



Scottish Third Sector Research Forum meeting

Thursday June 20th 2018: 1 – 3.30pm

Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR), Quadrant House, 9 Riverside Dr,
Dundee DD1 4NY

Minutes

In attendance:

Steven Marwick (ESS) (Chair), Louise Bowen (ESS), Jane Marryat (ESS) (Minutes), Louise Meikleham (OSCR), Jane Cullingworth via Skype, (Voluntary Sector Studies Network), Allison Matthews (Big Lottery Fund), Lucy Mulvagh (The ALLIANCE), Susan Hunter (YouthLink Scotland), Stuart Cable (University of Dundee), Ilse MacKinnon (SCVO), Jacqueline Rae (SG), Karen McArdle (University of Aberdeen)

Apologies:

Mathew Linning, Gemma Jackson (VS), Mark Meiklejohn (SG), Josie Isles (IS), Andy Dey (ACOSVO), Fiona McHardy (Poverty Alliance), Claire Stevens (VHS), Darah Zahran (Scottish Enterprise), Alasdair Rutherford (University of Stirling), Stephen Osborne (University of Edinburgh), Sophie Flemig (University of Edinburgh), Jessica Watson (University of Glasgow), Brendan McCormack (Queen Margaret University), Anne McDonald (HIEnt), Kerry Musselbrook (Iriss), Linda Macdonald (TRT), Ligia Teixeira (Crisis), Duncan Thorp (SES)

Welcome and introductions

1. Steven welcomed everyone to the meeting including Jane C. who was joining us via Skype. Steven thanked the Scottish Charity Regulator (Louise M.) for hosting the meeting.

Minutes and matters arising

2. The Minute of the previous meeting (15 March 2018) was approved.

Action: Jane M to upload onto TSRF webpages

3. There were no matters arising. Actions were either completed or are being taken forward.
4. Item 2 - Equality and Human Rights Commission has published the framework

Item 8 - Louise B. has connected with Erin Murray, chair of LARIA and will continue to do so.

Item 10 – Ilse said her colleague Sandra Hogg at Funding Scotland had confirmed that research is a search terms but some of the large research funders might be missing. Sandra would like to know who these are so she can make sure they are included in the results of searches.

Action: Jane M to send list to Ilse

Item 49 - Louise distributed copies of the infographic [To publish or not to publish?](#) that resulted from the discussion at March meeting. Louise thanked Forum members who gave feedback on this.

Subgroups

5. Research conference with University of Edinburgh

A paper was distributed from the subgroup about the plans for the research conference. This will be on 8 March 2019 at University of Edinburgh for 60 people. Cost £35 charged to cover costs. CenSE, University of Edinburgh will do the administration. Suggested themes for morning presentations are 'resource and internal management for the third sector and social enterprise in Scotland and for afternoon sessions: Managing external relations with partners and citizens. There will be an open call for papers and interest in attendance in November 2018 and more intensive marketing from January 2019.

6. Summary of discussion

There was discussion and questions around the audience, format and themes of conference. It is currently planned to be a traditional research conference – lots of listening and little interaction. It should at least to be very clear for the audience about the type of event they will be attending prior to the event. However ideally there should be some interaction would be helpful to allow participants to learn through networking and discussion and to make connections.

7. Other suggestions:

- It should lead to something. It needs to fit with organisations' agenda and future work
- There should be an overarching theme for the whole day
- Be clear about conference's purpose and outcomes
- Suggestion of themes: How to research and evaluate service excellence, link themes with TSRF resources

Louise confirmed will be another *Let's Collaborate* event in autumn 2019 that will, as usual have a focus on academic / third sector collaboration.

Action: for the subgroup to think further about:

- Overall purpose
- Theme
- Meeting participants' different learning styles
- Interactivity

8. The programme will be signed off at next Forum meeting (October 2018).

Action: All forum members to send wishlist, comments and other suggestions to Jacqueline Jacqueline.Rae@scotland.gsi.gov.uk who will feedback to the subgroup.

9. Inclusive growth subgroup

Ilse circulated a draft paper from the subgroup that explains the term inclusive growth and how it is used by the third sector. It includes key elements and space for a further reading list and holding pages for case studies. This paper is for third sector organisations to help them understand how they contribute to

inclusive growth and that they are already doing it (rather than this being an additional thing to do).

