissioning Strategy, Voluntary Action East Renfrewshire now has a “mature and positive partnership with the CHCP”. There have been discussions about the TSI adopting a co-commissioning role with the CHCP. To explore this approach, it has been agreed that Voluntary Action East Renfrewshire should administer a small grants trust to fund groups undertaking RCOP themed activities.

Example: Improvements to funding processes

In Argyll and Bute, the TSI has successfully worked to secure funds for locality groups to develop approaches to Reshaping Care for Older People. The funding has supported third sector groups to deliver innovative local services which were not previously eligible for funding.

Example: Improvements to funding processes

In Inverclyde, the TSI has been working with the local procurement team to develop the way the Council commissions services. The Council has now committed to a more open approach; to pilot Public Social Partnerships; and more understanding of the wider role of the third sector.

6.17 TSIs also gave examples which highlighted how their work was contributing to achieving the outcomes expressed in the local Single Outcome Agreement. There were many examples, and the table below highlights a small number of these. Other examples are integrated throughout the report.

Theme	Examples
Health and wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In North Ayrshire, the TSI supported the development of the personalisation agenda in social care services. • Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations chairs a cross sector Local Tobacco Alliance Steering Group.
Early years and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary Action Orkney led third sector involvement in research to identify priorities for early years services.
Older people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In many TSIs across Scotland, a strong focus of work was in influencing the way in which services for older people are planned and delivered through Reshaping Care for Older People. • Dumfries and Galloway TSI helped to develop a stronger representation of older people in Reshaping Care for Older People discussions. • Stirlingshire Voluntary Enterprise was involved as a ‘co-producer’ in joint commissioning of services for older people.
Equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fife Voluntary Action assessed training needs around the impact of welfare reform changes. • West Dunbartonshire CVS helped to increase third sector involvement in discussions around welfare reform. • Voluntary Action Perthshire helped to set up a Learning Disability Providers Forum.
Community safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In North Ayrshire, the TSI led consultation to inform a bid to the Reducing Re-offending Change Fund.
Community learning and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dundee Social Enterprise Network participated in the development of the Community Asset

	<p>Transfer Strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In Inverclyde, the TSI supported the 'Resilience' pilot which works to build community capacity.
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Example: Community safety

In North Ayrshire, the TSI carried out a consultation with approximately 100 offenders who had completed or were about to complete a Community Payback Order. It facilitated discussion with voluntary organisations around the barriers to using ex-offenders as volunteers. This changed the attitude of approximately 6 organisations, who altered their placement criteria to accept that client group and have since had placements of people coming off their CPO.

Section 7 | Lessons Learned

Introduction

7.1 This chapter sets out the key success factors, barriers and lessons learned by TSIs during 2012/13.

Key Success Factors

7.2 TSIs were asked about the approaches that they had found most useful or had the most impact. There was a strong overarching theme about working in partnership. Many TSIs highlighted their involvement with community planning; their joint work at a strategic and practical level with local authorities; and their co-production and collaboration activity with communities and public sector organisations. Many also highlighted the importance of partnership and collaboration across the third sector – highlighting activities such as the development of third sector or voluntary forums, and networking development. Many TSIs highlighted that this philosophy of working jointly underpinned all of the work that they did.

“A robust and effective partnership approach has had the most impact in all four key areas of activity... Third sector organisations have been fully involved in the process of planning and designing delivery of services within their communities and this has translated itself into a more coordinated approach to delivery.”

East Ayrshire TSI

Example: Involvement in the Single Outcome Agreement

Voluntary Action East Renfrewshire was heavily involved in the drafting of the new Single Outcome Agreement for the Community Planning Partnership. It was involved in an appreciative inquiry exercise about being a third sector organisation in East Renfrewshire, and supported the development of equality outcomes for the SOA. It is currently working to co-ordinate third sector contribution to the SOA outcomes, to ensure that contributions can be recognised and recorded – and recognises that this will be challenging.

7.3 There were numerous examples of how this partnership approach had resulted in more effective working and better outcomes. The most commonly highlighted area was in relation to ‘Reshaping Care for Older People’, where many TSIs felt that they – and the third sector more generally – were true partners. Many were heavily involved in developing ideas around Reshaping Care, co-ordinating third sector input, building relations between third and public sectors, and signing off plans for Reshaping Care.

