

SCOTTISH BORDERS COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP

STRATEGIC BOARD 14th June 2018

UPDATE ON THIRD SECTOR INTERFACE REVIEW BY THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

1. Background

During the course of 2017 the Scottish Government undertook a review of Third Sector Interfaces (TSIs)- the first such fundamental review since the TSIs were set up in 2009.

The Scottish Borders TSI consists of a Partnership of four organisations – some TSIs are Partnerships and some Single Organisations

This is a brief note of what has happened since December 2017.

2. In December 2017

- The Scottish Government (SG) set out its vision for the future of TSIs and for the Third Sector in Scotland which is ambitious and far reaching. "The SG wants TSIs to be recognised in their local communities and nationally as key agents of change who can play a vital role in the process of democratic renewal – strengthening local decision making and governance, supporting communities to act on their priorities and supporting and generating new ideas for positive change to flourish."
- Funding to Voluntary Action Scotland (VAS) will cease in September 2018.
- TSI funding is in place until September 2018
- The SG 'will re-define their vision statement for the network. *"We want to see a lively, vibrant, flourishing third sector across Scotland. We want to ensure local needs can be heard and that the third sector has a voice in local planning and decision making. The principal recommendation of the independent report, and of the paper VAS developed since then, points to the need for a redefining of our vision for TSIs as strategic partners, driving the delivery of local outcomes that should be co-produced at a local level and respond to priorities.* The Scottish Government will therefore develop a clear, future focused statement, within the framework of the emerging new national outcomes, setting out what is expected from TSIs and their organisations in return for Government funding
- The SG intends to *'establish a closer and more direct working relationship between the TSIs and the Scottish Government'*. "stating they will work more pro-actively across the Scottish Government to provide the TSIs with a strategic link to relevant policy areas and to broker a stronger and clearer role for TSIs in both shaping and implementing national priorities, including e.g. digital participation, health and social care, early years interventions and community empowerment. The local governance review, and the focus on strengthening local decision making and democratic governance in ways that support communities to act on their priorities and support new ideas for positive change to flourish, provides an important context for the Government's future relationship with the third sector locally. This also provides a specific mechanism for the Government to better realise the role of TSIs in delivering local outcomes and it will continue to work closely with colleagues leading this work to ensure all work is mutually supportive."
- The SG is to *'explore options for longer term change'*. "The changes are aimed at strengthening the network and individual and collective relationships with local and national decision makers. In taking this forward, the Government is also mindful that there are longer term issues that

warrant consideration in the context of the wider process of change, particularly relating to TSI funding allocations and arrangements. Any changes to the resourcing framework, or to the nature of funding arrangement, will need to be explored, managed and implemented over a longer timeframe.”

3. Update March 2018 – letter from the SG

- No significant progress made, particularly regarding future funding or vision statement
- Evaluation Support Scotland are to lead a project involving SG and the TSIs to develop an outcomes based agreement that will be in place for September and for the start of the new grant period. This framework would also be the basis for new reporting arrangements that would allow TSIs to demonstrate impact

4. Update May 2018 -(Notes from TSIs senior managers meeting 18 May

- TSIs should hear about funding by the end of June.

Further information is expected by September.

Marjorie Hume

Chair –Volunteer Centre Borders & Third Sector Representative on the Strategic Board