**Third Sector Research Forum**
**18 September 2012**
**University of Edinburgh Business School, George Square, Edinburgh**

**Present**
Kay Barclay, Scottish Government (Chair)
Sue Northrop, Scottish Government
Mark Meiklejohn, Scottish Government (Minutes)
David Cruickshank, Scottish Government
Stephen Osborne, Edinburgh University
Kevin McDonald, HiE
Artur Steinrowski, SAC.
Kathleen Doyle, VDS
Lisa McGhee, OSCR
Patty Lozano-Casal, ESS
Joanna McLaughlin, the Robertson Trust
Jonathan Coburn, Social Value Lab
Duncan Thorp, Social Enterprise Scotland
Sandy Watson, Scottish Enterprise.

Apologies
Ruchir Shah, SCVO
Carolyn Sawers, Big Lottery Fund

## 1) Introductions

Kay Barclay introduced the session and bid her farewells as she is leaving to take up a new post in Justice Analytical Services.

The minutes from the last meeting of the forum on 24 April, were approved.

## 2) Research papers update and reflections.

- **Why Involve the Third Sector in Reducing Reoffending?**

Joanna, the author of Why Involve the Third Sector in Reducing Reoffending, gave an update on the paper. The forum had agreed that this was an important area to look at and tied in with the findings of the Christie Commission and the Scottish Governments Reducing Reoffending Programme. The work was taken forward by a subgroup made up of The Robertson Trust, SCVO, the Scottish Government, the Big Lottery and Evaluation Support Scotland. The approach was to draw largely on existing evidence and through this process it became apparent, that although there is some criminal justice projects have been externally evaluated there is not a great deal of robust evidence available on this topic.

The paper notes that there is a need for a greater evidence base and an urgent need for greater evaluation. Joanna mentioned a recent Scottish Government paper "What Works to Reduce Reoffending?" which concluded

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that because of the difficulties in determining what works, it is important to ask not just *if* something is successful but also *why*.

The paper identified key attributes of the third sector that contributed to their being able to play an effective role in reducing reoffending including:

- o Commitment
- o Flexibility
- o Ability to work in Partnership
- o Ability to be innovative.
- o Ability to form a strong relationship with the service user.

Some approaches which began in the third sector have now been mainstreamed, for example mentoring or links to substance misuse programmes.

The paper including a number of case studies which highlighted good practice and also demonstrated the range of approaches including case studies both in prison and in the community and work around employability and substance misuse.

The paper also included a section on Challenges and Barriers, for example, a difficult funding environment leading to competition within the third sector and the danger of the skills and experience of smaller third sector organisations being displaced if they are forced to close or are taken over by the larger players. Joanna noted that they had had feedback from some organisations who did not agree with all of the points in this section and felt that there was no competition within the sector and that everyone worked in partnership together. Stephen noted that people being unhappy with the forums papers was not necessary a negative – the job of the forum job is not to "boost" the sector but to develop robust, well respected and impartial research. It was important that this included negatives and challenges. Joanna noted she had also had feedback from an organisation who was unhappy that they had not been included as a case study in the report despite having provided information on the criminal justice projects they deliver to the working group. Joanna suggested that in future reports, it might be worth including a list of all the organisations who have provided information to help with the report as a matter of courtesy.

Mark mentioned he had been present at a meeting of the Criminal Justice Review Group where the paper had been tabled and was well received. Members noted that it was a good concise paper and the group found the case studies very useful. A discussion of the paper drew out a general agreement on the important role the third sector had to play in reducing reoffending, both in prisons and the community; a recognition that funding for the third sector would benefit from being more logically structured and that a lack of consistency in procurement processes created difficulties for the third sector. Mark felt that the paper had reassured members of the sector's capacity to deliver. Although one of the aims of the Reducing Reoffending Change Fund was to promote strong, equal partnerships between third and

public sector, the final findings of the group, to restrict applications in years two and three to Public Social Partnerships and to provide funding in year one towards developing these partnerships went much further than was required and was an excellent result for the third sector.

The paper has been distributed to third sector organisations and was highlighted in ESS's e newsletter as well as being on the forums website and being referenced in Audit Scotland's report on Reducing Reoffending (due to be published in November 2012).

- **Third Sector Research Forum Research Updates paper**

The Third Sector Research Forum Research Updates paper (attached at **Annex A**) was tabled.

- **Co-production.**

Stephen spoke about work at Edinburgh University around co-production. The university has been looking at this area for around 6 years At there moment 3 particular areas of work are being taken forward by three PHD students at the university: Asylum, Crowd Sourcing and Community Engagement. The work is funded by the Edinburgh Business School Research Committee and involves drawing together the existing literature and working with third sector organisations active in co-production in Scotland. There are plans to hold a workshop around the findings around December and possible publication of a paper. There are also opportunities to raise awareness at, for example, the SCVO research conference and Social Science event in November. It was noted that, referenced by Christie, co-production had a high profile at the moment and a growing interest within both third and public sectors. It was important to use that enthusiasm but at the same time to recognise difficulties and challenges around the model.

- **Why involve the third sector in health and social care delivery?**

Kay briefly updated on the Health Paper noting it had received a wide distribution to Health Boards and is now being used as a discussion paper for Chief Executives.

## 3) Strategic Direction of the Research Forum

Kay had circulated the paper Developing a Strategic Evidence Framework for the Scottish Third Sector Research Forum (Annex B).

Kay outlined the paper's main argument – that a strategic Framework, clearly showing a direction of travel and identifying priority areas for research and information gathering was necessary not just for the forum, but for the whole of the third sector. The third sector was central to the PSR agenda and the

framework would help develop a clear narrative of where the third sector fits into PSR.

In terms of what the framework would actually look like, Kay suggested the group look at developing a logic model which she felt would provide a useful to tool to help to identify where the gaps in research are. ESS has used this method in the past and Patty explained that the model is ideal for showing a journey from needs to outcomes. It was suggested that a subgroup work to develop a logic model and Patty offered for ESS to take the lead.

- **Workshops.**

The group then split into two workshops to identify the evidence gaps and key actions that could serve as the basis for developing the framework. The report from the two groups are attached at Annex C.

In the discussion afterwards Kay noted that despite wide agreement that PSR was a good and necessary thing, and a recognition that the third sector was well positioned to deliver, change was slow. There is something missing around our knowledge – could this be a key area (or areas) of work for the forum?

It was suggested that the forum might facilitate or host 4-5 policy events based around the key themes of PSR.

In a discussion around dissemination of findings, there was agreement that the same research should be applicable to all audiences (SG, local government, third sector and public) but that methods of dissemination and style may have to be altered to suit a particular group.

Further suggestions from the workshop, contained in the notes of meeting at Annex C, were noted.

- **What Next for the Research Forum?**

It was suggested that, building on the suggestions of today's workshops and Kay's paper, a subgroup work to develop a draft of a strategic evidence framework using a logic model. Patty offered for ESS to take the lead on this piece of work.

Sue assured the meeting that SG remained committed to supporting the group. It was not yet clear whether Kay's post would be filled and this might be a good time, in tandem with developing the framework, for the forum to reflect on the sort of support needed and where it might come from.

Patty offered, assuming ESS management agreement, to host the next meeting of the group, Joanna and Kathleen also offered assistance.