Some highlighted that they were hopeful that this approach would develop in other areas – such as around Early Years.

“RCOP has opened doors that were closed to the third sector a few years ago, and has resulted in statutory partners having a better understanding of the third sector, and actively now seeking out our engagement.”

Voluntary Action South Ayrshire

“Being useful resourceful partners (*in the Reshaping Care Change Fund*) enabled influence from within partnerships based on professional respect. It led to invitations to participate in what would have previously been social care or health only service planning meetings.”

Stirlingshire Voluntary Enterprise

Example: TSI ‘sign off’

In Glasgow, the TSI had the right to ‘sign off’ the Older People’s Commissioning Plans within the Reshaping Care for Older People agenda. This meant that the TSI could co-ordinate third sector input, and negotiate funds to ensure that the third and community sectors are engaged in the programme. “It is unlikely that we would have achieved any of this on behalf of the sector without the influence that TSI ‘sign off’ gave us.”

7.4 TSIs also stressed the importance of working jointly with communities and third sector organisations, using a community capacity building approach. Some highlighted their successes in outreach work in rural and isolated areas, while others felt that they had strengthened community connections through approaches such as:

- face to face presence at meetings;
- mapping or audit activity;
- using an asset based approach;
- building organisational and individual relationships;
- awards ceremonies to recognise volunteer contribution; and
- providing ongoing capacity building support for organisations.

7.5 Most TSIs felt that a face to face approach was essential to capacity building, allowing for bespoke support for individuals and groups and a focus on the individual and community. They highlighted that this contact can result in requests for support in other areas, and referrals to more specialist support. Many felt that it was critical that communities and organisations saw their support as an ongoing programme, not just one-off unconnected support. Some highlighted that face to face support, while essential, could usefully be supplemented by use of technology – such as using websites and video conferencing – particularly in remote areas.

“Encouraging delegates and team members to see our organisation’s support as an ongoing programme of activity to be followed through time – rather than one-off unconnected

products to be dipped in and out of – is generally most fruitful in terms of efficient and effective working.”

Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations

“Often as a result of providing support on one piece of work another need is identified. This develops a trusting relationship with organisations and communities.”

Voluntary Action Orkney

7.6 Some TSIs also raised organisational improvements which had helped them to develop successful approaches. Some indicated that they had strengthened their volunteering pool, which had added capacity to deliver core services; undertake new activities; or raise the profile of the TSI. A minority indicated that through establishing a single organisation to take on the role of the TSI, they had been able to take a more strategic look at needs and demands, and a co-ordinated approach to service delivery. And a small number of TSIs indicated that they had been able to recruit dedicated officers – for example to focus on development or employability – or graduate placements which had enhanced their capacity to deliver.

Key Barriers

7.7 TSIs were also asked about the things they didn't manage to do, or things that didn't go as well as they had hoped. The barriers varied considerably depending on the context in which the TSI was operating. However, a number of themes emerged:

- **Monitoring and evaluation** – Many TSIs said that they had experienced challenges in moving from the Vbay system to Milo. There were problems with delays and limited functionality. Some could see improvements, but many felt that it had impacted on their ability to report on performance. Others had found it difficult to encourage volunteers and organisations to complete monitoring information, so that performance could be tracked. And some TSIs felt that their monitoring was focused on activities, and should be more focused on outcomes and changes.
- **Organisational issues** – This was a particular issue for TSIs which had been created through mergers. Many felt that the major organisational changes had resulted in an internal focus rather than a focus on delivering activities and outcomes for communities and organisations. This meant that there could be a 'fire fighting' approach, rather than a planned and proactive approach. Some organisations had experienced significant issues around cultures, personality clashes, departures of staff, terms and conditions, rebranding and recruiting board members.

