

EAST AYRSHIRE

COMMUNITY PLANNING JOINT OFFICERS' GROUP: 27 JANUARY 2009

**FUNDING OF VOLUNTEER CENTRES AND COUNCILS OF VOLUNTARY SERVICES
2008-2011**

**Report by Executive Director of Educational and Social Services
East Ayrshire Council**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Joint Officers' Group (JOG) of the developments taking place regarding the future funding of Volunteer Centres and Councils of Voluntary Services 2008-2011.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Volunteer Centre East Ayrshire was established in 2000 by a group of local organisations to promote and develop volunteering throughout East Ayrshire.
- 2.2 The Council of Voluntary Organisations (CVO) in East Ayrshire was established in 1993 to support local groups to gain access to the decision making processes which affect them and their communities. They also provide a wide range of services to voluntary organisations, including assistance with funding, constitutions and training.
- 2.3 CVO and the Volunteer Centre both receive funding from the Scottish Government through their respective National Bodies on an annual basis. In addition to this, the Volunteer Centre currently receives funding from East Ayrshire Council to support groups to register and comply with the Central Registered Body in Scotland (CRBS) in relation to Disclosure checks for volunteers and to cover some staff costs.
- 2.4 In the past, both organisations have received funding from the Community Planning Partnership for specific aspects of their work.
- 2.5 Both organisations are actively involved in the Community Planning process through Thematic Action Plan Groups and the Local Community Planning Forums.

3. CHANGES TAKING PLACE

- 3.1 The Scottish Government has highlighted that due to the changing relationship between the government and local authorities through the Concordat, it opens up significant opportunities for the third sector to contribute more to the growing of Scotland's economy. The Scottish Government wants to:
- offer investment, encouragement and support to ensure a competent, sustainable and competent third sector;
 - offer help towards building capacity within the third sector to deliver aims and objectives effectively; and
 - support the third sector to increase its role in the delivery of public services.

- 3.2 The Concordat means that this work will be more focused on partnerships at local level and as part of this process the Scottish Government is keen to support the further development of relationships between the third sector, local authorities, community planning partnerships and other local partnerships.
- 3.3 The Scottish Government would like the third sector and local authorities to develop local infrastructures to ensure the full contribution of the third sector to delivering single outcome agreements and to manage future funding which will be given direct to Community Planning Partnership areas.
- 3.4 Community Planning Partnership areas are being encouraged to develop or strengthen local interfaces including potentially establishing a single third sector representative body.

4. FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS

- 4.1 The Scottish Government has advised that the current funding arrangements for the Council of Voluntary Services and the Volunteer Centre networks will cease as from March 2011.
- 4.2 The model currently being considered by the Scottish Government is that one single pot of funding will be provided for each Community Planning Partnership area. The amount in each pot will be determined by available resources and by a formula to be established.
- 4.3 Decisions on the distribution of funds within the pot will be for the interface locally to make and not central or local government. It is hoped that the growing partnership with the Community Planning Partnership would offer some guidance in the priorities to be pursued in each area. Funding will be distributed either directly from the Scottish Government or via an independent agency.

5. TIMESCALES

- 5.1 Although funding arrangements will not change until March 2011, it is expected that discussions regarding local arrangements will take place as soon as possible in order to have an agreement in place and possibly implemented by March 2010.

6. THIRD SECTOR IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

- 6.1 A Liaison Officer from the Third Sector Division of the Scottish Government has been identified for East Ayrshire. Their role will be to look at the impact of the third sector across their allocated local authority area and help move forward the shift in focus required by the Concordat.
- 6.2 To date, the Liaison Officer has had initial discussions with the Volunteer Centre, the Council of Voluntary Organisations and representatives of East Ayrshire Council, including the Community Planning Partnership Unit.

7. ISSUES

- 7.1 Consideration may need to be given to the existing representation from the voluntary sector on the Community Planning Partnership Board and the Council and how this will look in the future if a new interface with the third sector is developed.

8. THE WAY FORWARD

- 8.1 A meeting of the Boards of the Council of Voluntary Organisations and Volunteer Centre will be taking place shortly to discuss the changes taking place and future action required by both Boards. This is at a very early stage; however, both recognise the significant change that will be required for their organisations in the future.
- 8.2 It is proposed that a small working group be established with representatives from the Volunteer Centre, CVO, Federations of Community Groups, Community Learning and Development, and Community Planning to discuss further the developments taking place and to identify whether or not a new interface should be developed solely for the third sector or whether existing partnership arrangements can support the changes taking place.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The Joint Officers' Group is asked to:
- (i) consider and agree the establishment of a working group;
 - (ii) remit officers to return to the Joint Officers' Group with an update and future recommendations; and
 - (iii) otherwise note the contents of the report.

Graham Short
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services
20 January 2009