

Research Forum - meeting 3 2009-10

**Scottish Third Sector Research Forum
Third Quarterly Meeting - 29 January 2010, St Andrew's House, Edinburgh**

In attendance:

Geoff Pope, Third Sector Division

Sandy Watson, Scottish Enterprise

Ruchir Shah, (SCVO)

Antonia Swinson (SSEC)

Linda Boyes (ACOSVO)

Louise Meikleham (OSCR)

Alasdair Rutherford (VDS)

Fiona Robb (HIE)

Gerry Higgins (CEiS)

Eleanor Burt (St Andrews University)

Dee Fraser (ESS)

Sinead Power, Scottish Government

Tracey Houston, Third Sector Division

Apologies:

Kathy Cameron (COSLA)

Chris Higgins (HIE)

Julianne Murphy (SG)

Kay Barclay (SG)

Minutes

The minutes from 18 August were approved, subject to a minor amendment on p2. **Forum members should note that minutes from this and future meetings will be circulated to members with a two week window for comment/suggested amendments before placing on the Scottish Government website.**

Members Updates

Sinead Power (SG)

· The Opportunities and Challenges of the Changing Public Services Landscape for the Third Sector in Scotland - A longitudinal Study

This contract was awarded to Edinburgh University/Edinburgh Napier in August 2009. The study will track the opportunities and challenges that third sector organisations face in a changing public services landscape in Scotland from 2009- 2014 (including the Concordat, Single Outcome Agreements, Crerar Review, Best Value 2, the Enterprising Third Sector Action Plan and the economic downturn). A qualitative longitudinal methodology will be used and twenty organisations will be tracked, with eight of these as in-depth case studies, including a number of social enterprises and a mental health practitioner. Case-study fieldwork will begin in March 2010 with first report of findings in October 2010 and then annually in 2nd and 3rd waves in 2011 and 2012.

· Evaluating the Success Factors for Establishing a Thriving Social Enterprise

This contract was awarded to EKOS. Work began in September with the research examining 10-12 social enterprises as in depth case studies to gain an understanding of how they identify success and the factors that contribute to this; understand if success factors are different in a time of economic recession; assess if current support structures meet the needs of social enterprises; identify the factors that have enabled successful social enterprises to overcome any obstacles; and identify any additional success factors and challenges for BME social enterprises. Minor changes have been made to the methodology to ensure that BME issues were addressed as part of the study. A policy seminar to discuss the top-line findings is likely to be held in June 2010.

· Literature Review for the British Irish Council - " Third Sector approaches to bridging the distance from the employment market for people with multiple and complex needs"

In May 2008, British Irish Council (BIC) Social Inclusion Ministers agreed that officials should take forward a 2008/09 and 2009/10 work-stream on the third sector's contribution to social inclusion. A ministerial meeting is proposed for March 2010 to consider a report on the final outcomes of this work-stream.

As part of this work, a review of evidence is being taken forward on how third sector organisations engage with people who face multiple and complex needs and bridge their distance from the employment market. The Third Sector/Social Inclusion work-stream is reviewing and sharing best practice and innovation in how third sector organisations engage with and bridge the distance from the employment market for people facing multiple and complex needs. This evidence review will contribute to meeting this objective.

The aim of the project is to better understand best practice, and identify innovation, in how third sector organisations engage with and support

people facing multiple and complex needs, on their journey to employment, within a UK and EU context, over the last 5 years.

The first draft report of the evidence review for the British Irish Council had now been produced by the contractors from the University of Glasgow. A streamlined draft, with a Summary 'Research Findings' document, will be circulated in February/early March. Publication is planned for mid to late March.

· Evaluation of Scottish Government Investment and Support for the Third Sector (including the Resilience Fund)

A package of funding and business support was developed for the period 2008-2011 in order to develop organisational capacity and capability to create a more financially sustainable, enterprising and business-like third sector.

An evaluation is being undertaken by GEN to determine if this is the right approach to supporting the sector and what changes need to be made in the future.

Fieldwork will take place during March 2010. Early top line findings will be obtained in March/April 2010.

· Engagement in Community Planning Partnerships in the Third Sector

This research has been delayed due to the number of projects out to tender recently and no decision had yet been taken on how best to take this work forward. Forum Members were asked to feedback views about whether they felt that this work would be useful.

· Contribution of the Third Sector to the Government's Purpose and Five Strategic Objectives

The research was published on 19 October and is available on the Scottish Government website - [The Evidence Base for Third Sector Policy in Scotland A Review of Selected Recent Literature](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/10/16155044/0)(<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/10/16155044/0>)

· **Critique of the National Performance Indicator 18** (increase the social economy turnover) - presentation in Jan 2010

· **Mapping Rural Third Sector - PhD studentship** - 3 months from March 2010 looking at mapping rural Third Sector in Scotland

Louise Meikleham (OSCR)

A research project is underway on the resilience of Scottish charities - in relation to both the recession, and the general ability of organisations to return to form after change/challenges. It is difficult to directly associate the research to the economic climate, but the study can be viewed as a

baseline and generally takes a broader view of resilience than just the current financial situation.

