Scottish Third Sector Research Forum meeting

Wednesday 13th March 2019: 10.30am – 1pm

The ALLIANCE, 349 Bath Street, Glasgow G2 4AA

Minutes

In attendance:
Steven Marwick (ESS) (Chair), Louise Bowen (ESS), Jane Marryat (ESS) (Minutes), Kerry Musselbrook (Iriss), Rebecca McGregor (Inclusion Scotland), Jane Cullingworth (Voluntary Sector Studies Network), Cathy Bulley (Queen Margaret University), Kiren Zubairi (VHS), Dinah Aitken (Salvesen Mindroom Centre), Lucy Mulvagh (The ALLIANCE), Amy Calder (YouthLink Scotland), Allison Matthews (Big Lottery Fund), Mark Meiklejohn (SG), Louise Meikleham (OSCR)

Apologies:
Mathew Linning (VS), Gemma Jackson (VS), Stephen Osborne, (University of Edinburgh), Alasdair Rutherford (University of Stirling), Stuart Cable (University of Dundee), Fiona McHardy (Poverty Alliance), Andy Dey (ACOSVO), Jacqueline Rae (SG), Josie Isles (Inclusion Scotland), Karen McArdle (University of Aberdeen), Ilse MacKinnon (SCVO), Cassy Rutherford (TRT), Duncan Thorp (SES), Darah Zahran (Scottish Enterprise)

Welcome and introductions

1. Steven welcomed all to the meeting, particularly to new attendees Dr Cathy Bulley representing Queen Margaret University and Amy Calder representing YouthLink Scotland. Susan Hunter, YouthLink Scotland sent best wishes to forum members. She is moving on to be CO of Youth Borders.

Minutes and matters arising

2. No changes were required to minute of previous meeting (6th December 2018). The Minute was approved.

Action: Jane M to upload onto TSRF webpages

3. Update on actions:
   Steven M. (item 3) National Performance Framework – there is likely to be a strategic event in June about what the NPF means for the third sector and how does it impact on our work. NPF is much more grounded in third sector; there are direct links to the volunteer outcomes framework.

Action: Steven will keep the meeting updated about the event.

4. Jane M. (item 12) Jane presented a paper which outlined an analysis of the TSRF mailing list. There are 251 names on the list as of 6th March 2019. These can be categorised by email address into:

- Academics **23**
- Independent funders **12**
- TSOs **150**
- Public sector **32**
- Other **34**

The key message is that we should try to boost the number of academics on the mailing list.

It was pointed out that Iriss is a third sector organisation.

Action: Jane to add Forum members to mailing list if not already on list.

5. Louise B. (item 23) to arrange a talk about ethics of research about vulnerable people. This will be discussed at another time.

Conference planning

6. The next conference will be on Wednesday 9th October. Steven introduced this item with some background of previous Let's collaborate events and handed over to Louise who presented the circulated paper.

7. Louise had pulled together the paper from discussions at last TSRF meeting and had written some conference outcomes. The meeting divided into 3 groups to discuss outcomes, content, call for papers, keynote speakers, topics for roundtable and matchmaking themes.

8. Feedback from groups:
Group 1: thought that the conference should
- o Unpack the definition of impact – what does it mean from TS, academic and policy makers perspectives
- o Explore how we ensure that people are involved in impact
- o Key note speaker perhaps could be a panel about different types of engagement.

Group 2:
- o Had broad support for outcomes
- o Need to understand the tensions and solutions about not making a difference to policy, not people
- o Address different people i.e. how research impacts on 'me'
- o Matchmaking – this shouldn't be too engineered and could be organised to meet different people at different times

Group 3:
- o Atmosphere: keep it supportive and inclusive as in previous years - no question too silly to ask.
- o Content with the outcomes but be clear about what certain words mean/ Plain English (e.g. knowledge mobilisation)
- o Ensure a good range of examples
- o Follow up on research from previous years- ask people back to talk about longer term impacts
- o Email previous participants at conference to ask what happened next.
- o 'Unsuccessful;' stories need to be told

- o Encourage co-presented papers/panels that will include range of voices
- o Accessible/inclusive
- o Key note speaker:
  DRILL: Sally Witcher
  Father's Network Scotland/ Gary Clapton U of Edinburgh
  Bournemouth University: Mel Hughes- collaborative research
- o Roundtable:
  GCPH – dissemination/communicating impact infographics
  Chris Kilkenny- childhood experiences – speaking up for others
  Edinburgh Poverty Commission
  JRF/Carnegie/ Poverty Alliance

9. Louise asked for volunteers to be part of a conference subgroup to act as a reference group to help with call for papers and selection process. Lucy, Kerry and Kiren volunteered (and Amy by email after the meeting).

Action: Louise B. will use the feedback to develop a programme with the planning subgroup which will ensure a range of voices and experiences are represented at the conference.

