



# **Third Sector Interfaces Support and Development Programme**

April 2011 – March 2012

## About Voluntary *Action* Scotland

### **Vision:**

Our vision is of a sustainable and high impact third sector delivering high quality services for the communities and people of Scotland.

### **Mission:**

Our mission is to develop, represent and support local infrastructure bodies and their members to ensure that, together, we can effectively influence policy and service planning at national, regional and local level and ensure our sector is recognised as key contributors to the delivery of high quality services.

VAS is the support and representative body for Third Sector Interfaces in Scotland. It is a Membership organisation comprising representatives from local Interfaces in each local authority area in Scotland. It aims to develop and deliver programmes of support by, for and with its membership

It works to the following key principles

- to limit its own direct costs, to ensure that the maximum funding possible is deployed to fund direct support services to the benefit of its members;
- to undertake a small number of key functions centrally (e.g. consultation, research, communications) on behalf of the TSI network, to provide a consistent, unified, collective voice and profile for TSIs;
- to utilise SG funding to access - effectively and proportionately - services which support TSIs to improve delivery of all 4 of the functions which Interfaces are charged to deliver;
- to seek best value through effective targeting, and where possible through collaborative action, to maximise the impact of the resources deployed;
- to draw primarily and directly on the extensive current skills, knowledge and expertise which already exists within the Interface world, with a major focus on promoting peer support and peer learning initiatives, and seeking collective action and shared approaches to delivery of support services, to promote their longer-term sustainability;
- to seek to work in partnership with other third sector agencies ;
- to build on, utilise and seek synergies with, those products developed through SVA which are recognised as being of particular relevance and value to Interfaces;
- to performance monitor and review programme delivery in 2011/12, to ensure its relevance, ability to meet objectives, quality standards and value for money.

## About Third Sector Interfaces

Third sector interfaces are being established in each local authority area in Scotland, providing local intermediary support services for the third sector. The core services are those which were traditionally delivered by the network of CsVS (Councils for Voluntary Service) and VC (Volunteer Centre) network.

The key criteria for third sector interfaces, as defined by the Scottish Government are:

- Support to voluntary organisations operating in the area, both local and those national organisations that deliver services at the local level;
- Support and development of social enterprise;
- Support to and promotion of volunteering;
- Connect between the CPP (Community Planning Partnership) and the third sector.

At the time of writing, 31 out of 32 Scotland's local authority areas have a Scottish Government recognised third sector interface structure in place.

## Scottish Government Outcomes

Through supporting and developing the network of Interfaces, which in turn enables a thriving third sector in each local authority area, VAS contributes to key Scottish Government objectives and strategies.

For example, but not exclusively;

- Reshaping older peoples care – Change Fund
- The Enterprising Third Sector Action Plan
- The Community Empowerment Action Plan
- The three key inequalities strategies; Equally Well; Achieving our Potential and the Early Years Strategy

Through supporting a strong third sector, and thriving volunteering, and in enabling that sector to work better with public sector community planning partners VAS contributes to all of the 13 national outcomes in the 2007-11 Scottish Government Performance Framework.

## VAS Outcomes

Through Scottish Government support funding to VAS the following outcomes should be achieved:

1. A complete network of 32 Local Interface arrangements will be in place and will be members of VAS
2. Interfaces will be better informed and supported to be able to deliver on the four key functions in their local authority area
  - Supporting and developing a strong Third Sector
  - Volunteering development
  - Social Enterprise development
  - Building the Third Sector relationship with Community Planning
3. The Scottish Government will be supported to build strong and resilient communities by receiving timely, relevant and strategic intelligence from VAS on issues and trends facing local third sector organisations and communities
4. VAS will have in place good governance and internal procedures to enable proper representation of Interfaces

## Network Support Needs

During the course of 09/10 VAS has carried out an intensive programme of consultation and needs analysis with Interfaces on their support requirements following the change over from existing support from SCVO and VDS. This has been previously reported to Government in the report 'Delivering More for Scotland' at Appendix I.