The tender had been adjusted following input from Forum members and the study has focussed on the data held by OSCR. Following an open tender, Axiom Consulting (Glasgow) had won the contract. They have previously worked with the NHS and conducted risk profiling for GPs and therefore had good experience of data mining.

The study is now midway through and is examining all of OSCR's data to get an understanding of risk and success factors. This includes information previously not examined. Coding frameworks are being established for reasons for charities winding up etc. An example of one of the sub-sectors being examined in the study is a profile for ceased charities compared to active charities. An interesting early finding is the high number of very low income organisations (<£2K).

A report will be available at the end of February and the results fed back to the Forum.

· **OSCR Public and Charity Trustee Survey**

The questions and methodology have been finalised and the survey and analysis will be carried out by Scotinform. The sample size for the Charity Trustee survey will be increased from 400 to provide a larger pool for in-depth telephone follow up and the public survey will again include focus groups. A probing question is now included to help tease out the financial effect of the downturn (on a qualitative basis)

· **Other Research**

A new Policy and Development team was created within OSCR in September, led by Quentin Fisher. Lorna Edwards (currently of the Social Enterprise Academy) will take up post in March as Development Manager and will engage with the sector via umbrella bodies, support organisations and advisors. Some of OSCR's research activity will be directed to informing and providing evidence to support this sector engagement.

- Action - OSCR to arrange a presentation by Axiom for the next Forum.

Antonia Swinson (SSEC)

· **OTS Survey - "The State of Social Enterprise in the UK"**

SSEC contributed funding towards the Scottish part of the OTS survey of 1000 UK social enterprises (94 in Scotland) - 'The State of Social Enterprise in the UK'. Eighty questions were asked covering a range of issues. The results were published in November and were circulated to Forum members.

The data will be looked at more closely by consultants before drawing firm conclusions or comparisons with the rest of the UK, but in the meantime Forum members' views were welcomed.

It was noted that in terms of training and employment service provision a lower percentage operated in Scotland than in the UK (10% vs 18%) whilst the converse was true in the retail sector (21% vs 12%).

Further Scottish info would be useful to maximise the usefulness of the data e.g. - in relation to Question 2 - geographical area that organisations operate in. **Action - SSEC to ascertain ownership of data and price the cost of additional data.**

· **Ipsos MORI Survey - "Attitudes to Social Enterprise"**

The MORI 'Attitudes to Social Enterprise' survey was conducted in August, interviewing a representative sample of 1000 members of the general public in Scotland. SSEC had bought two key questions around (1) knowledge of social enterprises and (2) perceptions of social enterprises.

The results showed that people in Scotland have limited knowledge of social enterprises, but awareness is much higher than in the UK, with awareness generally higher among women than men. Among those with knowledge of social enterprises perceptions are very positive - in particular 67% agreed that social enterprises should have a role in the delivery of public services. Rural knowledge appeared to be greater (also confirmed in the State of the UK results (75% vs 70%)). Further research will be done around this. Follow up work will be carried out in March, then again in the autumn.

· **SSEC Members Survey**

SSEC had a 48% return on their member's survey relating to organisational and trading conditions. A number of questions were posed: - Finance - how much has changed? What Government action could help? What action has the organisation taken as a result of the recession? The results will be circulated to the Forum once they have been explored further.

· **Other work**

SSEC plans to map turnover, sector and size of members. Technical help will be required for datamatching.

Glasgow Caledonian University and Age Concern Scotland are discussing with SSEC the role of social enterprise in providing jobs for older people. This might link with the O4O study underway at the University of Highlands and Islands.

Points raised

- It would be helpful to draw out BME attitudes from the surveys.
- The results which seem at odds with perceptions - and the retail and training and employment figures are surprising. It may be that, if definitions are looked at more closely, the relative percentages would be reversed. Likewise for the urban /rural picture - a better sense of scale and jobs might be given if looked at more closely.

