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**THIRD SECTOR DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY**

**REPORT OF MEETINGS**

**POVERTY & INEQUALITIES PARTNERSHIP (P&IP)**

25 January 2023

**THIRD SECTOR DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY SUMMARY**

*Working together to put our sector first*  
Dumfries and Galloway's Third Sector Interface

**PLEASE NOTE: THIS IS A PERSONAL RECORD BY THE HEAD OF OPERATIONS, CLAIRE BROWN. IT IS BASED ON MY OWN OBSERVATIONS. IT IS NOT A FORMAL MINUTE OF THE MEETING.**

1. The meeting started with verbal updates from each of the four subgroups
2. Subgroup 1- Severe and persistent poverty. As Chair of subgroup 1 I provided an update on its action plan:
  - a. A further 5,600 Cash First advice leaflet have been distributed across the region since the last meeting.
  - b. A mapping of food banks has been completed. Information on all those mapped will be added to relevant websites, including the Cost of Living website, with their permission.
  - c. Development of a training programme for statutory and third sector staff working in this area. The training material will be finalised with the subgroup members.
  - d. Appropriate use of personal data for individuals to maintain services to those at risk of destitution
  - e. Keeping the poverty-related support on DGLocator up to date is ongoing. TSDG has been mapping warm hubs and these are now posted on DGLocator. Thanks extended to TSDG regarding the mapping of warm spaces.
  - f. Current digital inclusion- an additional page on Cost of Living website will be included
  - g. The Hub in Dumfries is doing work on flexible fuel payments; a large number of referrals have been made to the project via Emergency Energy Payment Assistance Programme.
  - h. In my capacity as Chair of Subgroup 1 I thanked Wendy Jesson for her help with monitoring and tracking progress
3. Subgroup two covers benefit maximisation and debt advice. Christine Sinclair at DAGCAS leads this group. Christine referred to the group's work in relation to referrals for support and provided an update on wind farm trusts.
4. Subgroup three on fuel poverty had been led by Sue Irving from LHA. Sue has stepped down from the role and until a new Chair is appointed, Wendy Jesson will provide updates.
  - a. Wheatley Group South is interested in becoming an active participant in this subgroup, as have DG College and Police Scotland.
  - b. Credit Unions are to be promoted to RSLs
  - c. A flow chart is being produced of services and support available to reduce energy price rises
  - d. Home Energy Scotland are currently using the DG Locator app to map identify warm spaces and are contacting each to arrange a programme of drop-in sessions promoting their services.
  - e. Home energy emergency help programme is available via DG Council.
  - f. James Parker, DGC Officer working with wind farm funding attended the subgroup; discussion on the inclusion of poverty and inequalities criteria for wind farm funds and strategic region-wide opportunities for wind farms
5. A question was asked about fuel poverty funding and whether it is resulting in a dependency rather than tackling the problem? What happens when funding stops; lobbying should take place to drive down fuel costs. Important to tackle social policy issues; current policy is. Sticking plaster.

## KEY POINTS

6. The fourth subgroup (child poverty) is led by Laura Gibson; this subgroup is now a permanent subgroup of the Poverty and Inequalities Partnership and a new terms of reference has been prepared for the subgroup. A call was made that terms of reference for the other subgroups be reviewed to bring them more in line with subgroup 4 and ensure consistency across all subgroups.
7. I queried the DG Council directive that each subgroup is allowed only 1 representative from the Council, expected to contribute on behalf of all council departments. This is to be reviewed.
8. At the last meeting of the P&IP TSDG raised again the question of how the windfarm community benefit funds could be used to alleviate the cost-of-living crisis. The DGC officer with responsibility for windfarms was asked to attend the this PiP meeting to give an overview of the use of windfarm funds.
9. I asked whether local community councils in receipt of wind farm monies could decide to use the money outside the immediate geographic location of the windfarm, to give more regional benefit or benefit to communities not in receipt of funds. The Officer confirmed that communities could decide to use money outside their immediate geographic location; a regional fund exists that wind farms and communities can contribute to. This is administered by DGC.
10. The partnership asked if guidance could be provided to fund administrators on what money could be spent on to encourage creative use of funds for the greatest benefit. This will be picked up separately. Locality hubs could contribute to thinking of local solutions.
11. Recruitment of the new chair of the P&IP has been unsuccessful; thought is now being given to making the post a remunerated post to attract high calibre applicants and bring it in line with other strategic partnerships. The partnership agreed it was important to ensure that we continue with an independent Chair.
12. A draft monitoring and evaluation framework was presented to the partnership for reporting on progress against the subgroup action plans. It was agreed that the framework should be simple, with clear distinction between outputs and outcomes.
13. The Poverty Reference Group is currently looking to expand its membership and recruit new members. It was agreed that the locality hubs should be approached to consider new members, along with equalities organisations.