- **Resources and prioritisation** – Many TSIs felt that they were delivering their services within a challenging financial context. Some indicated that staff had resigned or were on sick leave due to intense pressures. Some had struggled to replace staff who left, due to funding constraints. Others were not able to do all of the activities they wished to, and felt that they were constantly having to re-prioritise as new issues – such as welfare reform or Reshaping Care for Older People – emerged. Many felt that expectations from the public sector were increasing, often at short notice. Many highlighted challenges covering remote areas. Overall, some felt that they were working to keep up with the ‘day to day’ with no space for creative work and new approaches. Some TSIs were considering income generation as an option, but felt that there could be challenges as traditionally their services had been delivered for free to organisations.
- **Working jointly** – Many TSIs highlighted issues with joint working. Some felt that the third sector was not treated as an equal partner, with the public sector believing it should have the lead role. Some felt that there was inertia in partnership working, particularly when partnerships were being restructured or if staff change and new relationships need to be developed. Some TSIs were experiencing challenges sustaining networks of third sector organisations – including forums such as third sector forums, social enterprise networks and volunteer managers networks. TSIs indicated that there were particular issues, in some areas, around social enterprise networks with concerns about the ongoing purpose of networks, the value for social enterprises, the lack of understanding about the term ‘social enterprise’ within some third sector organisations, and the reluctance by some organisations to move in the direction of charging for services.
- **Ongoing support** – Some TSIs felt that organisations still came to them when in crisis, and that attempts to move to pre-emptive support were not working. Others had tried approaches to address this, with some success. Some highlighted that training sessions could be poorly attended, often due to resource and budget issues. And some found it hard to match volunteering opportunities with the profile of volunteers in the area.

“People continue to come to us when it is very late, by which stage their issue presents as a crisis and requires dedicated time and effort.”

CVS Falkirk and District

“Rather than building on the reputation and profile of its constituent parts, celebrating the opportunities presented by the merger, the organisation has struggled so far to have the corporate impact it needs to help raise public recognition and respect for itself and for the whole third sector.”

tsiMORAY

Lessons Learned

7.8 TSIs were asked about what they had learned from their experience in 2012/13, and what they would do differently in the future. Again, in many cases TSIs gave specific, practical examples of how they would tackle some of the issues they had experienced around particular projects or initiatives. However, some overarching themes emerged, including:

- **Raising the profile of TSIs** – Many TSIs said that a key priority was to raise the profile of the TSI, to promote training activity, to encourage early engagement by organisations and to engage volunteers. There were lots of different ideas of how to raise the profile, including developing clear communication plans; using social media and websites; building relationships with public sector organisations and elected members.
- **New ways of working** – Many TSIs were keen to try out new ways of working including piloting new methods for supporting volunteers; developing pathways of support for third sector organisations; providing surgery style support; holding thematic meetings; supporting community engagement within community planning; and developing a streamlined approach to third sector responses to consultation or requests for information.
- **Developing evaluation and monitoring systems** – Some TSIs indicated that they would develop a co-ordinated and clear approach to information management, incorporating Milo and other information gathered – to give a picture of activities and outcomes. Some felt that they needed to develop clearer evidence about outcomes and impact in key areas of work, such as community planning.
- **A ‘proactive’ approach** – Some TSIs said that they would take a focused, proactive approach – identifying the areas they wished to be involved in, requesting a third sector role, and achieving a commitment to joint working in these areas from public sector partners.
- **A ‘patient’ approach** – For some TSIs, a key lesson learned was the need to take a patient and tenacious approach – recognising the small changes and ‘quick wins’ as progress towards making a bigger impact. Many said that they would revise their targets to make them more realistic, and to incorporate early actions which may result in early impacts. Others said that they would recognise that they couldn’t influence everything, and that partners had different priorities and capacities to take issues forward.
- **Strengthening TSIs organisationally** – Some TSIs, particularly those created recently as a result of merger, were planning to undertake organisational restructuring, undertake a skills audit of the board or develop new policies,

procedures and plans to strengthen the way their organisation worked. One suggested that there was a need for a fairer funding formula nationally for TSIs.

“We have also learned that progress towards change is mainly around process in the first instance – small changes in behaviours and attitudes which improve the status of the Third Sector – rather than larger, more tangible outcomes.”

Glasgow TSI

Section 8 | Future Priorities and Opportunities

Introduction

8.1 The final section of the survey explores key priorities and opportunities for TSIs, looking ahead over the next the years. It also explores TSI views on if and how the Scottish Government’s vision for the third sector can be achieved. This chapter summarises TSI views.

An acknowledged and respected third sector

8.2 TSIs were asked about the extent to which the Scottish Government’s vision for the third sector was a reality in their area, and what improvements needed to be made to make that vision a reality. The Scottish Government’s vision is:

“...for the third sector to be acknowledged and respected across all sectors, the Government and wider public sector, as an essential social partner in helping Scotland have a successful and fairer future.”