The group agreed to the suggestion that the Forum's website be hosted on ESS's website rather than Scottish Government as this will facilitate the development of the site and establish the collaborative nature of the group.

A discussion around becoming a Community of Practice with a virtual "blog" was also introduced and whilst members agreed to this notion in principle, no firm decisions were reached.

Annex A

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**Third Sector Research Forum**
**Summary of Research Updates**
**18th September 2012**

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**Scottish Government**

**1) Third Sector Longitudinal Study**

Year 3 report publication date 24 October.
Ministerial approval to continue the study for one more year (2012-2013) with the same contractors (University of Edinburgh Business School and Napier).

**2) Third Sector Quantitative Data Briefing Paper**

A paper pulling together key sources of quantitative data on the third sector and including analysis of OSCR data is currently being piloted.

This work is on hold due to unforeseen staff shortages but should be resumed soon.

**3) Improving Evidence for Local Outcomes**

Collaborative project between Scottish Government and key stakeholders to develop a programme of work to strengthen the contribution of evidence in local policy delivery. The key aim is to encourage analysts to work with CPPS to use evidence effectively in the delivery of SOA outcomes.

Using an action learning approach, it will draw on existing projects to demonstrate how analytical input is applied.

**Volunteer Development Scotland**

Research Activity

- Analysing and reporting the results from two surveys: Volunteering in Scottish Charities (2012) - a survey, investigating the challenges facing local charities in Scotland; and Volunteering in Scotland - an omnibus survey, investigating formal and informal volunteering in Scotland.

- Volunteers on Volunteering, a survey of users of Volunteer Scotland website

- Health and Social Care, Older People Project for the Scottish Government Joint Improvement Team. This pilot project has two key elements: (1) a review of existing (internal and external) data; and (2) working collaboratively with users of this data in order to identify their data needs and test how this data can be best presented to influence practice or policy.

- Conducting a UK evaluation of vInspired's cashpoint programme that administers funding to young people (14-25) to help them deliver social action

projects intended to make a difference in their local community. We are working with the Institute of Volunteering Research and the Third Sector Research Centre to deliver the evaluation.

- Funding and supervising a CASE Studentship in collaboration with Strathclyde University. This research will examine young people's attitudes to and experiences of volunteering. We aim to look at young people's involvement in both formal and informal volunteering practices (e.g. regular help in someone's home) and traditional as well as non-traditional practices (e.g. virtual volunteering).

- Funding and supporting a Third Sector Research Internship (January to March 2012). The specific details have still to be worked through but this short, discrete project will involve a research intern designing a project aimed at collecting some data and stories about what it is to be a volunteer (i.e. filling some of our knowledge gaps about volunteer's experience).

  Forthcoming publications

- A series of research bulletins to disseminate the results of *Volunteering in Scottish Charities* (2012)
- A series of research and policy outputs from Volunteering in Scotland (2011)
- A series of policy and practice outputs from Mike Woolvin's PhD 'Volunteering 'below the radar'? Informal volunteering in deprived urban Scotland'

**Scottish Agricultural College, Artur Steinerowski**

**The third sector and civil society in rural Scotland: present and future?** in Rural Scotland in Focus 2012, Mike Woolvin and Sarah Skerratt
- There are a greater number of charities per head based in rural areas of Scotland compared to more urban areas.
- Charities located in rural Scotland may be particularly likely to serve their local area and population.
- Rural charities take diverse forms including development trusts, social enterprises and community land trusts. There appears a particularly strong emphasis on asset ownership and place-based civil society activity. Furthermore, by focussing on only those third sector organisations that are registered charities, we are overlooking a great deal of less formal activity.
- Those in rural areas are significantly more likely to report having volunteered formally.
- However more needs to be known about the tasks volunteers perform in rural areas – in particular whether they are 'additional' or 'substitutional' - to ensure that such activity is sustainable.
For more information, please go to http://www.sac.ac.uk/downloads/file/470/rural_scotland_in_focus_2012_web_version

**Mapping the distribution of charities in Scotland**

- There are pronounced geographical variations in the number of charities (both absolute and per head), as well as in their purposes and characteristics.
- The number of charities per head of population increases with degree of rurality. This may suggest that charities are particularly characteristic of rural areas.
- The number of charities providing services also varies geographically, with a greater number per head in rural areas, whilst charities in rural areas also appear more likely to operate at the local level than those in more urban areas.
- Whilst this may suggest that there is a particularly strong role for charities in rural areas in bridging the gap between service provision and service need, and that charities in rural areas are more likely to provide services to the local population, this may also be a function of urban head office locations. Further analysis is required to understand the services provided by these charities, and those working beyond the 'local' level.
- It is also possible to map charities alongside socio-demographic variables such as deprivation. For example, it appears that the less deprived the area, the higher the number of charities per head.

For more information, please go to http://www.sac.ac.uk/downloads/file/666/2012_mapping_the_distribution_of_charities_in_scotland


## **The role of community led social enterprises in enhancing community empowerment, capacity, and resilience (Acronym: COSER)**

The **key objective** of this research is to investigate the role of rural community-led social enterprises in enhancing community empowerment, capacity and resilience. This will be examined through service-delivery and specifically co-production, as a key articulation of social enterprise. The research will examine:

- perceived impacts of rural community-led social enterprises on community empowerment, capacity and resilience, from multiple perspectives;
- processes of social enterprise service co-production and how they enhance community resilience; and
- strategies employed by community-led social enterprises to participate in service delivery, co-production, and implications for sustainable service provision.


**Social Value Lab, Jonathan Coburn,**

Embedding Social Value through Sustainable Procurement

The report examines the views of public sector commissioners and procurement professionals in Scotland as they attempt to buy more sustainably, maximise the social value they obtain through purchasing and deepen their engagement with the third sector.

http://www.readyforbusiness.org/downloads/Social_Value_Procurement_Survey_Report%202012.pdf

**OSCR (Lisa McGhee)**

'OSCR Online' has gone live and there are new, shorter Annual Return (AR) and Supplementary Monitoring Return (SMR) forms.

Testing of the online system began in February and went live on 6 June 2012. This new online service enables charities to:

- submit Annual Returns and monitoring forms online
- submit accounts online
- update charity details online

It is easy to use, prevents errors in completing forms, saves time and money, is accessed via the OSCR website and is available 24 hours a day.

**SCVO Scottish Third Sector Statistics, 2012**

The results from SCVO's financial panel survey have been published on SCVO's website and are available here: http://www.scvo.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/SCVO-Scottish-Third-Sector-Statistics-2012.pdf

**Key findings**
Figures compare 2011 to 2010.
- ↑ Annual income up to £4.5 billion in 2011
- ↑ Expenditure up to £4.3 billion
- ↑ Staff numbers increase to 138,000
- ↓ Full Time Equivalent employees down to 83,350
- → Staff costs remain at £1.93billion
- ↑ Assets rise to £8.6 billion
- ↓ Assets of smaller charities shrink
- ↓ Majority of smaller charities spend more than their income
*(Source: SCVO 2012)*

**SCVO: Research Conference on 2nd November**
**Scotland's Third Sector Research Conference 2012: exploring evidence in a time of change**
2nd November, South Hall, Pollock Halls, Edinburgh

From politicians to media pundits, everyone is talking about the third sector. But do they know what they are talking about? Can the sector really deliver? What can the evidence tell us, and what gaps need to be addressed?
Now in its third year, these are just some of the pressing questions that Scotland's premier conference on the third sector research agenda will discuss, bringing together Scottish Government, third sector researchers and practitioners, leading academics and public sector officials.