10. Two versions of the draft are included as appendices to this minute for review and feedback. The first (original version shared in the meeting) has more text while the second has layout changes and has been edited to allow for larger font size.

Action: all. Contact Ilse with your feedback on the draft paper. Specifically about:

- if there are any superfluous elements or obvious gaps in content
- suggestions for case studies/ examples that could be included
- at the meeting people agreed it would be helpful to include a section at the end of the paper with next steps, 'top 5' things you can do or discussion questions – so that the paper can be used as a tool. Please suggest questions that might be useful to include here.

11. Suggestions for the paper:

- Royal Society of Arts uses the term 'good work' instead of fair work to encompass fulfilling, desirable jobs.

Action: Ilse to email a copy of document to Jane C.

Action: Ilse and Louise B. will work up a design for this paper to ensure has a distinct TSRF identity.

2.50pm Stuart Cable gave apologies and left the meeting

Introduction to YouthLink Scotland

12. Susan Hunter, Senior Policy and Research Officer, YouthLink Scotland thanked the Forum for the opportunity to join the Forum and to present the research work of YouthLink Scotland – the national agency for youth work in Scotland.

13. YouthLink Scotland is a membership organisation. Its members are local authority youth services and third sector youth organisations, some issue specific such as Respect Me and including uniformed organisations. The organisation's core activities are lobbying, providing information and events and research about demonstrating impact.

14. YouthLink Scotland's research activities 2016 - 2018 include

- Research matrix (on website) – mapping what is already known including formal and informal research, evaluations and European Commission's studies
- Transformative Evaluation – Universal Youth Work Research Study – providing training to third sector and field workers to collect change stories from youth people.
- Being young in Scotland survey by Ipsos MORI (not done now)
- Youth-led research around issues such as sectarianism, forgotten women in history
- Youth Democracy Award
- 2015 literature review of impact of youth work (funded by The Robertson Trust)

- National Youthwork Strategy

15. YouthLink Scotland identified the lack of gathering their own data although they were good at using other data sets. And there was a gap in research about the impact of universal youthwork. They set up the Scottish Youth Work Research Group, chaired by Dona Milne. The group includes Scottish Government, youth work academics, community education, quantitative researchers, and researchers working on birth cohort studies such as Growing Up in Scotland.

16. Questions/Discussion

- Is there any research into social isolation and poverty in rural areas with no youth clubs? Young Farmers are doing some research and YouthLink Scotland's Rural Youth Project has been surveying opinions about impact of youth experience in different geographical sites: Callander, Falkirk Council area and will publish their report in August 2018.
- Did the research matrix show gaps in research? Not specifically but did create a depository of what's around in research about youth work impact. There will be a Scottish country report, also a report for England and a European report.
- The Forum are interested in knowing more about participatory research and learning more about the content and approach taken.
- YouthLink Scotland is managing the Cashback fund and will support members to do good research.

Subgroup: Work planning for 2018/19

17. Steven introduced this section reminding the Forum of the key drivers from 'Researching Together' conference that the Forum should address when deciding on the work plan for new subgroups for 2018/2019:

- Building awareness and a clearer identity for the TSRF. ESS has started work on this. There is now a separate mailing list for those signing up to receive the quarterly TSRF updates. Sign up is on TSRF webpage and currently over 200 people have signed up.
- Brokering academic collaboration. The forum could broker the brokers.
- Funding – help third sector organisations to find funding for research collaborations.
- We do not lobby but could communicate with research councils the barriers for the third sector to research collaboratively with academics.

18. There will be two Subgroups for 2018/19:

- Participatory research/Lived experience research – How to do this well, what's needed to skill people to do this work, produce a resource. The group were asked to start thinking about what would be useful for TSRF to do.
- Role as broker and shining a light on research funding for third sector collaborative work.

The meeting broke into the two groups.

19. Funding third sector research group

Jane C, Jane M, Steven, Ilse, Louise M.

Discussion took place about research funding – what previous TSRF small research project found about who funds, how and some barriers and challenges to third sector organisations in taking part in research with academics. For example, TSOs more likely to get funding if they were part of the application process, TSOs could only get a maximum of 30% of funding (unless a very special circumstance), applications process more amenable to academics.

