

6th Meeting of Board of Voluntary Action Scotland – 6th & 7th November 2009, Perth.

This briefing from the Board seeks to highlight some of the main items under discussion. It is not a formal minute.

Present: Harry Whiteside, Jessie Macneil, Dom Hunter Grant, Sandy Milne, Alasdair Nicholson, Gaynor Jones, Gilbert Smith, Helen Rorrison, Helen Macneil.

Apologies: None

In Attendance: F. MacLachlan (Minute Secretary)

Vote of Confidence in VAS

In what we took as a clear indication of confidence and support in our direction of travel and ability to deliver, confirmation was given from Geoff Pearson, Third Sector Division, of an award of £40,000 to VAS. AS well as contributing to some of our core organisational costs, we have been asked through this funding to undertake work on developing proposals on the support needs of Interfaces and to pursue a wider partnership model of membership and activity for VAS.

This announcement followed a meeting with Christine Carlin and Geoff Pearson to consider how our aspirations for VAS might contribute to the S.G. agenda, our ability to feed intelligence from membership and Interfaces into a range of high level forums and to assist in policy development. There appeared to be recognition of the importance of that role for VAS and this would be something that we would pursue directly with John Swinney, MSP when we meet on 25th November.

Christine advised of changes that had taken place within her Department, the current urgency to process applications for the Resilience Fund. We raised some concerns over how the principles and intent contained within the Joint Statement from the Third Sector Strategic Task Group would be implemented – there were already some indications that some local authorities were seeking to apply a particularly narrow interpretation of the guidance, especially in the area of reserves held by organisations.

Meeting with Volunteer Centre's Partnership Management Group (PMG)

Some members of the Board had met with the PMG the previous afternoon. We had originally requested a meeting with the VC Directors, but this had been considered inappropriate at this stage by PMG. The PMG are currently "reinventing" themselves, with a change of membership and role and it was possibly not the best time to meet with them. We spoke of our intent to open membership of VAS to VC's, our recognition that we wanted an equality of interests and that we would be happy to work through the PMG as required. Any fears that the interest of "volunteering" would be lost within VAS were in our view unfounded and this was demonstrated through our current Board membership and its strong reflection of those interests.

S.V.A - ICT Tender

K.M. provided an update on the development and progress of this tender. There were some issues with how the tender opportunity has been put together, but K.M. and E.S. have been liaising with SCVO about these issues. The Common ICT Platform is now part of the Managing Intelligence tender and it is hoped that the work will be underway by the end of 2009/very early 2010.

Representation to SVA Management Group

A place on the SVA Management group had now been confirmed for VAS and it was agreed that E.S. should be our representative. Elliot currently serves on Management Group representing VC



interests and he will now resign that position. Benefits seen in maintaining continuity of knowledge and experience.

Expenditure from SVA Programme

As a result of a request from the North Region it was agreed that we should seek detailed information on the expenditure incurred by the SVA programme – reflecting some wider concerns about impact and value. Letter to be written to SCVO detailing the information requested and if necessary this could be followed up directly with Big Lottery. H.M. spoke of her involvement with the DINC Forum and would be happy to consider her involvement with that Forum in the guise of a VAS member rather than from GCVS.

There was also concern that there appeared to be a message coming from SVA that only those who were now recognised as Interfaces could secure support through SVA - if this is the case then it needs to be challenged. This will be clarified through our reps to SVA Management Group.

Possible SVA Support to VAS Development

Whilst the funding from SG was a considerable boost, there were developmental areas –solid pieces of work – that we were not as yet resourced to undertake. It was felt that there was still scope within the SVA programme to work up a proposal. GG, HW and ES to pursue.

Rural CVS – Parliamentary Meeting

Frank Burns from ALVO was co-ordinating a possible follow up meeting with Jim Mathers and VAS were being asked to be part of that meeting. Agreed that we had a clear interest in supporting that meeting and that K.M. should attend.

Development of Wider Partnership Model

As a result of earlier discussion with intermediaries involved in Social Enterprise it had been agreed to undertake a facilitated meeting between SCVO, VDS, VAS, Senscot and Scottish Social Enterprise Coalition on 9th December. We would hope to clarify respective roles in relation to local infrastructure support and how “Enterprise Organisations” engage with VAS To be attended by KM, ES, AN and GG.

Senscot

Meeting arranged with SenScot – Aiden Pia and Colin Campbell for 23rd November.

Meeting with John Swinney MSP, 25th November 2009.

Some time spent on preparing the message and issues that we wished to take to John Swinney. Our role and aspirations, what we could deliver and our strengths were clearly part of that agenda – but there were also particular issues around ring fencing of future funding for interfaces; where VAS sits in national policy arenas and alternate vehicles for identifying support needs and delivery of such services to interfaces.

Membership to VAS

We sent membership forms to all CVS after Conference, we have received some forms back to approve and we look forward to receiving many more for our January meeting. We shall be sending membership forms to the VC's in the near future.