The key support requirements rated as most important, in order, were identified as:

1. National representation
2. Policy Briefings
3. E-bulletins
4. National conference
5. Quality management/EFQM
6. Regional CEO/Managers' meetings
7. Common/impact toolkits
8. Management system/database system/IT support

The work programme for VAS support is based on these requirements. It recognises that some elements have been already resourced through the Big Lottery /SCVO SVA programme, namely Toolkits; EFQM and Data Management systems (Vbay and MILO). In these instances the VAS role is as part of the SVA Management Group and MILO development team ensuring fit for purpose services.

Other than MILO, most products from the SVA programme are due to finish in September 2011. VAS will work with SCVO and Interfaces to seek to develop sustainability of those aspects of programme which have continuing and high value.

VAS work plan focuses on those services not available elsewhere - and on meeting Government requirements on developing a strategic partnership with Interfaces.

## VAS Support and Development Programme for Third Sector Interfaces 2011/12

### Outcome 1: A complete network of 32 Local Interface arrangements will be in place and will be members of VAS

Output	Key tasks	Performance Indicators	Milestones/Timeline
<b>Development Support to Interfaces</b>	<p>Through discussion with Scottish Government identify interfaces, and constituent bodies, still in a developmental phase and offer peer support and one to one advice and guidance</p> <p>Respond to specific requests for advice and practical assistance from Interfaces</p> <p>Facilitate mediation when necessary</p>	Interfaces demonstrate ability to complete positive 6-month report as required by the Scottish Government	32 functioning interfaces by October 2011
<b>Change constitution of VAS to move towards full and equitable membership reflecting the development and adoption of Interface status across Scotland</b>	Consultation with current membership	Majority of membership agree changes	<p>By VAS AGM November 2011</p> <p>32 interfaces signed up as VAS members by VAS AGM November 2011</p>
<b>Reporting and monitoring framework</b>	Establish working group to develop and propose a framework for reporting Interface activities to Scottish Government and local Community Planning Partners	A fit for purpose reporting framework adopted by Interfaces	Interfaces submitted 6-month returns to Government by October 2011 using the proposed framework

## Outcome 2: Interfaces will be better informed and supported to be able to deliver on the four key functions in their local authority area

Output	Key tasks	Performance Indicators	Milestones/Timeline
<b>Communication mechanisms for effective dissemination of relevant information to Interfaces</b>	Develop Communications Strategy and deliver Communications Plan 2011/12	Communication measures implemented according to Plan	VAS Board adopted the Strategy by June 2011
	Develop and update VAS website	Websites running and updated regularly	Functioning websites by July 2011
	Build dedicated websites to promote and support the delivery of MV and Saltire Awards	Interfaces actively participated in these meetings	Meeting dates fixed by May 2011
	Distribute bi-weekly e-bulletins	Workers are well informed of MV/Saltire development	Certificates and promotional materials ready by June 2011
	Produce VAS annual review	VAS members found e-bulletins relevant and useful	First e-bulletin circulated by June 2011
	Facilitate 4 Interface network meetings	Annual Review published and disseminated to target audience	Annual Review produced by September 2011
	Prepare policy briefings relating to the four key functions	Accurate information are communicated in a timely manner	Customer satisfaction survey completed by November 2011
	Respond to Interfaces' requests for information, assistance and advice in a timely manner	Interfaces are sufficiently informed to deliver on the four key functions	
	Generate Press releases to communicate VAS's position on a range of third sector issues	Positive feedback from Interfaces	

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<p><b>Peer support and learning opportunities</b></p>	<p>Establish, develop and convene 4 thematic Practitioners' Forums</p> <p>Moderate professional discussions using social networking tools such as LinkedIn</p> <p>Deliver a 2-day national conference for the Interface network to discuss common issues, share good practice and plan for the future</p> <p>Identify and commission joint training for Interfaces to develop and improve on competencies required to fulfil TSI role</p>	<p>Interfaces participated in one or more Forums</p> <p>Majority of Interfaces signed up discussion group</p> <p>Interfaces attended the national conference</p> <p>Training needs identified and met</p> <p>Positive learners' evaluation</p>	<p>2 Practitioners' Forums established by August 2011</p> <p>LinkedIn discussion group set up by August 2011</p> <p>All interfaces attended the national conference of October/November 2011</p>
<p><b>Knowledge/skills exchange platform</b></p>	<p>Broker skills consultancy opportunities amongst Interfaces to allow access to practical support services and resources necessary for the implementation of local delivery framework</p> <p>Each Interface is allocated a notional sum of money to purchase support, development or consultancy services from within the Interface network. For example, facilitation of a Board/Staff Development day; delivery of staff training; using social networking; developing your Volunteering programme; understanding charity law etc.</p>	<p>A large range of skills registered at VAS</p> <p>Organisations repeatedly use the exchange</p> <p>Positive feedback from organisations using the service</p> <p>Positive feedback from organisations delivering the service</p>	<p>System in place for skills registration by September 2011</p> <p>20 Interfaces used this service by March 2012</p>