Annex A

This year, the conference is being delivered in partnership with the UK Third Sector Research Centre. The conference will therefore welcome eminent speakers from leading UK universities alongside third sector practitioners and Scottish academics.

Places are filling fast so secure your place now by booking on-line.  For programme and discount information see conference webpage or contact Helen Swatton on 0141 559 5019.

Please circulate conference flier to your networks and colleagues.

**Highlands and Islands Enterprise**

**A Minimum Income Standard for Rural & Remote Scotland**

New research into the minimum cost of living in rural Scotland has been commissioned by a partnership of Scottish organisations focused on economic and social development.

The 'Minimum Income Standard for Remote and Rural Scotland' study will look at the price of goods and services required by different household types to achieve a reasonable standard of living.

The research is being carried out by the highly regarded Centre for Research in Social Policy at Loughborough University, in partnership with The Centre for Remote and Rural Studies at the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI).

Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) is leading the project, along with local authorities Highland Council, Moray Council, Argyll and Bute Council, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and Shetland Islands Council, housing groups Rural and Island Housing Association Forum, Scottish Federation of Housing Association, Chartered Institute of Housing (Scotland), and Scottish Enterprise.

Rachael McCormack, Director of Strengthening Communities at HIE, said: "This important study will help our understanding of the cost of living in rural Scotland today. It's about more than just food, clothes and shelter. It is about people having what they need to take opportunities and make the choices necessary to play a full part in society.

"The findings will help inform local, regional and national policy makers and shape the activities of the range of agencies involved."

Donald Hirsch, Director of the Centre for Research in Social Policy at Loughborough University, said: "We've already conducted income standards research across the UK but this has mainly looked at the needs of people in cities and urban areas.  We have studied the living costs of rural households in England, compared with urban households.  However, the costs faced by people in remote areas of rural Scotland may well be different.

"Our research looks not only at the price of goods and services paid by people in different areas, but also at how the definition of a minimum 'basket' of goods and

services varies. Living patterns are bound to be different in remote areas – for example, in terms of use of transport and patterns of leisure activities."

Previous research carried out by the university in England has resulted in local minimum wage levels being introduced.

The 'Minimum Income Standard for Remote and Rural Scotland' study will be published next year.

Annex B

**Developing a Strategic Evidence Framework for the third sector:
A proposal for the Scottish Third Sector Research Forum**

**September 2012
Kay Barclay**

**Summary**

This paper sets out the policy context in which the Scottish Third Sector Research Forum is operating to identify the underlying need and rationale for a Strategic Evidence Framework.

The paper summarises the key messages from the Christie Review, highlighting the need for and parameters of public service reform. It then identifies key Scottish Government policy interventions that are currently underway and identifies what outcomes are intended for the third sector, recognising that change is needed if the full and equal involvement of the third sector in public service reform is to be realised.

Some practical issues for consideration are discussed. The forum will be invited to discuss ways of improving communication and dissemination through becoming a community of practice, developing a blog and improving our web presence.

Finally a set of questions that will be explored more fully in the workshop at the Research Forum Meeting on 18th September are listed for consideration in advance of that meeting.

More details on the policy context and communication approaches are provided in annexes.

Annex B

**Developing a Strategic Evidence Framework for the third sector:**
**A proposal for the third sector research forum**

**Section 1: Background and Rationale**

**Why we need a Strategic Evidence Framework for the third sector in Scotland**

Scotland's public services face unprecedented challenges. Economic, social and demographic pressures have been increasing demand for public services at an unsustainable rate, yet despite significant expenditure negative outcomes and economic and social inequalities have remained unchanged or become more pronounced. Meanwhile, the global economic recession is placing extreme pressures on public spending resulting in severely constrained budgetary options. The current system is clearly not working and urgent review and change is needed.

The Christie Commission Review (conducted in 2011) highlighted the depth of the challenge and set the parameters for radical public service reform drawing on evidence from a wide range of sources. What is particularly clear from the review is **the critical role that the third sector is playing and will continue to play in** public service delivery and reform, prevention and the delivery of outcomes both locally and nationally.

A cross governmental programme of reform is now underway that builds on the Christie Review's findings and which has critical implications for the third sector. On the one hand, there are great opportunities for the third sector who are well placed to deliver these approaches and have a wealth of experience of working in this way. In fact, their involvement is likely to be essential for reform to happen. Yet, at the same time, there are challenges and barriers to their full involvement. Moreover, the sector is operating a pressurised environment as a result of the recession and reduced public spending for the longer term and they are facing greater demands for their services at a time of diminishing resources.

It is clear that there is a compelling need for a number of key changes around the third sector in order to maximise it's role and facilitate it's full involvement. Government programmes are intended to support and develop the third sector and enable those changes to happen.

**Implications for the Scottish Third Sector Research Forum**

The time is ripe for the Research Forum to clearly identify what specific role it can play in supporting the third sector in this massive programme of public service reform, in particular to understand what evidence is needed and how evidence can be used to support and understand the process of critical change within the third sector.

As a research forum our shared strength is in our expertise of:
- Conducting research and collecting data and evidence;
- Understanding of the third sector, and the context within which it operates

- Accessing evidence from a range of sources (from practitioner knowledge, organisational data, academic research, statistical data)
- Synthesising and presenting knowledge in accessible format
- Discussing the issues and developing a better understanding

We are in a strong position to champion evidence and facilitate it's mobilisation to have maximum impact on key decision makers within the policy process. **We need a strategic evidence framework to help us to clarify the specifics of what this will involve and how we will do it.**

**The proposal**

This proposal is to develop a strategic evidence framework which can help the forum align programmes of research and evidence gathering around shared outcomes.

The objectives of the strategic evidence framework are to:

- identify the particular role that our forum will play in understanding and delivering change within the third sector

- align our work with the policy priorities of Scottish Government ministers so that we can identify where we can use evidence to support or challenge policy decisions and maximise the impact of evidence in policy development,

- identify key research and evidence questions that must be addressed to support the third sector to achieve it's potential and be fully engaged in the reform programme

- Identify specific activities that the research forum can deliver in the period ahead to meet these research and evidence requirements.

- identify effective ways of disseminating knowledge and increasing opportunities to discuss and share learning (with consideration for becoming a community of practice)

- produce an overarching mission statement and set of objectives for the forum with which to update our remit

This framework can then be used by all forum members to plan and prioritise their research programmes and will be the starting point for identifying opportunities for collaboration and partnerships between forum members.

**Developing the Framework**

At the next meeting we will run a facilitated workshop to map out the outcomes for the third sector that current policy workstreams are intended to support to enable the sector's participation in the reform agenda that will in turn lead to improved outcomes for Scotland's people.

Annex B

Once we have discussed the third sector outcomes, we can then identify what evidence will be needed to support and understand that process of change, and what activities the forum will do to access and disseminate that evidence.

The next step will then be to consider what the forum is going to do and how through new collaborative ways of working we will do it.