20. We agreed a first step was to draw up a short key messages document for third sector and funders drawn from Jane M's research and conference discussions. Peter Mathews' learning could also be a case study

21. Then we would share with funders to ask if messages look right to them. We could host a roundtable of funders. As Research Councils do not have Scotland staff the Scottish Funding Council might be a place to start and perhaps Rebekah Widdowfield could help broker connections.

Action: Jane M. to send list of research funders to Ilse to share with Sandra Hogg, Funding Scotland

Action: Jane M. To write first draft guide

23. Participatory research/lived experience group

Lucy M., Susan H., Karen McA., Allison M., Louise B.

We identified that participatory research and lived experience methods and methodologies are broad topics and our discussion reflected this. We also thought that work we do on these topics should show the TSRF to be championing methods of involving people (community members) in research. Our discussion covered: participatory action research (PAR), co-production, involving young people as researchers, using narrative enquiry and storytelling research methods; validity of storytelling as 'quality' research; the challenges of engaging people to come forward to talk about their lived experience; and storytelling as a method of demonstrating the impact of project work.

Lucy M. flagged up forthcoming PAR conference that the ALLIANCE is hosting in collaboration with NHS/University of Strathclyde (30th August). We are also aware that SCDC is taking forward work around community-led research and thought there might be some work we could do to support the development of a community-led research network if we get a sense of that being a useful action.

Action: Lucy M. to circulate details of the conference to TSRF and for the sub-group to use learning from that event to inform a work plan. Note: the conference will be an invite-only event.

Action: Louise B. to connect with KTN members around community-led research topic so that any TSRF sub-group and KTN work in this area dovetails.

Research updates

24. Scottish Charity Regulator (Louise M.)

Scottish charity and public surveys

At the end of May the [Scottish Charity Regulator](#) published the findings of its [Scottish Charity and Public Surveys](#). The bi-annual research found that the Scottish public's overall trust in charities is around the same as it was two years ago, but that there was an increase in those saying their trust has decreased over the same period. Trust was higher for local charities than for Scotland-wide, UK and international charities. Knowing how much of a donation goes to the cause, seeing evidence of what it has achieved and knowing it is well run were the highest rated ways to increase public trust. The charity survey found that, as in previous years, funding is the most pressing concern. Charitable status was rated as very important by 73% of charities and 86% say they benefit from being a charity, with access to tax/rates relief and increased public trust being the highest rated benefits identified.

Infographic and report are on Scottish Charity Regulator website

Data tables from the above research are available. Gemma Jackson, Volunteer Scotland will be using OSCR data to focus on findings about volunteering.

Action: Louise M. to send information for publishing in newsletter to Jane M.

25. Scottish Government (Jacqueline)

Jaqueline has been working on volunteer evidence outcomes framework. An academic researcher has done a literature review as part of this work.

Action: Jacqueline will provide an update to Jane M. and links for the newsletter

Research linked to public partnership work has been published and Social Enterprise Scotland third sector review is just about to be published

26. Evaluation Support Scotland (Steven)

Steven has been invited to be part of a short life working group about the new public health body's research and evidence function

27. SCVO (Ilse)

Power BI: Ilse has started using this app to work with data- would welcome getting in touch with any forum members who have experience of using it.

Action: Louise B. to make an agenda item - a discussion about the role of the Forum and its members in the National Performance Framework

28. Big Lottery Fund (Allison)

BLF's new knowledge and learning team in Scotland will be looking at:

- community research

- helping BLF staff to facilitate learning
- how to measure success – process and impact

29. **University of Aberdeen (Karen)**

- Living in Hope- report of a study for the Health and Well Being Network in Kincardine and Mearns and why people did not engage with health and wellbeing related activities. The findings were that the lack of engagement was a cultural phenomenon of small fishing villages and workers on large scale farms who preferred to 'look after themselves.'
- With the WEA, training volunteer members of the NE Local Association in Narrative Inquiry so they could contribute to the development of stories about the work of the WEA for evaluation and marketing purposes.
- Co-writing a book: 'The impact of work in the Community: How to gather evidence of change.' It is being written by 5 people including Assessors and Ed Garrett from the third sector. It is a 'how to do it' book
- Evaluating as a Trustee the work of 'Signposting', an organisation that acts as a community and third sector link for people referred, for example, by GPs and other professionals. Using narrative inquiry with the participants.