- Timings of the study might have an impact, but there is little point in paying to explore out of date data further, but it may be worthwhile to examine key questions.
- Small sample size may also have affected the result.
- It would be useful to compare the results from the time of entering the recession with a year from now.
- It was suggested that SSEC check with OTS who owned the survey database so that they could assess whether they would have to pay the original contractors to do additional analysis of the Scottish data or whether they could do the analysis themselves.
- It was agreed that the next Forum should include a lengthy dedicated session to focus on data capture. Data needs to be aggregated and gaps identified and a mapping exercise such as this would help to establish priorities. This would tie in with the work that is being conducted by the Scottish Government around National Indicator 18.
- As volunteers play a vital part in the success of an organisation, it would be useful to draw out more information from Question 17 in the OTS survey. OSCR also have a strong interest in volunteers as part of their integrated reporting and have found count/assessing volunteers to be very difficult. The way that a question is framed often impacts on the answer - e.g. trustees/boards are often volunteers, but may not be considered as such by those responding to the survey. This may need to be addressed by means other than a questionnaire as the definitions used are often misleading or used interchangeably. OSCR surveys could be useful in offering flexible timings and the content could be altered. **Action - OSCR, SCVO and VDS agreed to consider the issue further.**

Fiona Robb (HIE)

HIE are developing an in-house model for measuring social value that links with their electronic management system. Indicators are linked with national outcomes. Data may be collected to include some back tracked information and will provide two years information by next year. HIE's social impact measurement model includes a range of different sectors including key service delivery, arts and culture, environment, place and assets. Output indicators will be mapped to National Outcomes (particularly numbers 10 and 11). HIE will then decide whether to use social audit or SROI, perhaps just doing a concentrated evaluation on NI's 10 and 11. HIE will provide a number of events for organisations to showcase the range of measurement models that are available.

HIE are working with the University of the Highlands and Island Millennium Institute (UHIMI) around the impact of the recession on the community of Helmsdale (fragile and remote). The report is due next week. **Action - HIE to circulate to Forum members**

HIE has commissioned Senscot to provide a report on whether Service Level Agreements are a recognised legal form and, if so, what are the legal and

accountancy implications for both funders and funded? There are differing views on whether they are considered to be income or grants and confusion has arisen as a result.

Case studies have been undertaken to evaluate HIE's account management role with social enterprises to look at how this is working and to raise awareness of HIE's role with the public.

Plans for next year include evaluating the impact of HIE's wider intervention in the cultural sector and evaluating the impact of services provided via HISEZ.

HIE will also be looking at wellbeing in rural communities and are currently in discussion with a number of account managers in order to identify suitable areas.

Alasdair Rutherford (VDS)

Volunteer Development Scotland's work is organised into five programmes: Health & Wellbeing; Sport, Arts & Culture; Connecting with Communities, Environment; and Employability, Education & Learning

VDS are currently conducting research into employability and volunteering, in particular looking at the accreditation of informal learning through volunteering.

VDS is particularly concerned about the availability of volunteering data at the local level. Data is needed on volunteering at the local level relating to the Interfaces and CPPs. Some data is available but quality is variable and regional comparisons are difficult. National statistics on volunteering come from the Scottish Household Survey, but this only asks the volunteering question to half of all respondents. VDS responded to the recent SHS consultation asking that this should be increased to the whole sample in order to generate robust regional data on volunteering.

Points raised

- Voluntary issues are becoming increasingly important with strong interest from the Cabinet Secretary. Next year will be the 'European Year of Voluntary Activities' and the Scottish Government is currently working up plans.

Sandy Watson (Scottish Enterprise)

Gail Rogers of Scottish Enterprise has agreed to attend the next Forum to present an overview of Scottish Enterprise's research. In the meantime, a short paper was circulated to members summarising Scottish Enterprise's approach to research, which has an industrial business focus and looks at key sectors. A copy is attached.

Research is accessible via - the Economic Research page of SE.com at - http://www.scottish-enterprise.com/sedotcom_home/about-us/research-publications/economicresearch.htm, or if it is relevant to labour market

issues a copy will be sent to ResearchOnline at <http://www.researchonline.org.uk/fskills/index.do>. 74 industry evaluations (some sector specific) are available via ResearchOnline. A lot of valuable information is available and we need to carefully consider how we might make best use of this. More research is available internally and Gail can advise how this might be accessed.

Discussion

A meeting has been arranged between SSEC and Scottish Enterprise to discuss support for the Food and Drink sector in Scotland. Food and Drink is a key sector for Scottish Enterprise in the Government's Economic Strategy. The growing number of food and drink social enterprises could contribute to this directly or through the supply chain and should be aware of the work that Scottish Enterprise is doing.