We can then also revise the remit and objectives of the group, develop an overarching mission statement.

**Looking forward**

This is the first stage in the development of the framework. The intention is that this will be followed up with a logic modelling workshop (or series of workshops) with a specialised sub group from the forum/ third sector.

**Context: Key Policy Developments**

To provide context to our discussion, some important current policy developments are listed below together with the intended third sector outcomes that government is working towards achieving. These policy areas are discussed in greater detail in Annex A.

| Key policy developments | Intended Outcomes/ implications for third sector |
|---|---|
| **Public Service Reform and Prevention** building on the findings from the Christie Review. 4 pillars of reform: <br>• Prevention <br>• Partnership <br>• People <br>• Performance <br><br>It's **HOW** you deliver services that is key | Third sector already adds value in this area and will continue to build on these types of approaches to ensure that they become embedded in service delivery: <br>• Building services around people and communities <br>• Early intervention and preventative approaches <br>• Service integration <br>• Partnership and collaboration/ Co-production <br>• Working with communities <br>• Focus on place |
| **Developing the infrastructure for third sector (third sector interfaces)** Clarify the role and position of interfaces within CPPs and supporting third sector in their area. | There is an effective local infrastructure to support the third sector that facilitates it's involvement in community planning and ensures robust delivery of PSR. |
| **Community Planning Review** <br>• Joint review by COSLA and SG to enable partnerships to deliver more Christie recommendations and PSR | 3rd sector becomes a full and equal joint partner in CPPs; is accountable and takes responsibility as a member of the partnership, whilst managing to maintain independence; |

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|---|---|
| more effectively<br>• Workstream to improve involvement of third sector in CPPs (an aspect of which develops of strong and conducive professional relationships) | is enabled to bring knowledge, expertise, skills; contribute to decision making.<br><br>Roles, relationships and responsibilities are clarified<br><br>The 3rd sector is fully involved in service planning, design and delivery through CPPs. |
| **Scottish Government support to the third sector:**<br><br>**Just Enterprise –** to support third sector organisations to grow in financial resilience and sustainability.<br><br>**Developing Markets programme** to improve business opportunities for the third sector (and promoting the use of public social partnerships and community benefit clauses)<br><br>**Enterprise Growth Fund (£6M)** investing in third sector organisations that are moving towards financial sustainability<br><br>**Scottish Investment Fund (£3M in 2011-12)** | The third sector is more financially sustainable and has capacity to deliver PSR/ services.<br><br>Increased public sector confidence in the third sector.<br><br>Third sector wins more contracts<br><br>Increase the economic contribution of the third sector.<br><br>A more enterprising third sector operating as growing businesses.<br><br>Enhanced third sector leadership to support business development and sustainability.<br><br>Public social partnerships and Community Benefit Clauses increase opportunities and help to strengthen third sector role in designing services.<br><br>. |
| **Supporting Volunteering**<br>Volunteer Development Scotland<br>Voluntary Action Fund (£1M)<br>Saltire Awards | Volunteering better supported/ valued<br>Stronger civic identity |
| **Community Empowerment**<br><br>Currently under consultation, the Community Empowerment Bill aims to:<br>• Strengthen opportunities for communities to take independent action to achieve their own goals, aspirations | Third sector will help support community capacity building especially with harder to reach and disadvantaged communities.<br><br>There is a stronger civic identity / participation |

| | |
|---|---|
| • Ensure communities are better able to have a greater role in determining how their local public services are delivered | |
| **Change Funds (£500M+)**<br>To facilitate the spending shifts away from acute to early interventions give momentum to preventative approaches.<br><br>Three Change Funds cover:<br>Reshaping Care for Older People<br>Early Years<br>Reducing Reoffending | Third sector plays a key role in delivering Change Funds and should be a partner in Change Plans in each LA.<br><br>Partnership working is realised through these programmes. |
| **Tackling deep rooted inequalities in Scottish society,** tackling racism, improving outcomes for minority groups | Third sector continues to work to support the unequal / hard to reach/ excluded communities in society. |
| **Focus on Outcomes**<br><br>Since 2007, an outcomes focussed way of working, monitoring progress and measuring impact, has become instilled at all levels (from the governmental to the local to the organisational). | The third sector is outcomes focussed, conducts monitoring and collects evidence to evaluate their progress towards outcomes. |

These activities and outcomes are key components of any logic model that will be developed.

## Section 2:  How the Forum works: Practical Considerations

**Improving the Forum's Approach to Communication and knowledge dissemination**

There is already a large body of evidence about "what works[1]".  The key issue is how to channel that knowledge to maximise impact and make change happen. Knowledge mobilisation and dissemination are therefore critical roles for this forum and we need to develop our capacity in this area.  This is to ensure that:

- We get access to the "right" knowledge (i.e. knowledge that is useful, relevant to the key issues at stake, accurate and can help to support the work of the third sector)
- We access knowledge from a range of sources (including practitioner knowledge, academic research findings, organisational data and robust statistics) covering a range of relevant themes and issues

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[1] Christie Review; JIT website; drugs; self directed support

- We present knowledge in formats that ensure that it will be read and understood and that are appropriate for different audiences
- We ensure that knowledge reaches the right audiences at the right time to ensure that it has maximum impact.

This is more pressing now that we are co-producing research briefing papers which aim to have impact on policy decision makers and maximise opportunities for the third sector across government.

In addition, there is also a need for:

- more opportunities for discussion and a "safe" place to develop and share our thinking and to support our learning over and above our regular meetings
- a way of broadening participation in these discussions without our face to face meetings becoming unwieldy.
- a neutral a-political place to publish / store our research outputs to which interested parties can be directed
- Better networking and improved relationships amongst members helping us to align our research, share solutions to challenges and work collaboratively

One suggestion is to establish the Research Forum as a **Community of Practice.**

A Community of Practice is a group of people who:
- Share expertise / interest in an area
- Pursue this interest through discussing, working together, sharing knowledge and understanding
- Interact and learn from each other
- Take collective responsibility in developing the knowledge they need.

Many Communities of Practice make use of virtual web environments to build on their work during face to face meetings and as a place to share materials and papers.

There are a number of options for developing a virtual presence:

1) The Knowledge Hub (supported by the Local Government Association)
2) An online discussion group such as Yahoo Groups
3) Internet forum of message board
4) Developing the forum website within ESS's website

**The Knowledge Hub** is a membership networking site that allows collaborative working to be conducted with varying degrees of openness and privacy depending on the needs of the group. The Hub is favoured by many Scottish Government working groups who have established communities of practice. Online groups and internet forum operate in a similar way but are hosted by an external agency (such as Yahoo). Further details on these three options are discussed in greater detail together with the pros and cons more fully at Annex .

*Hosting the forum on ESS's website*

A further consideration is to move the Research Forum site onto the ESS's website. This provides scope to make improvements to the Research Forum website as a key means of publicising the forum and it's work. Currently the site is hosted on the Third Sector pages of the Scottish Government website and it is currently used primarily to publish the minutes of the forum's quarterly meetings.

By moving the site to ESS's website, this would help to reposition the forum as genuinely collaborative group working with and facilitated by the SG but not dominated or controlled by it. It would enable us to publish co-produced papers in a neutral territory to facilitate maximum publicisation which the virtual networking options above do not allow. As ESS are currently in the process of reviewing and updating their website, this would be a timely opportunity for the Research Forum and one that we should therefore consider.