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<b>TSIs standards and values</b>	<p>Lead the development of TSI specific standards and values aligned to EFQM and PQASSO</p> <p>Support Interfaces to demonstrate good practice by working to the agreed standards and values</p> <p>Support Interfaces in pursuing “Committed to Excellence” of EFQM through training and mentoring</p>	<p>Interfaces adopted TSI standards and values</p> <p>Interfaces achieved “Committed to Excellence” recognition</p>	<p>Standards and Values developed by July 2011</p> <p>The network adopted the Standards and Values by November 2011</p> <p>20 Interfaces achieved “Committed to Excellence” by March 2012</p>
<b>Common strategies for TSIs</b>	<p>Develop common strategies and policies for Interfaces to adopt, these might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning/WFD strategy</li> <li>• ICT Strategy</li> <li>• Community Engagement</li> </ul>	<p>Strategies and policies adopted and implemented by Interfaces</p> <p>New strategies and policies identified by the Interfaces network to be developed by VAS</p>	<p>3 strategies developed by October 2011</p> <p>The network adopted the strategies by December 2011</p>
<b>Financial support to TSIs joint development</b>	<p>Commission professional agencies (e.g. legal advice) in response to specific or common TSI requirements</p>	<p>Interfaces, through VAS, gained professional legal and HR advice to be able to deliver the four functions to required standards</p>	<p>Professional agencies identified by May 2011</p>

### Outcome 3: Strategic relationship with Government and other key strategic partners

Output	Key Tasks	Performance Indicators	Milestones/Timeline
<b>Partnerships with Government</b>	<p>Regular strategic partnership meetings with Scottish Government including, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 meetings with Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Employment and Sustainable Growth</li> <li>• 3 meetings with Scottish Government Permanent Secretary and Director for Local Government &amp; Third Sector</li> <li>• Monthly meetings with Third Sector Division team</li> </ul>	VAS regularly met with Scottish Government officials	<p>First meetings with Minister and senior officials by July 2011</p> <p>Dates set for following meetings by August 2011</p>
<b>Partnerships with SCVO; COSLA, VDS, SVA, Big Lottery Fund, LTCAS, Quality Scotland, ACOSVO etc</b>	<p>Collaborate with partners to continue SVA legacy and ensure sustainability</p> <p>Represent the network on SVA Management Group</p> <p>Promote membership of ACOSVO</p> <p>Promote and support volunteering in partnership with VDS</p>	<p>Partnership agreement in place</p> <p>Interfaces' interests are represented on SVA Management Group</p> <p>VAS members benefited from ACOSVO membership</p> <p>Interfaces are informed and in support of VDS volunteering initiatives E.g. EYV2011</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

