

# The National Performance Framework What does it mean for the third sector?

## Report of discussion event on 19 June 2019

### Background

A new [National Performance Framework](#) (NPF) was launched in June 2018. It sets out a vision for national wellbeing in Scotland and measures achievement in relation to this.

On 19 June 2019, 26 people came together for a two hour discussion event run by Evaluation Support Scotland (ESS) and the Scottish Government National Performance Unit to explore what the NPF means for the third sector. The participant list is attached.



### Aims of the session

- To tell participants what the Scottish Government is doing to implement the NPF
- To share views and experiences of how the NPF is relevant to the third sector
- To discuss possible key messages for the third sector and actions to promote the NPF in future

### Summary of the event

Tim Ellis, Deputy Director Performance and Outcomes at Scottish Government gave a short presentation on the NPF. Will Tyler-Greig from Scottish Government Third Sector Unit spoke about how it had been used in the development of the new volunteering outcomes framework. Steven Marwick from ESS shared different ways the third sector is – or could be – using the NPF.

Participants discussed how they have used the NPF (if at all) and how it might be used in future. They identified key messages. The following is a summary of the rich discussions.

### How is the NPF currently used in the third sector?

- Some organisations have created logic models to map their organisational outcomes to the NPF and show their contribution. Third sector intermediaries are mapping what local organisations are doing in relation to NPF.
- Some participants were supporting the gathering of evidence in relation to the outcomes or sustainable development goals.
- Some said the NPF reinforced third sector values.

## How could the NPF be used in future?

### → NPF can be an **aid to communication and partnership**:

- new ideas and innovations might have softer landing in local or national Government if it can be shown these have relevance to the NPF
- a hook for presenting third sector evidence to Parliament
- a starting point for coproducing new policies
- Don't assume it's not relevant for small or local organisations. The common language of national outcomes can empower and value community activity
- Promote to private sector – for cross-sectoral work.

**However** ... participants were not sure that local authorities want a national common language. Some parts of the public sector (eg large capital projects) find it difficult to make the link to NPF.

### → NPF can be a **framework for accountability**:

- A lever to hold SG to account eg "unkind" services or to ask how deficiencies in performance are being addressed
- Third sector has data and evidence to share about the national outcomes to illuminate the "why" and "how" of the framework and the experiences of marginalised groups or people from equalities groups.

**However** ... third sector contribution is not necessarily measured by the current set of indicators and national statistics.

### → NPF could be used in **funding**

- Use it in commissioning and service specs (it is not currently)
- Explicit reference in all SG funding of the sector and a clear link to other SG strategies that relate to the sector.

**However** ... can the NPF have traction in a climate of reduced resources / cuts?

## Some practical suggestions to promote the NPF

- Guides and case studies to help people engage with it
- Examples of how third sector is using the NPF in their own strategies in third sector organisations strategy and funding applications
- Third sector intermediaries can share it with their members
- Capacity building for intermediaries – train the trainer, NPF champions
- Tools and templates to help organisations use the NPF
- Further communication by SG about how it's being implemented
- Mapping other outcome frameworks, strategies and frameworks (including GIRFEC) to the NPF to show how it all fits together.

## Key messages from participants for the third sector

The NPF can help you

TSIs / third sector intermediaries have a role to promote the NPF and help the third sector to engage

Share it with members / colleagues and help them see how they fit

Let's show how we as a sector meet the NPF outcomes

Consider referencing the NPF in funding applications

Make sure your board knows about NPF

Don't assume that anyone in local government has seen it or prioritised it!

Third sector has a role to disseminate to statutory colleagues

It's OK not to have read it – you are doing it!

Let's avoid "framework fatigue"  
NPF isn't brand new – it's what we already do

## Key messages from participants for Scottish Government

Link NPF to specific frameworks (eg GIRFEC), legislation and strategies

Use NPF as a tool to collaborate across departments

Influence procurement and commissioning policy to use NPF

Make NPF a requirement of your funding to local authorities and third sector

Use third sector evidence – not just population indicators – to measure the NPF and create ways for third sector to feed in

Tell third sector where to find data and evidence to help them influence, campaign and fundraise

Break down indicators at local authority level to make outcomes more relevant to local organisations