### *How would the community of practice work?*

Our community of practice would consist of all research forum members who currently form the "core" membership of the forum, plus other appropriate stakeholders that wish to share our knowledge and contribute to our debates. These would be "associate" members of the forum whose participation was primarily virtual. Membership would be moderated but appropriate stakeholders expressing an interest would be permitted to participate in blog or interactive forum hosted on whichever virtual medium we select. We would develop a group that is wider than the current research forum membership.

The core members would continue to meet face to face but we would use the virtual environment to supplement and enhance our work and through it enable broader participation.

We would nominate a few members of the forum to take responsibility for moderating and facilitating the community. We would establish a rota to share the workload across the forum.

The virtual space will enable us to share evidence papers, think pieces and other outputs (forum minutes, "newsletters", our remit etc) and have ongoing interaction and discussion. This is not to say that our papers cannot be shared through other media. For example, primary authors can publish joint research forum output on their own sites with members agreement.

We can link the Community of Practice to the Research Forum web pages to publicise our work and draw people in, and in this way disseminate and share our knowledge across networks.

### Linkages with the new Knowledge Translation Network

ESS are facilitating the development a Knowledge Translation Network (KTN) with a small team of stakeholders which aims to facilitate and share learning about effective knowledge translation and dissemination activities and to improve the practice of

knowledge dissemination.  This group will draw upon the expertise of the Research Forum and other groups and researchers who are working to mobilise knowledge (especially practitioner knowledge) and to transfer it into the policy making domain to maximise it's impact.  The learning from the group can then be fed back into the Third Sector Research Forum to inform our knowledge dissemination practice.  More details of the KTN are provided at Annex D.

**WORKSHOP PLANS**

**Some questions to consider in advance of the 18th September meeting**

1. What are the changes in and around the third sector that need to happen (i.e. what are the longer term outcomes for the third sector that we are working towards)?

2. What are the key research and evidence questions that need to be addressed that will support the third sector?

3. What can the research forum do to help to address these?

4. How will the forum operate (considerations around the practicalities such as becoming a community of practice, developing a blog, using ESS's website etc)

**Workshop Instructions**

1. Divide into two groups (Mark with one, Patty with the other)

2. Brainstorm critical research questions/ evidence gaps that must be addressed to enable the third sector to deliver PSR (What do we need to know….?)

3. Write them on post it notes /stick on flip chart

4. Identify **what activities** the forum can do that will enable these research questions to be explored in more detail- write them down next to questions.

5. Identify **which audiences to target messages at.**

6. **Report back to the group and discuss**

**Annex A Policy Context**

*1) Public Service Reform and Prevention*

Public service reform is a priority of government. The Christie Review recommends:

- Building services around people and communities
- Early intervention and preventative approaches
- Service integration
- Partnership and collaboration/ Co-production
- Working with communities
- Focus on place

A programme of public service reform is now developing around four pillars of reform (the 4 Ps):

- A decisive shift towards Prevention to reduce demand in the longer term
- Greater integration at the local level driven by Partnership working with the full range of partners
- Making the most of our People (Workforce Development)
- A sharper more transparent focus on Performance improvement

Seven key reform outcomes are summarised below:

| Successful public services… | This means organisations are: | This means leaders are… |
|---|---|---|
| **1. Prevention: reducing demand in the longer-term** Have a bias for prevention in how they work and act with people & communities, as well as in the timing of investment. | 1. *Demonstrating collaborative working, early action and upstream investment in order to tackle root causes and prevent problems becoming chronic.* 2. *Capturing appropriate evidence to demonstrate the effectiveness of those preventative approaches, including in mainstream services, in reducing or delaying future demand and improving outcomes.* 3. *Enabling and empowering staff at all levels to work collaboratively across sectoral or organisational boundaries.* | Leaders are focussed on root causes not symptoms, taking a long-term view and anticipating and preventing problems wherever possible. They are clear on what it is they are trying to prevent and for whom; promoting a bias for prevention at all stages of life – not just the early years. They visibly put outcomes above organisational boundaries, and work collaboratively with partners to resolve issues such as cost shunting. |

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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **2. Integration & Partnership: collaborating & inclusive** Recognise and work with the relative strengths, abilities and capacities of the full range of partners. | *1. Developing approaches to agree shared priorities, share power and responsibilities with partners to deliver better outcomes, including communities and the third sector.* *2. Ensuring budgets are pooled and shared effectively to resource these shared priorities.* *3. Holding partners to account for delivery.* | Leaders see the value in working in a cross-boundary way with a wide range of partners to maximise effectiveness, and are clear about where to collaborate and where to use more generic delivery approaches. They feel responsible for outcomes beyond their own job description and share power and resource to secure those outcomes. |
| **3. Workforce Development & Leadership: making the most of our people** Recognise that innovation springs from taking courageous risks, some of which may fail or may take time to show positive impact. They do not operate with a blame culture and make space for, and trust others to, drive change. | *1. Using creative tools (such as systems thinking) to more fully unlock the innovative ideas and potential of frontline staff, reduce waste and failure demand.* *2. Putting in place development plans for existing and future workforces to build expertise, capacity and develop the next generation of public service leaders.* *3. Developing new cultures and mechanisms to allow people from within and across organisations to talk to each other and share ideas.* | Leaders take responsibility, manage and hold risk. They jump to the possible, focussing on what can be done, not what can't. They provide space for the transfer of new ideas both within and outwith their organisation. Leaders have a clear development plans for existing and future workforces, to build up expertise, capacity and develop the next generation of public service leaders. They look for opportunities to collaborate and integrate with the others in their locality, private and third sectors to bring pace, energy and commitment to reform. |
| **4. Performance Improvement: continually improving** Strike a balance between evidence-based approaches and innovation (e.g. valuing local knowledge & perspectives). Report openly and transparently on | *1. Regearing measures and indicators towards outcomes-focused performance improvement and quality standards.* *2. Practising robust and honest self assessment which is strongly built on staff and community views of effectiveness.* | Leaders use evidence and information intelligently to get to grips with need and effectiveness and have a questioning and inquiring mind to challenge orthodoxy. With partners, they ensure outcomes measures and indicators are the basis for performance reporting and |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| outcomes to service users. | 3. *Prioritising the improvements likely to have biggest impact on achieving outcomes, creating mechanisms for measuring and reporting on progress and for deploying resources when improvement is slower than required.* | reviews. Leaders step in to stop things that are not working and actively share lessons. |
| **5. Person-centred outcomes**<br>Do things with, and for people, to build ownership by citizens and public service staff to improve outcomes for people and tackle inequalities. Recognise and accept that there are no shortcuts to genuinely involving others. Relationships and reciprocity are a core part of improving outcomes. | 1. *Working with people and communities to co-produce appropriate responses to best achieve outcomes. For example, by trusting and supporting community-based responses.*<br>2. *Maximising public-facing staff's time to build respectful relationships with the people and communities they serve, rather than on processes and procedures.*<br>3. *Enabling staff to use local knowledge and professional judgement to do 'the right thing'.* | Leaders start by asking what do people need and who is best placed to decide rather than who delivers the services and at what cost. They can describe a clear vision of what new services might look like to build engagement and reduce ambiguity. They persistently communicate 'outcomes'; and actively manage tensions between delivering outcomes for people and the wider community or society. They help others to determine the best type of approach, processes or delivery models to improve specific outcomes, and can confidently give an account of their decisions to secure maximum public value from investment. |
| **6. Assets-based**<br>Build up and on the assets of Scotland and its people and seek to enable autonomy and resilience. A goal of everyone working in public services is to build on strengths and unleash capacity rather than compensate for weaknesses. | | Leaders recognise and are able to respond to the fact that enabled citizens may want things provided differently. They enable people to take risks and work in new ways; challenging others to think imaginatively about how outcomes might be achieved. Leaders pick winners; focusing resource |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | and practical actions towards the 'right things to do'. They spot and create room for local innovation and professional knowledge to grow and spread. |
| **7. Values-driven** Are professional, evidence-based and impartial; operating with honesty, transparency, trust, compassion, care & courage. | | Leaders speak plainly and do what they say they will do. They are approachable, optimistic and have high aspirations. They are willing to be courageous. They hold others to account when they divert from values. |