TSI Survey 2012/13

8.3 The majority of TSIs felt that partners recognised the significant role and contribution that the third sector could make. Many pointed to the improvement of relationships and joint working, with many feeling that their partnership working was maturing and consolidating. Most felt that the third sector was integral to community planning, and that respect for the sector was increasing. Some pointed out that public organisations were undergoing transformational change, at the same time as TSIs are developing, helping to support effective joint working. Others pointed to positive joint working relationships with the private and independent sectors – particularly around health and social care agendas, but also in other areas such as Business Improvement Districts (BIDs). Many felt that there were clear signs that this vision was realistic and achievable.

“On the whole the third sector is ‘acknowledged and respected’ and is seen increasingly as an ‘essential social partner’.”

Voluntary Action Orkney

“We believe that the Third Sector is being increasingly acknowledged and respected by Midlothian Council and a number of partner agencies.”

Midlothian TSI

“Our organisation enjoys a very positive and productive relationship with public sector partners and is actively encouraged to engage within all appropriate strategic planning undertakings.”

Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire

8.4 However, a minority of TSIs had seen little change and felt that steps to work with the third sector were largely tokenistic. In some areas, major funding pressures for public sector organisations were diverting attention from working with the third sector. In others, TSIs pointed out that major decisions had been taken with no involvement of the third sector, despite joint working arrangements being in place. Some highlighted that major decisions could be taken outwith formal partnerships, meaning that there was a real need for early engagement and involvement of the third sector in service planning and development.

“It is getting better, but still an issue with attitude and the third sector being invited to sit round the table as a token gesture because agencies have been instructed to do so.”

Co-Cheangal Innse Gall (Western Isles TSI)

8.5 A common concern was that while public organisations were committed to this vision at a strategic level, this was not filtering down to all levels of management and front line staff.

“It is our opinion that there currently still exists a commitment gap between the officers at senior management in the public sector (who are firmly with this agenda) and officers further down the ladder of responsibility who may not have an adequate base of knowledge about the direction of travel.”

Dumfries and Galloway TSI

“While all public sector partners commit to this strategically, it will take time for it to be embedded throughout organisations.”

Inverclyde TSI

8.6 TSIs also highlighted that there were challenges in relation to resources. While it was seen as positive that the third sector was being included in decision making, this created pressures on TSIs and other third sector organisations. Some TSIs felt that if they prioritised and only got involved in certain issues, this was interpreted as a sign of lack of interest.

8.7 Finally, many TSIs said that while joint working was improving, the third sector could often still feel like a ‘junior partner’. Many felt that as TSIs were small organisations,

with limited staffing and resources this resulted in a power imbalance – particularly as often the majority of resources and power were held by the local authority.

Key Priorities

8.8 TSIs were asked to identify their key priorities and challenges over the short term (12 months) and medium term (next three years). Many of the priorities and challenges, particularly for the short term, were internal. Priorities included:

- **Sustaining and growing income levels for the TSI** – Many indicated that an immediate priority was financial sustainability for the TSI. Some were aiming to sustain their current position, given the challenging financial context. Others indicated a clear aim to grow their organisation to meet increasing demand for support. TSIs talked of identifying alternative funding sources, and generating income through charging for some services and activities.
- **Organisational development** – Many TSIs were keen to strengthen their organisation, particularly where the TSI had been created through a merger. Many were keen to build on the potential synergy that could be created through bringing different organisations together into the TSI. Some pointed to a need for strengthening governance and board skills, and others highlighted a need to consolidate staff knowledge and skills. Some wished to rationalise their premises.
- **Monitoring** – Many TSIs wanted to embed effective monitoring procedures into their organisation, to enable effective tracking of activities and outcomes.
- **Communication** – Many TSIs highlighted the need to increase the profile of the TSI, to have a clear communication and marketing strategy and to develop common branding.

8.9 TSIs also identified a wide range of external priorities. Common themes included:

- **To participate meaningfully in community planning** – Most TSIs indicated that they wanted to continue to build on positive relationships to shape and influence policy through community planning. Many talked of supporting the third sector to articulate a common view at a strategic level, and working to ensure that the contribution of the third sector is recognised. Some highlighted the need to support wider community engagement and empowerment in community planning.
- **To influence policy and practice more widely** – Many TSIs wished to work with third sector organisations to collectively respond to major policy drivers – such as welfare reform and public service reform. Key areas highlighted included Reshaping Care for Older People, integration of adult health and social care,

early years service reform, community learning and development, tackling unemployment and community empowerment.

