

Argyll and Bute Third Sector Interface

Update to MAKI ACPG 28th August 2024

TSI activity for quarter one 2024-2025 has involved completing the final version of the TSI funded Community Wealth Building report, supporting member organisations and the wider community through the council and IJB budget processes as well as planning for our next business plan and new strategy.

Scottish Government, Parliament, the TSI landscape and policy activity

Charities and funders have been urged to take part in a new Scottish Parliament inquiry aimed at enhancing the efficiency of the public funding process.

Holyrood's Social Justice and Social Security Committee has launched a consultation on third sector funding and wants to understand what can be done to make the process more efficient, so available funding can be used more effectively.

The committee's findings will be shared with the Scottish Government in advance of its next budget.

With a change of government nationally the TSI network is keeping an eye out for potential changes to the structure of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and other national funding programmes.

Local strategic partnerships

Community Wealth Building (CWB) progress

Following April's Community Planning Partnership (CPP) meeting the CEO presented the report's findings to the four Area Community Planning Groups (ACPG). Subsequently two further groups have been started arising directly from community action to implement parts of the TSI funded report. The first is a group dedicated to identifying ways of making community renewable projects more accessible to local communities in Argyll and Bute. The second is a local group in Helensburgh and Lomond interested in adopting CWB methods for their local place planning aims as well as to meet to identify their ask of the TSI in terms of CWB support.

Finally, the CPP's CWB steering group will meet for a final time in August 2024 to identify how to take forward the specific recommendations contained in April's report.

Community Benefits

Part of the CWB report outputs was a review of how we approach community benefits arising from major infrastructure schemes.

TSI Scotland, contracts, sector support and strategic action plan delivery

1. TSI National Conference and Scottish Government returns

The TSI Scotland network held a two-day national conference in Edinburgh in May which was attended by over 120 staff across the two days with speakers from a wide range of organisations including ACOSVO, Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES), The Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Social Enterprise Scotland, The Royal Society of Edinburgh and SCVO. ABTSI's CEO led a session on leading in Challenging Times and feedback for the whole conference agenda was well received and it is intended to run the event again pending further funding from the Scottish Government.

2. ABTSI strategy development preparations

Further to the Board's decision in April 2024, the CEO has been working on a plan to deliver a survey and focus groups identifying key local third and social enterprise issues in general for three reasons:-

1. Map and identify the concerns and needs of the sector
2. Use the findings to drive an overarching training, events and networking calendar
3. Use the findings to drive the TSI's new strategy, business plan and a sector led campaign.

3. Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund – Year four grant and preparations

Grant letters for year four (2024-2025) of the Communities Mental and Wellbeing Fund were received and signed in July 2024. As with 2023-2024 funding is broadly the same with £280,979.23 for the fund itself. Work is underway on preparing the schedule including consulting with the sector about the local fund guidance plan. It is anticipated that the fund will be open by the end of September 2024.

4. Hustings

General Election Hustings for Oban and Helensburgh organised by the TSI were held on 24th and 26th June respectively. They were both very well attended and the Oban hustings was live streamed.

5. Argyll and Bute Climate Action Network (ABCAN)

The TSI supported Argyll and Bute Climate Action Network continues and year two of the seed corn funding programme will be disbursed in September 2024 using the TSO platform. Funding is at a much lower level this year at £10,000.

6. Taking Action on Rural Poverty workshop June 2024

The TSI is on the steering group for the Robertson Trust funded project delivered by the Poverty Alliance – Taking Action on Rural Poverty. As part of their work, they held a sector learning event in June 2024 and the TSI CEO presented a session on how the TSI's networks and community wealth building approaches can support anti-poverty work in Argyll and Bute. It was well attended with over 40 groups represented.

7. Work of the Wellbeing Development Manager

The Wellbeing Development Manager, hosted by the TSI and funded by Macmillan Cancer Support and the HSCP, has continued to work at pace. The synergy with the TSI's work is significant as it involves capacity building third sector groups active in preventative healthcare as well as developing information and support tools such as TSI database and a proposal has been agreed to expand its use as a tool for analysing sector services and capabilities. This will be funded by the project's funders and collaborate with our database manager, Phil Ashby.