The great potential of the third sector in delivering this agenda has been recognised by Ministers and the sector is expected to play a key role in this agenda. As evidence from Christie shows, the third sector is particularly well placed to deliver this agenda because it:

- is locally based and embedded in local communities it helps to build community capacity to facilitate community involvement and empowerment in service delivery at a local level
- uses assets based approaches such as co-production and flexible person centred approaches that facilitate individual self management and allow choice, and that are known to be particularly effective with certain client groups: those with special needs or disabilities, socially excluded groups, people with long term or mental health conditions, those with drugs and alcohol addictions, the homeless, unemployed, offenders, the unemployed and so on)
- is used to working in partnership both with other third sector organisations and public and private sectors working uses flexible person centred approaches operates from a cheaper cost basis
- helps to overcome equalities issues, as it works with the hardest to reach groups).

However the challenges and barriers that it faces include:

- Financial constraints leading to reduced quality of service
- Competitive tendering pitting third sector organisations against each other and compromising partnership working and requiring time and effort to be spent bidding for money rather than working with clients
- The pressure to demonstrate their social impact and contribution to outcomes to funders and in order to increase their success in future funding bids
- The requirement to demonstrate their impact using quantitative indicators when their impact tends to be of a more qualitative or "soft" nature.

## 2) Scottish Government support to the third sector

In light of the importance attached the third sector's role in public service reform Third Sector Unit has a number of programmes in place to support the third sector to maximise opportunities and develop the capacity and sustainability of the sector.

**The Developing Markets Programme** is being delivered by the Ready for Business consortia on behalf of Scottish Government. This aims to help public service buyers better understand what the third sector can offer and will aim to improve business opportunities for the third sector and improve sustainability in the process. The outcomes are to:

- improve the profile of third sector suppliers with the public sector buying community and thereby open markets

- strengthen understanding and application of Community Benefits in Procurement

- encourage routine use of co-production in the design of public services and development of Public-Social Partnerships

**The Just Enterprise Programme was established to** provide business support to enterprising third sector and this includes a range of activity for organisations with the greatest potential to grow and develop sustainably - that could be in terms of income, employment or contracts secured. This service offers four main themes and organisations may to register on these programmes: business support; procurement; start up and learning and development.

## *3) Community Planning Partnerships*

A key cornerstone of the prevention agenda is effective community planning delivered through Community Planning Partnerships and Single Outcome Agreements: these are key vehicles for the delivery of reform and outcomes at the local level. The Scottish Government and COSLA conducted a joint review of CPPs to consider how to improve their ability to deliver the Christie recommendations and public service reform.

The resulting "statement of ambition" sets out the intention to strengthen community planning partnerships to enable them to deliver more effectively through the following building blocks:

(i) a new statutory duty on all relevant partners to work together to improve outcomes for local communities, whether acting nationally, regionally or locally, through participation in community planning partnerships and the provision of resources to deliver SOAs;

(ii) Formal requirements of Community Planning Partnerships to ensure they operate as genuine Boards in order to facilitate more effective partnership working and planning, resourcing and delivery of local priority outcomes; and

(iii)    The establishment of a joint group at national level to provide political and strategic leadership and guidance to support effective delivery and the building of capacity at a local level

Currently, there are issues around the engagement of the third sector on CPPs and development of SOAs which in part stems from the issues around the local interface infrastructure which is not working effectively in every area.    The proposals for improving CPPs will include actions to more fully involve the third sector.    A workstream to address third sector involvement is being developed.

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## 4) Community Empowerment
Scottish Ministers are currently developing a Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill as part of strengthening communities and a public consultation on the bill is currently underway.

The Bill aims to:
- Strengthen opportunities for communities to take independent action to achieve their own goals, aspirations
- Ensure communities are better able to have a greater role in determining how their local public services are delivered

The bill is built around three themes:
- Strengthening participation (enabling effective community engagement and influence on the delivery of public services, so that services are built around and with people and communities)
- Unlocking Enterprising Community Development (to enable communities to own assets, bring unused/underused assets back into use in their area, unlocking community enterprise and increasing social capital
- Renewing our communities (enabling communities to take action on vacant or unused properties and influence how they are used)

The Bill is also seen as a possible vehicle for the proposed changes on community planning that emerged during the review.,

## 5) Change Plans

To support the transition in funding that is needed away from dealing with consequences towards early intervention approaches, Change Funds have been allocated in the areas of Older People's Services, the Early Years and Early Intervention Change Fun and Reducing Reoffending Change Fund.    This is a programme of targeted preventative spending  in which the third sector is expected to play a key role given it's specialist expertise, ability to engage with vulnerable groups and it's flexible, innovative approach.

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**Key themes/ work areas of the Local Governance and Communities Directorate:**

- Support and drive local government to deliver improved outcomes for local communities

- Work with local CPPs to improve the use of evidence for local outcomes (including evidence that comes from third sector organisations)

- Improve the capacity of Community Planning Partnerships to deliver PSR

- Enhance community engagement and empowerment to ensure the local community is properly involved so that local services are developed in line with local needs.

- Support public service delivery improvements and ensure that the programme of public service reform is coherent, comprehensive and effective

- Overcome inequalities and discrimination

- Increase understanding about reform and delivery approaches that work well (drawing on expertise from the third sector experience of delivering services).

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Annex C: **Options for the Research Forum to go virtual as a CoP**

**(Thanks to Patty Lozano Casal for her input to this Annex)**

**Option 1:  Create a CoP on the Knowledge Hub**

The Knowledge Hub is a membership networking website provided by the Local Government Association, which aims to help people to connect, share and learn from each other.   The hub is now being used by many working groups from the Scottish Government

The Knowledge Hub offers new ways of working, allowing researchers/analysts/ data providers/ data users to connect across boundaries quickly and efficiently.  It allows collaborative working to be conducted with varying degrees of openness and privacy depending on the needs of the group; access and membership can be controlled; new communities can be formed; they can be short life or long standing; they can supplement and enhance existing "face-to-face" activities.