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<p><b>Partnerships with Social Enterprises</b></p>	<p>Encourage TSI`s to network appropriately with their local Social Enterprise community</p> <p>To share good practise and local developments over the VAS network To encourage enterprise and intertrading within the network.</p> <p>To liaise with and encourage positive links between VAS and other Social Enterprise networks and bodies, including Government</p> <p>To facilitate collaboration in connection with support and delivery and research requirements of existing and emerging social enterprise, particularly at local and regional levels</p> <p>Contribute to positive public policy developments at local and Scottish Government levels</p>	<p>Networking mechanism in place</p> <p>Learning shared at seminars, network events, publications, exchange</p> <p>Signposting, brokerage and facilitation services in place</p> <p>Partners are engaged at meetings and events to have informed discussion</p> <p>Network has better understanding of different support available at different levels, cascade good advice, information and support is available and accessible at local area level</p> <p>Scottish Government makes decisions and policies informed by surveys, network feedback and working groups</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Part of existing network schedules</p> <p>Gathering intelligence on capacity, areas of interest and potential opportunities</p> <p>Directors roles with specific duties covering Social Enterprise and Employability</p> <p>Discussions underway with Support service contractors and others</p> <p>Use regular and systematic communication to build on previous work</p>
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<p><b>MILO</b></p>	<p>Continue to support the development of MILO</p> <p>Negotiate the ownership of MILO – shared ownership by Interface network</p> <p>Inform the network of the development of MILO</p> <p>Ensure the training rollout to all Interfaces</p>	<p>MILO is developed with VAS's inputs</p> <p>Interface network shares the ownership of MILO</p> <p>Interface network is kept up-to-date with the development of MILO</p> <p>32 interfaces had training on MILO</p>	<p>MILO in place by August 2011</p> <p>Ownership of MILO is clarified and agreed by September 2011</p> <p>32 interface completed training on MILO by March 2012</p>
<p><b>Intelligence from Interfaces on local issues and priorities</b></p>	<p>Gather intelligence by conducting surveys, reviews, researches and consultation with Interfaces</p> <p>Make recommendations to the Scottish Government regarding funding distribution</p> <p>Collate evidence from practitioners forums to inform policy making</p> <p>Aggregate reporting from 6-month returns</p>	<p>Scottish Government makes decisions and policies informed by the intelligence gathered by VAS</p> <p>Scottish Government distributes funding based on VAS's proposal</p> <p>Scottish Government are informed of Interfaces' activities through returns</p>	<p>2 surveys/researches completed by March 2012</p> <p>Funding formula proposed to Government by October 2011</p> <p>Executive summary of Interfaces' 6-month returns by November 2011</p>

### Outcome 4: VAS will have in place good governance and internal procedures to enable proper representation of Interfaces

Output	Key Tasks	Performance Indicators	Milestones/Timeline
<b>Governance measures</b>	Register with OSCR as Charity	VAS becomes Scottish Charity	Charity status obtained by June 2011
	Ensure the fulfilment of requirements from Companies House and OSCR	Requirements fulfilled and returns filed within timescale	Returns filed by given dates
	Develop VAS operational plan	Tasks completed according to plan	Plan reviewed by October 2011 Final report by April 2012
	Hold Annual General Meeting	Annual General Meeting took place	AGM took place by November 2011
	Develop internal strategies and policies to reflect good practice	Internal strategies and policies are implemented	Ongoing development and review of strategies and policies
	Set up internal systems and procedures for operations	Fit for purpose systems and procedures are implemented	Ongoing development and review of systems and procedures
	Conduct regular Board meetings	Board meetings took place with minutes recording decisions and actions completed	Provisional Board meeting dates scheduled by May 2011

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<b>Finance management</b>	<p>Develop VAS budget 2011/12 in line with operational plan</p> <p>Develop and implement VAS funding strategy</p> <p>Implement internal financial procedures</p> <p>Monitor the health of VAS finance through regular updates at Board meetings</p> <p>Submit Accounts regulatory bodies and Tax Returns to HMRC</p>	<p>Budget approved by the Board</p> <p>Sufficient funding in place to support VAS work</p> <p>Plan to raise fund to sustain VAS future work</p> <p>Financial monitoring system in place records</p> <p>Regularly updates available for Board's scrutiny</p> <p>Returns filed according to requirement</p>	<p>Budget in place by April 2011</p> <p>Funding for 2011/12 in place by May 2011</p> <p>Funding strategy developed by August 2011</p> <p>Financial system in place by April 2011</p> <p>Updates ready before each Board meeting</p> <p>Annual accounts ready by AGM</p>
<b>Staff management</b>	<p>Develop personnel policies and procedures to recruit, induct, support and supervise staff members</p> <p>Provide staff with professional development support</p>	<p>Personnel policies and procedures in place</p> <p>Records of training offered and taken</p>	<p>Ongoing development and review of personnel policies and procedures</p> <p>Appraisal by March 2012</p>