'Find an academic' signposting web page
10. Louise talked to her paper about the content for a new webpage about finding an academic partner for collaborative research. The paper is a product of previous discussions where it was agreed that TSRF can't be a matchmaking service but is able to make suggestions about how to go about finding an academic to work with.

11. Louise clarified that TSOs could have a SSSGS internship.

12. The Forum agreed that this was an extremely useful piece of work.

Actions: Louise B. to upload page to website.
　　　　　　To review content annually.
　　　　　　Add caveat – if you know of anything that should be included else please let us know- however there is a maximum content restriction.
To produce a few publicity tweets for TSRF members to tweet through their networks.

Subgroups

13. The meeting broke into 2 subgroups: 'Funding for research' and 'Conference planning and participatory research'

Funding for research - Jane M, Dinah, Louise M., Steven.
- o Jane talked through the resource to date
- o It was suggested to add a section about research and innovation services in universities and a short description about how universities are organised. Include role of research officers – and spin out companies that make links to industry and business support.
- o Key messages to TSO:

   i. Be brave – ask for funding
   ii. TSOs give access to people researchers want to reach
   iii. Ask about time commitment needed.
   iv. Encourage dialogue - tell academics what would make it easier for TSOs to use research i.e. We'd be able to use research if…..
   v. Think of different ways to get academic input
   vi. Remember academics work in a richer environment – their day rate is expensive. As a TSO you may have to moderate your expectations.
   vii. It's not a world that TSOs are used to operating in.
- It was decided to have the resource ready to be launched at the TSRF conference
- Soft launch on stand at conference along with promoting other TSRF (and KTN) publications
- Stand to be staffed at breaktimes by TSRF members – Jane, Louise M, Dinah and others.

Action: Jane revise document and send to Louise and Dinah for comment

14. Participatory research subgroup broke into two smaller groups of 5 people:

Group 1**:** Louise B., Lucy M., Amy C., Kiren Z. Allison M.

What resource should the TSRF offer on participatory research?

- Overarching messages- legitimising participatory research
- Accessible infographic supported by signpost to relevant resources about methodology/ examples etc.

Message - Participatory research can be credible and robust

- it can redress balance of power of traditional 'researcher/researched
- if it's action research then it can have a wider/ immediate benefit for the community it is based in - community identifies problem then identifies solutions. More likely to have sustainable outcomes and changes as a result
- can increase skills and knowledge of participants
- peer research can produce deeper insight and analysis of a particular topic
- it provides access to expertise and knowledge grounded in experience.

Group 2 Mark M., Jane C. Cathy B., Kerry M.

Could there be a workshop at the conference on this? Test out a draft of the infographic at the conference?

Signposting to other resources:

- Iriss co-production toolkit
- Inclusion Scotland

Key messages- will be different for different stakeholders? E.g. messages to funders- how PR is different – what it offers

- Highlight and define what the collaborative element is - for different stakeholders
- Purpose of TSRF producing the infographic: to grow new research collaborations?
- Acknowledge different drivers/ agendas/ restrictions
- Can we find a common language? Style of communication is very important
- What should participants expect when outcomes and outputs are not all predetermined?
- Where are the boundaries and the challenges?
- Trustworthiness- validity- credibility
- Implications for ethics: what does this mean for consent- if it's an evolving process/ type of research activity
- Things to consider: involvement of all groups; ownership; strengths based approach; dialogue; this approach can be a direct route to impact
- What are the differences between participatory research and co-production? What does it look like at delivery level?

Guest speaker

15. Kiren Zubairi from Voluntary Health Scotland presented the findings from her research [The Zubairi Report, lived experience of loneliness and social isolation in Scotland](#)

Last year Kiren Zubairi conducted social research with a group of 57 people through 5 focus groups and 6 interviews and learned about – what loneliness and social isolation is, how it affects people, what causes it and what can be done at an individual, societal and governmental level to tackle it. The focus of the research was to hear from under-represented demographics:
- BME women,
- people living in socio-economically deprived areas,
- people living and working in rural areas
- paid and unpaid carers of people receiving palliative care.

All of whom have been less visible and less heard in the debate on loneliness and social isolation thus far. Based on what people told me I was able to derive a number of key findings:-

- Loneliness and social isolation is a Public Health issue affecting all population groups impacting on their quality of life, resulting in a range of poor often life limiting physical health conditions and driving down people's mental health and wellbeing.

- Places and spaces are central to tackling loneliness and social isolation. Places, spaces and the links between them that are well informed by those that will use them, well-designed, maintained and resourced are key to nurturing quality relationships and developing a sense of belonging and purpose.

- Understanding the nature and importance of compassion not only in our roles in health and care but in all services provided to the public regardless of the sector delivering them, is key to ensuring people feel they are understood, respected and that they matter.

- Loneliness and social isolation cut across a range of multidisciplinary and cross-portfolio policies and legislation.

The Scottish Government's strategy A Connected Scotland chimes well with the findings of the research and that there are clear and measurable actions across a range of portfolios that can help to tackle loneliness and social isolation. More widely, it is encouraging that there is a real collaborative movement to help foster a more connected society.

