

Highland Third Sector Forum

Terms of Reference

Purpose of the Forum

- The main purpose of the forum is to provide an opportunity for staff/volunteers from the Third Sector to come together and discuss issues of common interest, share knowledge and experience, and identify areas of good practice
- The forum also exists to give the voluntary and community sector an opportunity to be involved at an early stage in the development and implementation of new policies or service changes e.g. Compact, lobbying, social policy etc
- to update the voluntary and community sector with information on funding opportunities and discuss plans for service commissioning
- for voluntary and community organisations to provide information about new or changing services to other organisations
- to identify gaps in current provision of services or areas of increased levels of need
- to be used as a forum for consultation on policy, service development and service delivery
- to update the voluntary and community sector on changes in services and provide information.
- to discuss process issues – how services are delivered
- to encourage and support smaller organisations to get more involved in service delivery
- to support new and unique initiatives responding to grass root needs
- to promote opportunities for mutual support and networking and encourage joint working between local voluntary and community organisations
- to engage with other related services across the spectrum of activities

Membership of the forum

- The forum is open to any voluntary or community organisation that operates in the Highland Unitary Authority Area.
- representation from the voluntary and community sector can include paid workers, volunteers or management committee

Format of the forum

- the forum will be both meeting-based and 'virtual'
- meetings will be held four times a year
- each meeting will run for half a day – with occasional full day sessions on specific issues
- in addition, there will be information via e-mail, post and on the VAH website
- Meetings will include opportunities for organisations to share information on their service.
- the meetings may include small group work as well as presentations

Facilitation

- There will be a Chair and Vice Chair elected by voluntary sector members of the group on an annual basis.
- chair will agree an agenda in advance of each meeting
- The organisation and running of meetings, web-based forum, sourcing speakers, circulating agendas, minutes etc will be performed by Voluntary Action Highland.
- You can view: Past Minutes, Reports, Presentations online at www.voluntaryactionhighland.org

Links with Other Forums

- Links with various partnership boards, organisations, statutory agencies may be established

Reviews

- The terms of reference will be reviewed annually