In providing support for growing businesses, Scottish Enterprise's role complements the Business Gateway at the higher end of the growth spectrum. The social enterprise sector could be more aware of Scottish Enterprise's support services. **Action - SW to do a short presentation at a future meeting**

Points raised

- Scale is important as social enterprises only come into the public eye when they grow to a certain size.
- Increased knowledge of community benefit clauses is needed.
- Mergers, acquisitions and partnerships need to be formed/encouraged. This is accepted in the private sector, but less so in the third sector.
- High profile organisations like Jamie Oliver's '15' are needed. CEiS are currently in discussion with the SG to consider how best to achieve scale and impact
- Significant work is needed on how the third sector works with the private sector
 - o SG held a workshop on this last year
 - o Huge opportunities if the third sector & private sector understand each other better
 - o Research would be very useful in helping the third sector put forward their case
- A reception by SSEC, "A Celebration of Social Enterprise and Food", will be held at the Scottish Parliament, 6-8pm on 25 May. Speakers include - Christine Grahame, MSP and Antonia Swinson, Chief Executive of SSEC

Ruchir Shah (SCVO)

SCVO are refreshing the financial and workforce profile of voluntary organisations. Longitudinal data has been gathered over a 15 year period. Three temporary members of staff have been recruited to analyse this, looking at - 700 annual accounts, breakdown of grants, tracking income, public sector, investment income. This will be done every 2-3 years. Baseline information will be presented at the gathering on 19 February. A more detailed breakdown will be available by summer and this will feed into the next Forum discussion.

A short piece of health research has been commissioned which will include an examination of the alternatives that third sector organisations can provide in relation to public sector. This work will have links with the Scottish Government's "The Evidence Base for Third Sector Policy in Scotland - A Review of Selected Recent Literature.

At the Gathering on the evening of 18th February there will be 35 places available at a seminar on research resources for the third sector. **Action - Ruchir to circulate details to Forum members.**

Points raised

- SSEC highlighted that Tayside have taken account of CBCs in their healthcare work
- CEiS highlighted an Autism Research Venture. Often those with autism have a heightened attention to detail and can be very successful at work requiring high levels of accuracy. Work undertaken in Denmark has helped to flip such a 'disability' to become an advantage. It is planned that that partners will be engaged in the spring and systems testing will be carried out in several areas. Research will help to provide intelligence as to where highly valuable contributions can be made by the third sector - with the aim of establishing a sustainable enterprise. It would be useful to identify which universities/partners might be interested in this work which is likely to be high profile. Panorama are interested in making a film which will involve tracking individuals 6 months prior to taking up this opportunity then throughout the study, with the aim of identifying the competitive advantage of employing individuals with autism. It is possible that the Third Sector Research Centre may be interested in this work. **Action - Sinead Power offered to advise re specifying the needs of the study.**

It was suggested that the next Research Forum should take the form of a workshop to include:

- A two hour workshop to consider the current research information available. **Action - Sinead Power agreed that her team would aim to collate as much information as possible for presentation to the next Forum. Forum members were invited to forward relevant material to Kay Barclay and Julieanne Murphy.**
- A 30 minute slot for Gail Rogers of Scottish Enterprise (20 minute presentation with questions)
- A representative from the TSRC could perhaps be invited

AOCB

· **Research proposal from Social Firms Scotland, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde and University of Glasgow - How do Social Firms Contribute to Recovery from Mental Illness? A Qualitative Study**

The following general comments and suggestions were made by Forum members -

- As much of the information available at present is anecdotal, it would be very useful to have Scottish data to explore our unique circumstances
- A knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) might prove useful
- It might be helpful to have a more neutral title to the proposal e.g. "What is the viability of SFS in delivering"

In addition, Eleanor Burt suggested that this research could potentially be very valuable and offered to provide SFS with much more detailed constructive advice that may help in the development of a proposal to the ESRC. **Action - Tracey Houston to advise SFS of outcome of discussion and provide contact for SFS to Eleanor Burt.**

· It was unanimously agreed that membership of the Forum is offered to Jackie Killen on the understanding that she will represent the interests of the Funders Forum. **Action - Tracey Houston to advise Jackie Killen of the outcome.**

· **Action - Forum members were invited to consider any other possible gaps in Forum membership and to advise Geoff Pope by end of February. An e-mail vote could then be conducted if necessary.**

· **Action - Dee Fraser agreed to feed back to Forum members on the Young Foundation event that she will attend on 9 February at the Big Lottery.** It was noted that the Young Foundation event coincides with Enterprise Scotland Day

· Guidance on annual accounts would be helpful particularly as the 'Joint Statement on the Relationship at Local Level between Government and the Third Sector' refers to clarity in relation to grant and contract funding. Greater standardisation is needed in relation to sources of funding particularly as Service Level Agreements are sometimes not viewed as contracts). **Action - SCVO were asked to discuss the matter with Graeme McKechnie of the Scottish Government.**

· The next SSEC S2S Trade Fair will be held on 21 April at the Edinburgh Corn Exchange

Date of Next Meeting

· **The next meeting of the Scottish Third Sector Research Forum will be held on 11 May from 10.30 - 3.30pm. Please note that this will be in Thistle House, Haymarket, Edinburgh (directions will be circulated with the agenda nearer the time).**