“A firmer, more collective voice to more fully represent our member organisations.”

Dumfries and Galloway TSI

- **Building the capacity of the third sector** – Many TSIs were keen to support third sector organisations to strengthen their governance and business planning, including considering social enterprise and income generation activities. This included mentoring, change management support, bespoke support and support with tendering and public sector procurement. Many highlighted the need for ongoing collective support to develop or strengthen third sector forums and opportunities for collaborative working.
- **Strengthening volunteering** – Almost all TSIs highlighted the need to continue to promote and support volunteering, particularly with young people. Many were keen to raise the profile of volunteering with community planning, and within public sector strategies and policies.
- **Community capacity building** – Some TSIs said that they had key priorities around engaging with a wider range of community groups, supporting community asset management and supporting community engagement, involvement and co-production with public sector partners.
- **Building intelligence** – Some TSIs were keen to build their analysis of the third sector, and to build on their community intelligence to gain a clearer understanding of the needs, strengths and skills of the third sector.

Example: Community Benefit Clauses

Voluntary Action South Lanarkshire plans to influence community planning partners in procurement, encouraging the use of community benefit clauses and added community benefit.

Example: Repositioning the Third Sector

Clackmannanshire Third Sector Interface aims to reposition the third sector to become more robust and sustainable. It has begun work to map the third sector in Clackmannanshire, explore links with the Single Outcome Agreement and identify and eliminate duplication. The TSI will produce recommendations for change as a result of this work.

Supporting Social Enterprise

8.10 TSIs were asked particular questions about the opportunities for social enterprise in their area, and how social enterprise development could best be supported over the next three years. Many TSIs indicated that they were seeing a clear increase in demand for support with social enterprise activity, with grants and funding becoming more difficult to obtain. However, others felt that often organisations waited until crisis point, without planning ahead.

8.11 The key opportunities identified included:

- **Public sector procurement** – Almost all TSIs highlighted the opportunities potentially emerging from public sector procurement. Many said that organisations were increasingly making use of techniques such as ‘community benefit clauses’, where social enterprises could provide added value.
- **Partnership across third and private sectors** – Many TSIs pointed to the opportunities offered by ‘public social partnerships’, bringing together business skills with social and environmental objectives. Others highlighted the potential for third sector organisations to work together as consortia, or sharing resources and assets, to tender for larger public sector contracts. Some stressed the potential offered by the synergy created by clusters of social enterprises trading in the same areas sharing their skills and experiences.
- **Specific themes** – Most TSIs felt that there were particular opportunities for social enterprise development around self-directed support, older people’s services, environmental projects, leisure and tourism, asset transfer, community empowerment and accessible transport. Some highlighted local opportunities which were unique, such as subcontracting services for infrastructures projects like the Midlothian rail link or Commonwealth Games.

8.12 Just some examples of the work planned or at early stages in this area include:

- CVS Falkirk and District has entered into a new partnership to launch a Social Enterprise Zone across the local authority area.
- Voluntary Action Angus is supporting the development of an enterprise and innovation centre. The TSI also plans to hold events inspiring people to think differently and creatively, linking to the concepts of co-production and asset based approaches.
- Fife Voluntary Action is supporting the establishment of micro-providers in the care sector to develop social enterprises around self directed support. This aims to give local people choice, and to develop social enterprise opportunities.

- East Dunbartonshire Voluntary Action will offer short term incubation space and support for new and developing social enterprises.
- Voluntary Action Perthshire has appointed a Development Officer with a specific remit of Social Enterprise Development.
- Co-Cheangal Innse Gall (Western Isles TSI) is targeting its social enterprise support in two locations, where it feels it can maximise the potential for joint action.
- Voluntary Action South Ayrshire is developing an 'enterprise pipeline' to support social enterprises at an appropriate stage in their development. This will include access to Social Enterprise Leadership Academy training.

Example: Dundee

Dundee Social Enterprise Network plans to grow its social enterprise network to support both new enterprises and third sector organisations. It is currently seeking additional funding to enable it to support joint working between social enterprises and become a central point of contact and knowledge for social enterprises.