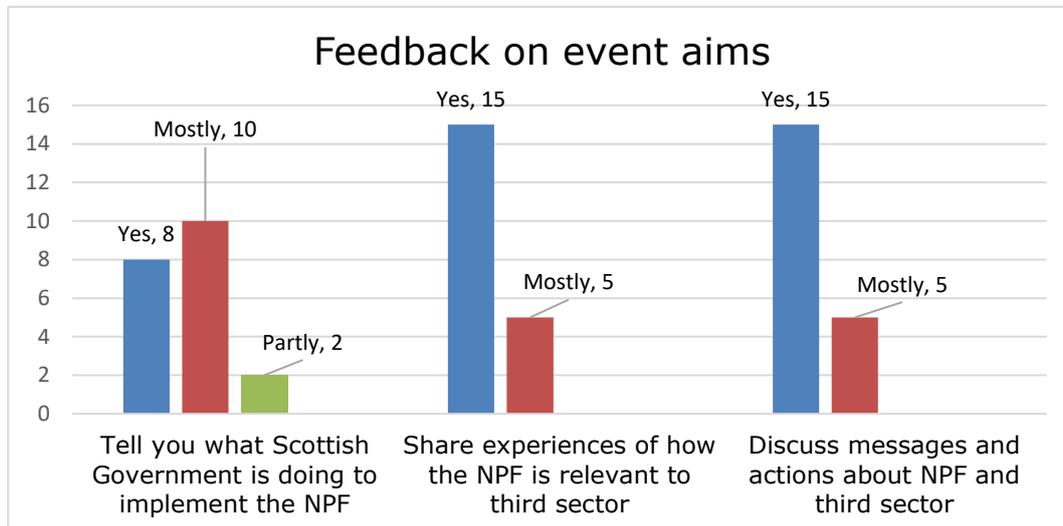
Tell people about the NPF: publicity, discussion, social media. Develop identity and engagement

Involve the third sector in governance / monitoring of the NPF

Produce tools and templates to help third sector use NPF

## Feedback on the event

20 participants completed feedback forms. The graph below shows the event largely met its aims although we could have done more to share what the Scottish Government is doing.



Participants' answers to the question "what are you taking away from the session?" can be summarised as:

- ✓ **Learning** about the NPF and how it works in practice
- ✓ Commitment to **promote** the NPF to others
- ✓ Motivation to **use** the NPF in their own work, strategy or fundraising

### Example comments:

*"The NPF is very visual and easy to refer to. [My organisation] will be adapting this and making more reference to the NPF in relation to our work"*

*"Reinforced importance of outcome based approach, gathering evidence about the difference we make"*

*"As intermediary need to look at what/how we support members to engage etc. Don't assume people have heard about it/know about it"*

*"We'll use the NPF more in our reporting and funding applications and influencing activities. We'll use the evidence and data that are relevant to our cause from the NPF website"*

Most participants gave positive comments on the event that were, in summary:

- ✓ Excellent **discussions** with colleagues
- ✓ **Well run** session

*"Very good - pitched at appropriate level and discussion groups provided a variety of perspectives"*

*"lots of fruitful conversations with colleagues"*

*"Table discussions really interesting and useful - diverse organisations and experience round table. Felt very constructive"*

*"Well organised, focused and open for discussion."*

Participants' helpful suggestions about things that could have been better can be summarised as:

- more practical examples
- more public sector involvement in the session

*"Would be useful to see how NPF has already been used. Have more public authority people here - have a more diverse representation."*

*"I thought the example of the volunteering framework was quite thin on how it connected to the issues and delivery at grassroots level which was a missed opportunity. But it did open up an idea around empowerment and creating your own framework which acts as a bridge"*

*"a co-session with LAs and SG. Not in isolation"*

## Next steps

The session identified some practical actions that can be taken to promote the NPF to the third sector and engage the sector in its implementation. Scottish Government officials said the messages for them were helpful and while they can't promise to deliver on them all, they will agree with ESS and other partners what could be usefully done next. ESS will follow up those people who said they'd like to stay in touch or offer a case study.

If you have any comments or questions on this report please email [info@evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk](mailto:info@evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk)

Evaluation Support Scotland works with the third sector and funders so that they can measure and report on their impact and use learning to improve practice and inform policy. [www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk](http://www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk)

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## Participants

Sovay Fitzpatrick	Addaction
Sarah van Putten	Befriending Networks
Jennifer Wallace	Carnegie UK Trust
Keith Irving	Cycling Scotland
Magali Redding	Eczema Outreach Support
Steven Marwick	Evaluation Support Scotland
Louise Bowen	Evaluation Support Scotland
Derek Welsh	Midlothian Voluntary Action
Patricia Kearns	North Lanarkshire Council
Jamie Munro	The National Lottery Community Fund
Susan Mitchell	One Parent Families Scotland
Velicia Dovaston-Dick	Raploch Community Partnership
Margaret McCole	The Ridge
Ilse MacKinnon	Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations
Tim Ellis	Scottish Government
Hazel Benza	Scottish Government
Will Tyler-Greig	Scottish Government
Lindsay Isaacs	Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance
Gilly Mendes Ferreira	Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
Mark Han-Johnston	Self-Directed Support in Scotland
Jayne Chappell	Social Firms Scotland
Natalie Masterton	Stirling Voluntary Enterprise
Nathan Farrell	Sustrans
Gemma Jackson	Volunteer Scotland
Susan Hunter	Youth Borders
Kenny McGlashan	Youth Theatre Arts Scotland