*Membership* could be of two types:
1. *Core* - all research forum members who would form the core membership of the community of practice (limited number)
2. *Associate*- any other appropriate stakeholders that wish to share our knowledge and contribute to our debates (unlimited number)

The Knowledge Hub would provide us with a virtual space to share evidence papers, think pieces and other outputs (forum minutes, forum "newsletters") and would enable us to have ongoing interaction and discussion.  The core members would continue to meet face to face but we would use the Knowledge Hub to supplement and enhance our work and through it enable broader participation.

The pros:
- Better dissemination and sharing of knowledge and research to reach targeted audiences, maximise impact and facilitate change.
- Better networking and improved relationships amongst third sector forum members and more opportunities for interaction.
- Better alignment of research activities and priorities amongst forum members, more collaboration and less duplication.
- A way of broadening involvement in the forum beyond the core membership without unwieldy meetings.
- Increased understanding of best practice:
  - What works and what doesn't
  - How to improve communication between practitioners and those at strategic level
  - How to improve service delivery of the third sectorandultimately help Scottish communities particularly those who are excluded, disadvantaged or face multiple and complex needs.

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- Increased support for and understanding of an outcomes focussed third sector and how to demonstrate progress towards outcomes.

The cons:

- Requires input and nurturing; would need to establish a number of moderators / facilitators and have a rota to share the workload.

- Need to attract users by working on interesting and stimulating debates and themes– we could pick some hot topics to stimulate interest.

- Not everyone likes working in this way.

- Our material is tucked away and less easily accessible as it is not freely available on a public website.

- What happens when materials leak into the public domain- is this a problem?


**Option 2:  Create a CoP as an online group**

For example, Yahoo! Groups is one of the world's largest collections of online discussion boards (alternatives include Google Groups, Groupbox and Wiggio). The term Groups refers to Internet communication which is a hybrid between an electronic mailing list and a threadedInternet forum, in other words, Group messages can be read and posted by e-mail or on the Group's webpage like a web forum. In addition, members can choose whether to receive individual, daily digest or Special Delivery e-mails, or simply read Group posts on the Group's web site. Groups can be created with public or member-only access. Some Groups are simply announcement bulletin boards, to which only the Group moderators can post, while others are discussion forums. The variations of Yahoo Groups are virtually endless.

As well as providing e-mail relaying and archiving facilities for the many Groups it hosts, the Yahoo! Groups service provides additional facilities for each Group web site, such as a homepage, message archive, polls, calendar announcements, files, photos, database functions, and bookmarks.

It is not necessary to register with Yahoo! in order to participate in Yahoo Groups. The basic mailing list functionality is available to any e-mail address, but a Yahoo! ID is required to access some other features.

Each new group created at Yahoo! Groups allows the creator (group owner) to have several features attached to the group. Some of the features can be selected for "off", moderator, members, public. Here is the complete list of possible group features:

- **Group members**
  - *Messages*: Post via web or email to group. No edit function except delete.
  - *Photo album* (100GB): Organized into album/thumbnail structure.
  - *File storage* (100MB): Capable of storing any file format.
  - *Link directory*: Options for folders, text labels for each link.

- o *Poll*: Members can create multiple-choice polls, including various options for ID display.
- o *Database*: Up to ten tables, each with up to one thousand rows and up to ten columns.
- o *Member list*: Scroll of registered member profiles, and the basics of the information they provide.
- o *Calendar*: Scheduling system for clubs with regular events.
- o *Promote*: HTML box for website display (to join a group).

- **Administration** (owners or managers who can do post approval)
  - o *Invite*: to invite more members by email.
  - o *Management of members* (approve new members, delete members).
  - o *Management of messages* (approve new messages, delete messages).
  - o *Options*: Edit of the group homepage display text etc.
  - o *Post approval*: It is possible to switch to strict moderation if required.
  - o *Web tools management*: Options are off, public, members, administrators.

The pros:

- Potentially as those in Option 1.

The cons:

- As those in Option 1.
- It is less business-like than Option 1 so it could have impact on the Research Forum's reputation.

## Option 3: Create a CoP as an Internet forum or message board

AnInternet forum, or message board, is an online discussion site where people can hold conversations in the form of posted messages. Depending on the access level of a user or the forum set-up, a posted message might need to be approved by a moderator before it becomes visible.

A discussion forum is hierarchical or tree-like in structure: a forum can contain a number of sub-forums, each of which may have several topics (this could be useful for subgroups working on specific papers and within those to discuss tasks, like evidence gathering).

Within a forum's topic, each new discussion started is called a thread, and can be replied to by as many people as so wish.Depending on the forum's settings, users can be anonymous (this would not apply to our Forum) or have to register with the forum and then subsequently log in in order to post messages (this would be the preferred option). On most forums, users do not have to log in to read existing messages.

The pros:

- Online discussion boards are one of the various effective forms of communication on the Internet - People share opinions and discuss thoughts.

- It is accessed by a diverse and huge audience - enables different takes on a subject and allows gathering a more well-rounded set of information.

- It is the perfect place to send messages and ensure they reach their targeted audience (as well as getting their views).

The cons:

- It might be difficult to get started – nobody wants to post on an empty box!

- Maintenance will be time consuming – it requires a moderator.

- Privacy is an issue here so those posting comments will have to ensure that the information given is not confidential, restricted or sensitive.

Resources: www.freeforums.org; www.forumotion.com.

**Annex D:  KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION NETWORK (KTN)**

**1.    What is the role of the KTN?**

The role of the KTN is to advance our understanding of, and improve the practice of, knowledge translation and to support innovation and the use of evidence in decision making.  Therefore, the KTN will

- Be aware of evidence being produced by a wide range of working group organisations and find ways to disseminate the evidence at local and national level (e.g. through practitioners; representative organisations, etc)

- Learn from each other to gather and disseminate evidence in a way that demonstrates how the third sector contributes to different policies

- Establish connections and develop systems that allow to feed evidence from the third sector into policy development and implementation

The KTN will run parallel to the Third Sector Research Forum, convened by the Third Sector Analytical Services (Scottish Government).  It will support the Forum to disseminate evidence papers and information about events, aimed at sharing evidence and showcasing good practice.  The KTN will also work with the Forum to distil and disseminate learning about the process to co-produce and disseminate evidence papers, translating it to others who may benefit from it.

**2.    Background**

The third sector plays a key role in delivering services in Scotland, contributing to a vast number of policy areas:
- Support Early Years (e.g. Play, education, health, family relationships)
- SupportOlder People(e.g. reshaping care and palliative care)
- Collaborate with service users (e.g. self-directed support, personalised service packages and training in self-management techniques)
- Reducing re-offending (e.g. supporting affected families; providing alternatives to jail sentences; drug and alcohol problem abuse) – including young offenders
- Homelessness and unemployment
- Community development
- And more generally, the health and social care integration and prevention agendas (e.g. food and  healthy eating initiatives; active living projects)

Theco-production model to developing/ implementing policy and delivering services that the Scottish Government currently encourages provides an excellent opportunity for the third sector to share on-the-ground experience and strong ties to geographical communities.