Section 9 | Key Findings

Key Findings

- 9.1 Overall, most TSIs felt that positive steps had been taken during 2012/13 to move towards achieving the Scottish Government's vision:

"...for the third sector to be acknowledged and respected across all sectors, the Government and wider public sector, as an essential social partner in helping Scotland have a successful and fairer future."

TSI Survey 2012/13

Volunteering

- 9.2 TSIs had supported over 25,000 volunteers in 2012/13 – with a third of these being unemployed, and over a third aged under 25. There is evidence that volunteers are seeing positive outcomes in terms of developing confidence, self esteem and wellbeing – as well as moving forward on the path to work. This includes developing new skills, finding ongoing volunteering opportunities, and moving into part or full-time work.
- 9.3 Most TSIs had systems in place to gather feedback from volunteers shortly after they had been referred for a placement (usually four to six weeks). However, some TSIs found it challenging to effectively track and gather feedback from volunteers, with some reporting poor response rates and others finding that volunteering opportunities had not progressed.

Social Enterprise

- 9.4 TSIs provided intensive support to kick start social enterprises or support them to further develop and expand. TSIs also supported social enterprises to access funding from other sources, and provided forums for social enterprises to network and share experiences and expertise. Some facilitated discussion around developing joint working around a particular area of social enterprise – such as pools of 'micro providers' around a key issue. TSIs also worked with public sector organisations to encourage procurement practices which provide opportunities for social enterprises and community benefit, and worked with the private sector to encourage joint working.
- 9.5 This resulted in new social enterprises being established, existing social enterprises expanding, the profile of social enterprise increasing, and new jobs being created. However, some TSIs reported particular issues around establishing and maintaining

social enterprise networks – with concerns about the purpose and value of the networks, the general lack of understanding about the term ‘social enterprise’ and the reluctance by some organisations to move in the direction of charging for services.

Supporting Third Sector Organisations

- 9.6 TSIs received almost 76,000 enquiries about support to third sector organisations in 2012/13, and had a potential client group of approximately 28,400 registered third sector organisations across Scotland. Over a third of these – almost 10,000 organisations – received one to one support. This is often intensive and ongoing support. TSIs also provided training for 7,500 people from over 3,600 organisations.
- 9.7 This activity resulted in the creation of stronger, more sustainable third sector organisations; enhanced joint working between third sector organisations; better governance and resolution of conflict; and better measurement of impact and outcomes. However, some TSIs felt that organisations came to them when in crisis, and that attempts to move to pre-emptive support were not working. Others had tried approaches to address this, with some success.

Community Planning

- 9.8 All TSIs have a permanent place on the local Community Planning Partnership at the highest level. All were involved in signing off the Single Outcome Agreement, and almost all say that they are involved at all stages of decision making processes within the Community Planning Partnership. TSIs sit on a very wide range of partnerships and forums with and linked to community planning, across many different issues.
- 9.9 TSIs have played a key role in building links between the third sector and community planning partners. They report that local strategies and plans now better reflect third sector priorities, volunteering and social enterprise; that there are improved relationships with local authorities and other public sector partners; and that there has been increased investment in the third sector.
- 9.10 TSIs are also directly contributing to the achievement of the local outcomes set out in Single Outcome Agreements. Some are directly delivering services which contribute to outcomes – such as delivering a youth employability programme. Others are contributing to SOA outcomes across the fields of health, early years, older people, equality, community safety, community learning and development and beyond.
- 9.11 There is also a strong connection between national outcomes and local outcomes, meaning that TSIs are supporting the achievement of national outcomes at a local

level. They are also making a particularly strong contribution to the reshaping of public services through the three Change Funds around Reshaping Care for Older People, early years and reducing re-offending.

9.12 However, many TSIs highlighted issues around joint working. Some felt that the third sector was not treated as an equal partner and some found that there was some inertia in partnership working. In some cases, TSIs were working with community planning partners to review and improve the way the third sector was engaged in community planning.

Future Priorities

9.13 TSIs were keen to undertake activity to:

- raise the profile of the TSI and strengthen the TSI organisationally (particularly where a merger had taken place);
- influence policy and practice more widely around major policy drivers – such as welfare reform and public service reform;
- continue to build on positive relationships to shape and influence policy through community planning;
- support social enterprise development - including influencing public sector procurement, promoting partnership across the third and private sectors and supporting social enterprise development around specific themes;
- develop outcomes focused evaluation and monitoring systems; and
- target their activities proactively, rather than trying to do everything within existing resources.