Action: Karen to send link to rural research to Jane M.

Action: Karen to tell us more about her work at another meeting

30. **VSSN (Jane C)**

2018 Voluntary Sector and Volunteering Research Conference:

Trust, Transparency and Accountability of Charities and Voluntary Organisations: Challenges for Policy, Practice and Research

6th-7th September 2018 (All Day), London

The **Voluntary Sector and Volunteering Research Conference** – organised by NCVO and VSSN – provides a unique opportunity for academics, policy makers and practitioners from the UK and further afield to come together to share and discuss research that addresses the conference theme and the broader issues facing the voluntary sector and volunteering at this time.

For information and booking click here: <https://www.vssn.org.uk/events/2018-voluntary-sector-and-volunteering-research-conference/>

Public trust in charities, voluntary organisations and wider civil society is under threat from a perceived lack of transparency and accountability surrounding its work. From the Oxfam scandal, to the failure of Kids Company, and ongoing concerns about fundraising practices, the media gaze and political spotlight is increasingly falling on organisations' work. This raises some important questions for research on the voluntary sector and volunteering:

- How is the sector, and civil society more generally, affected by and responding to media and political challenges to become more transparent and accountable?

- How is public trust holding-up in light of recent events, for individual organisations and the sector as a whole?

Alongside this intensified public attention, the voluntary sector and wider civil society continues to deal with a complex series of challenges associated with rising inequality, material hardship, and multiple disadvantage, whilst campaigning and advocating on behalf of some of society's most seldom heard voices. This broader context presents, inevitably, opportunities and challenges for the voluntary sector and volunteering, and high quality research and analysis are needed more than ever to help understand these.

Updates sent by email before the meeting

31. Inclusion Scotland (Josie)

DRILL research projects in Scotland: one of our projects had a launch of their report and findings last week. The launch was held at the Insight Institute at the University of Strathclyde and was well attended. Nick Bland from the Local Governance Review Team took part in the panel discussion, as did Heidi Tweedie-MacFarland and Benjamin McElwee. There were also several personal accounts of being involved in public life from people with lived experience of mental health issues, as well as feedback on the process of coproduction from the Research Collective.

The report "Untapped Potential" can be found here:

<http://voxsotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/14183-Mental-Health-DRLL-Report-A4-Rev7.pdf>

Action: All- Josie would appreciate any feedback or support around dissemination for the report. Would people be able to use their existing networks in any way?

32. Centre for Homelessness Impact (Ligia)

Last month we launched our [flagship tools](#) which have been designed to put evidence at the fingertips of those working to end homelessness. We're now working collaboratively with the Scottish Government to extend our work to develop an outcomes framework that underpins current efforts to undertake an options appraisal for Scotland's new national data system on street homelessness.

We are partnering with Clore Social to offer emerging leaders in housing and homelessness sectors a 6 month [intensive leadership programme](#). The deadline to apply is July 2nd.

33. Iriss (Kerry)

Our recent research, for wider sharing: Community Social Work case studies, and forthcoming critical history of community social work written by Colin Turbett. The case studies are drawn from both the statutory and third sector. <https://www.iriss.org.uk/collection/showcasing-community-social-work>

34. **Social Enterprise Scotland (Duncan)**

The new national policy forum for social enterprise - the Cross-Party Group - has now been approved by The Scottish Parliament. Please **read/share the news**.

Social Enterprise Scotland is seeking views from social enterprises on what will help them raise their profile to customers and unlock new markets. Take just 10 minutes to fill in **this survey** to share the ambitions you have and challenges you face when trying to reach customers - your views will shape the national Social Enterprise Action Plan.

The Social Enterprise Awards Scotland 2018 - get your application in now - DEADLINE Friday 6 July! All info and online applications at: socialenterpriseawards.scot (please share widely). Read/share our new article on why you should apply: thirdforcenews.org.uk/blogs/why-you-should-apply-for-the-social-enterprise-awards-scotland-2018

35. **AOCB**

No AOCB

36. **Next meeting**

Next meeting will be on **Tuesday 2nd October, 10.30- 1pm (1pm lunch), Big Lottery Fund, Glasgow** *(Please note change of venue from previous minutes)*