16. Congratulations were conveyed to Kiren from forum members who commented on the quality of the report and how useful it will be to the sector. Cathy will tell her students about the report and Lucy said having a rights-based approach will be useful to ALLIANCE members.

17. The meeting drew attention to the section 'third sector as an enabler' on page 39 – third sector services seen as trusted, accessible to communities because they are not seen as hierarchical and are often a conduit to other services.

Action: Jane to promote report in TSRF newsletter

Action: Louise B. to ensure that report is showcased at TSRF conference

Research updates

18. **The Salvesen Mindroom Centre** - Dinah
    SMC Research Centre for Learning Difficulties has appointed Dr Sue Fletcher-Watson as [Director]

19. **The ALLIANCE** – Lucy
   The ALLIANCE has launched its self-directed support research about people's experiences of self-directed support. This is a mixed method, peer research. A paper and online survey will be launched next week (beginning of April) and available for 3 weeks. There will be 10 interviews conducted in 7 local authority areas and focus groups for BME, LGBT, women, and rural/remote areas participants. The research findings will be reported on 20th May.

Action: Lucy to tell Louise B. link details when available and all to publicise survey.

20. **YouthLink Scotland** – Amy
   Since the report on Universal Youth Work was launched local authorities have been in touch with YouthLink Scotland to do some small-scale research in their areas.

   YouthLink Scotland is promoting youth workers perspective on Brexit.

Action: Amy to send wording for TSRF newsletter and link to above item

21. **The National Lottery Community Fund** – Allison
   NLCF is consulting stakeholders about their 2020 awards programme

22. **Scottish Charity Regulator** – Louise M.
   a. SCIO research still ongoing with Alastair Rutherford (University of Stirling)
   b. Still working on Data visualisation to interpret results from online survey – at present its very chart heavy.
   c. ACOSVO annual survey of Third sector Chief Officers results were very positive about Scottish Charity Regulator.

23. **Iriss** – Kerry
   a. [Making evidence meaningful event] will be on 18th March involving Inclusion Scotland, NHS Scotland, Scottish Recovery Network.
   b. They are adding 'how to get started' to their [co-production toolkit]
   c. More [Insights] have been published: rural social work, sex offenders, social pedagogy.

Action: Kerry to update on forum on when toolkit has been updated

24. **Inclusion Scotland** – Rebecca
   DRILL Services for who? Changing attitudes of services designers and deliverers which underpin discrimination experienced by disabled people with other protected characteristics.

Action: Louise B. to ensure that DRILL is showcased at TSRF conference

25. **VSSN** – Jane
   Has 2 events coming up:
   a. 23rd May day seminar in Sheffield - <u>Small groups, big issues?
      Researching local, community-based, and 'below the radar'
      organisations and action</u> Call of papers out now deadline: April 1st

   b. [Voluntary Sector and Volunteering Research Conference](#) run by NCVO
      & VSSN is on September 10th – 11th in Birmingham Call for papers is
      out until March 13th.

Action: Jane M. to publicise events in newsletter

26. **What Works Scotland** - Jane
   a. Has officially wound up. Policy Scotland at Glasgow University will be
      doing legacy work and website management.
   b. [Research by Oliver Escobar and Jane Cullingworth](#) about mechanisms
      for TSOs to participate through third sector interfaces will be published
      in the next few weeks

27. **Queen Margaret University -** Cathy

   a. The Life Changes Trust project developing a School of Leadership and
      Policy and Practice Forum. 5-year project and a collaboration between
      QMU, UoE and Age Scotland with approx. 18 other 3rd sector partners
      at this stage – but more will come on board also as the project
      progresses. The project kicks off in April.

   b. QMU partnering with Dementia-friendly East Lothian on the
      development of 'Meeting Centres' in communities across East Lothian.

   c. We are finishing off a project on real time older peoples care
      experience feedback with Randolph Hill.

   d. Project with VIARAMA (Virtual reality) a Social Enterprise and St
      Columba's Hospice to offer VR to people at end of life.

   e. Dementia Working group reset up a mix of QMu Alz Scotland local
      community organisations.

   f. Projects with The Cyrinians – short listed as partnership of the year
      with Nursing Times Annual Awards 2019.

28. **Voluntary Health Scotland** – Kiren
   VHS has been asked to join the University of Edinburgh Accelerator
   Impact advisory group

29. **ESS** – Steven is on the Research and Evidence working group for Public
   Health Reform. They have discussed third sector evidence and how to
   make PH agency effective in engaging with TS evidence. Steven will
   continue to engage in this way.

30. **AOCB**
   None

31. **Steven** thanked Lucy and the ALLIANCE for organising today's venue and providing lunch and thanked members for attending the meeting.

32. The next meeting will be on **Tuesday 4th June 2019 1pm lunch for 1.30 – 4pm meeting at the Volunteer Scotland office in Stirling.**