Third sector organisations (TSOs)collect valuable data (qualitative and

quantitative)about communities and individuals, which can be used by:

- TSOs to report/ demonstrate to funders (and others) the impact they have on their beneficiaries' lives
- Funders to make better informed decisions about grant-making
- Policy makers to understand and be aware of practice based evidence and how it can be used
- TSOs, funders and policy-makers to improve services

However, some of this evidence is never shared or acted upon.  Some of the reasons for this may be:
- TSOs not having the resources, time or skills to analyse the data
- Information is formatted in a way that is not meaningful
- Information is written in a language that does not reach key audiences
- A need for TSOs to be supported to effectively combine the evidence they have collected individually in order to make a stronger case as a sector.
- Evidence is not valued or validated by recipients
- Under-developed processes at national and local levels to receive and act upon evidence produced

An example may be a TSO writing a report to funders where statements such as "58% of users attended 1-1 meetings with their assigned advisor"; whereas the information is useful to assess service user engagement, it does not provide information on the why, which is crucial to understand the impact that that particular service may have on them and improve reach/ engagement.  As a result, funders do not have the full amount of data they need to make certain decisions about funding continuity or support to be provided to the TSO they fund.  They can't see the full picture.

One of the issues the TSOs therefore face is making sure they use the evidence that they collect, not only to demonstrate social impact but also to influence policy-making decisions across different policy areas, which is particularly important for preventative initiatives.  Another issue is making sure that the evidence reaches those who have the power to make such decisions.

Evidence travels a path, which may take various routes; for example:

- *Path A*:  From the TSO that produces the evidence, to the funder who makes use of it to make decisions about support and funding needs
- *Path B*:  From the TSO that produces the evidence, to other TSO that have a remit on that specific piece of information
- *Path C*:  From the TSO that produces the evidence, to the policy area in the SG who makes use of it to develop new policy/strategy.

But not only TSOs produce evidence.  Funders do too through internal and

external evaluations of projects and initiatives. Nevertheless, even in these cases evidence may travel similar paths.

Key questions then are: 'how do we ensure that that information reaches intended (and unintended) audiences'? Also, is there a specific process that could minimise the distance/time travelled? Do others manage to do so? Who are they? Can we learn from them? This certainly isn't a one person job, but for a **network** of key people who have the use of evaluation and evidence at heart and who can bring to the table different perspectives and connections to ensure that evidence reach its destination.

## 3. KTN membership

Members should be:

- Organisations who directly produce evidence to develop, implement or influence policy, or
- Organisations who are working with organisations in order to produce evidence to develop, implement or influence policy

Current members, as at May 2012:

| Andrew Paterson | Community Health Exchange (CHEx) |
|---|---|
| Cath Logan | Big Lottery Fund (BIG) |
| Nancy Fancott | Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland (CCPS) |
| Joanna McLaughlin | The Robertson Trust (RT) |
| Mark Meiklejohn | Third Sector Unit – Scottish Government (TSU) |
| Patty Lozano-Casal | Evaluation Support Scotland (ESS) |

**Developing a Strategic Evidence Framework for the third sector:**
**A proposal for the Scottish Third Sector Research Forum**

**TS Research Forum Workshop (18 September 2012) – Patty's group**

The aim of the workshop was to allow the participants to brainstorm critical research questions / evidence gaps that must be addressed to enable the third sector to deliver Public Service Reform; in other words, answers to "what do we need to know …?"

With this in mind, those attending the meeting were divided in two groups, which were facilitated by Mark Meiklejohn (SG) and Patty Lozano-Casal.

**Group 1:** Participants included Sue Northrop (SG); Duncan Thorp (Social Enterprise Scotland); Jonathan Coburn (Social Value Lab); Sandy Watson (Scottish Enterprise); Lisa McGhee (OSCR); Kay Barclay (SG), and Patty Lozano-Casal (ESS, facilitator).

The group engaged in a 20 min discussion, in which the following issues were brought up:

- Issues around **'evidence' and its use**:
  o What is good enough evidence?
  o What kinds of evidence are valued?
  o Is there miscommunication in evidence supply/demand?
  o Understand the politics behind evidence and its use
  o When we talk about 'evidence gaps', for who are we talking?Is there a lack of understanding?
  o What are people's perceptions about evidence gaps?

- Issues around the **different sectors**:
  o Need to articulate and evidence the third sector diversity
  o Are we being too generic?  Need to spell out the specifics about different organisations
  o Need to understand the unique contributions of the different sectors and how they fit together
  o The boundaries between public sector and third sector are far too defined, could we blur them a little bit without disrespecting those boundaries?
  o What is working (or not) on the ground?  Is there learning to be transferred? – this applies to all sectors
  o What is the third sector doing well that the public sector could learn from, and vice-versa?  Encourage learning exchange!
  o Learn 'what works' by doing it – (self-)evaluation is important

- Issues around **Public Service Reform** following Christie's report:
  o The need for change has always been there, the economic climate is only highlighting it
  o Ensure that the 'Christie's message' gets to the third sector in a way that is clear and the sector gets it

o Improve understanding of how changing policy needs to be done in a context for it to be relevant and to work
o Who is the reform of services driven by? This links to the Theory of Change (i.e. evidence)
o Where is the resource for changing coming from? Is this an evidence gap?
o Should we be talking about third sector, public sector, etc or public services when it comes to driving change?
o What are public sector partners doing to drive change? (e.g. procurement)
o Increase understanding of the different models of commissioning that are coming from Government (e.g. Public Social Partnerships)
o What is helping/stopping change taking place in public services?
o Both the third sector and public sector need to do things differently – learn from each other!

- Finally, about the **Third Sector Research Forum**:

o Can the Research Forum solve any issue? Do we have the capacity to change everything or just some things?
o The Forum needs to have time/space for open and honest discussions about specific issues where members can share experiences and learn from each other – the produce something that can be shared more widely
o The Forum is very diverse in terms of membership – we cover most of the third sector and public sector (COSLA used to be more involved, it'd be good to get them on board again) – share learning

Patty Lozano-Casal
Evidence into Policy and Practice Manager, ESS
19 September 2012

**Developing a Strategic Evidence Framework for the third sector:
A proposal for the Scottish Third Sector Research Forum**


**TS Research Forum Workshop (18 September 2012) – Mark's group.**


**Group 2:** <u>Participants</u>    David Cruickshank (SG), Stephen Osbourne (Edinburgh University) Kevin McDonald (HIE)    Artur Steinrowski (SAC) Kathleen Doyle (VAS) Joanna McLaughlin (Roberstson Trust)Mark Meiklejohn (SG).

**Evidence Gaps**
The group engaged in a 20 min discussion, in which the following gaps were suggested as areas of work the forum might take forward.

- Impact of place (and communality of issues across place)
- Virtual Communities
- Co-production – what is it? What works and doesn't work?
- Personalisation
- What's the Right Infrastructure for the Third Sector?
- Evidence at a local level
- Nationally Consistent Stats Reporting.
- A simple Social Impact Model

Christies 4 main themes:

- Prevention
- Partnership
- People
- Performance


The group also asked who the evidence was for – third sector, SG, Local Authorities or all three, and if we had to look at tailored reports for different groups.

**Actions:**
The following actions were suggested.

- Establish 4 subgroups to take forward work on the four Establish Links between the Forum and the 4 PSR groups within the SG.
- An "After Christie" conference

The group noted that this was a substantial step change for the group and additional resource may be needed such as:

Non forum members co-opted onto subgroups
A paid support worker.