9.14 There were many examples of new areas of work, new ways of working, new partnerships and joint working arrangements and new research which demonstrated the desire of TSIs to continue to change, adapt and contribute to both local and national outcomes and priorities.

Commentary

9.15 The surveys submitted by all TSIs in Scotland provide a clear picture of their activities and short term outcomes in the four main areas in which they operate – volunteering, third sector support, community planning and social enterprise. However, more generally, the responses also demonstrate how TSIs are supporting wider policy and practice priorities, and mitigating against the big challenges experienced in the current economic, social and environmental context. This goes beyond the immediate four areas of work in which TSIs are expected to operate, and illustrates a very strong potential to be partners in public service change.

9.16 Key themes emerging in terms of the approach taken by TSIs are:

- **Building relationships** – A key role for TSIs has been building relationships between third sector organisations themselves; between public and third sector organisations; and with the private sector. TSIs have created opportunities for meeting and networking, sharing experiences and practices, and learning from one another. TSIs have also encouraged policies which provide a strategic framework for this joint working. This demonstrates the potential to build new partnerships as public service reform progresses, and to ensure fuller third sector involvement as the Scottish Government aims for.
- **Encouraging new approaches** – TSIs have had a key role in encouraging those they work with to think about new ways of working. Many have worked with community planning partners to consider the way in which they engage with and work with the third sector – including promoting the use of community benefit clauses and building awareness of social enterprise, volunteering and third sector more generally. Others have supported third sector organisations to think about working together, becoming more enterprising or working jointly with the public or private sector. Many TSIs have provided direct support to enable new initiatives and organisations to start up. In some cases, TSIs have gone beyond supporting new activities and approaches and have become involved in delivering these directly. This demonstrates the potential for TSIs to support the wider third sector to address gaps in provision and, where required, fill these gaps directly.
- **Supporting transition** – Much of the support provided to third sector organisations focused on key transitions and new opportunities. For example, TSIs had undertaken significant activity to support third sector organisations to consider and work towards the new legal model for charitable organisations in Scotland – the Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO). As strengthened governance and organisational robustness is required for third sector organisations to provide more services, this shows the potential of TSIs to help the wider third sector meet these opportunities.
- **Contribution to national approaches** – Many TSIs had been heavily involved in local discussions and decisions about the implementation of national policies and initiatives. For example, many had been very involved in decisions about planning and delivering activity around ‘Reshaping Care for Older People’, and in the other two Scottish Government Change Funds – for early years and reducing reoffending. This experience of the brokerage required to reshape public service provision points to a significant potential to support further change and enhance the role of the third sector within this.

9.17 TSIs identified key challenges in the environment in which they work – including the economic context, welfare reform, the contraction of public funding and changes to public sector procurement. TSIs also highlighted key policy drivers which impact upon their work, such as the shift to asset based and community empowerment approaches, the drive towards sustainable third sector organisations (with self generated income), and public service reform. Their survey responses provided clear evidence that there is significant potential to play a bigger role in the future, building on the positive work already undertaken in these areas.

9.18 There is clear potential for TSIs to continue to shape and influence local and national policy and practice, including:

- The Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill will be drafted in late summer 2013 and will emphasise the importance of community involvement and control over their own communities. There is clear role for TSIs to make links between the support for third sector organisations and social enterprises, and community empowerment.
- The proposals to integrate health and social care (currently published as the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Bill) will build on the Reshaping Care for Older People Agenda to require joint working between health and social care – and potentially the third and community sectors.
- Community planning partnerships will be moving from Single Outcome Agreement development to implementation. This will be a key stage in moving from planning to action, and could provide many opportunities for TSI input and contribution.

9.19 In order to realise this potential, and continue to undertake work in the areas already undertaken, it will be important to consider:

- Pro-actively prioritising – TSIs will need to decide on key priorities, within the constraints of existing resources. Many pointed to increasing demands, and as the profile of TSIs increase alongside major public service reform and a challenging economic climate it is likely that these will continue to increase. TSIs will need to (on an ongoing basis) review priorities and take strategic decisions about which areas of work to invest in for the coming years(s).
- Charging for (some) activities – Once it has been decided what can be done within existing resources, it may be appropriate to develop social enterprise approaches to charging for additional activities. For example, this may involve charging for additional consultation activities undertaken for public organisations, or charging third sector organisations for ongoing support.

- Reach – TSIs have undertaken good work engaging with a wide range of communities and groups – including older people, young people and offenders and the organisations that work with them, through the three national Change Funds. There is potential to draw on this experience to reach out, and support others to reach out, to other groups of ‘seldom heard’ people – as many TSIs are already doing - to ensure that the third sector promotes equality and diversity, supports the voices of everyone in communities to be heard, and draws on the skills and strengths of all people.
- Measuring impact and outcomes – There is an ongoing shift towards demonstrating the change or difference that an organisation’s activities make. While some TSIs are able to demonstrate clear outcomes in some areas, there is a need to continue to demonstrate the difference that TSIs make in terms of the changes that occur for individuals, organisations and partners as a result. TSIs will need to continue to shift towards an outcomes focused approach to monitoring and reporting in order to continue to demonstrate impact and potential.

Appendix One
Third Sector Interfaces Scotland

Local Authority	Organisation (s)	Partners
Aberdeen	Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations	Single agency
Aberdeenshire	Aberdeenshire Voluntary Action	Partners: Bridge CVS CVS Aberdeenshire – Central and South Volunteer Centre Aberdeenshire
Angus	Voluntary Action Angus	Single agency
Argyll and Bute	Argyll and Bute Third Sector Partnership	Partners: Argyll and Bute Social Enterprise Network Argyll Voluntary Action Islay and Jura CVS
Clackmannanshire	Clackmannanshire Third Sector Interface	Single agency
Dumfries and Galloway	Dumfries and Galloway Third Sector Interface	Single agency
Dundee	Dundee Third Sector Interface	Partners: Dundee Voluntary Action Ltd Dundee Social Enterprise Network Volunteer Centre Dundee
East Ayrshire	Voluntary Action East Ayrshire	Partners: Volunteer Centre CVO East Ayrshire
East Dunbartonshire	East Dunbartonshire Voluntary Action	Single agency
East Lothian	Volunteer Development East Lothian	Single agency
East Renfrewshire	Voluntary Action East Renfrewshire	Single agency
Edinburgh	Edinburgh Third Sector Interface	Partners: Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations' Council Edinburgh Social Enterprise Network Volunteer Centre Edinburgh
Falkirk	CVS Falkirk and District	Single agency
Fife	Fife Voluntary Action	Single agency
Glasgow	Glasgow's Third Sector Interface	Partners: Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector

		GSEN/ CEIS Volunteer Glasgow Glasgow Third Sector Forum
Highland	Highland Third Sector Partnership	Partners: Caithness Voluntary Groups CVS North Voluntary Groups East Sutherland Ross-Shire Voluntary Action Signpost Inc Voluntary Action Badenoch and Strathspey Voluntary Action Lochaber Skye and Lochalsh CVO
Inverclyde	Inverclyde's Third Sector Interface	Partners: CVS Inverclyde Inverclyde Community Development Trust
Midlothian	Third Sector Midlothian	Partners: Volunteer Centre Midlothian Midlothian Voluntary Action Social Enterprise Alliance Midlothian
Moray	tsiMORAY	Single agency
North Ayrshire	North Ayrshire Third Sector Interface	Partners: The Ayrshire Community Trust Arran Community and Voluntary Services
North Lanarkshire	Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire	Single agency
Orkney	Voluntary Action Orkney	Single agency
Perth and Kinross	Voluntary Action Perthshire	Single agency
Renfrewshire	Engage Renfrewshire	Single agency
Scottish Borders	Borders Third Sector Partnership	Partners: The Bridge Volunteer Centre Berwickshire Association for Voluntary Services Scottish Borders Social Enterprise Chamber
Shetland	Voluntary Action Shetland	Single agency
South Ayrshire	Voluntary Action South Ayrshire	Single agency
South Lanarkshire	Voluntary Action South Lanarkshire	Single agency
Stirling	Stirlingshire Voluntary Enterprise	Single agency

West Dunbartonshire	West Dunbartonshire CVS	Single agency
Western Isles	Co-Cheangal Innse Gall	Partners: Voluntary Action Borders and Vatersay Harris Voluntary Service Volunteering Hebrides Volunteer Centre Western Isles Outer Hebrides Social Economy Partnership
West Lothian	Voluntary Sector Gateway West Lothian	Single agency

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