

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC



VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

WEST LOTHIAN SOCIAL ENTERPRISE NETWORK UPDATE

REPORT BY HEAD OF PLANNING, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to update the panel on the current activities being undertaken by West Lothian Social Enterprise Network (WLSSEN) in providing an effective single point of access for support and advice and representing the interests of social enterprises within West Lothian.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the panel:

1. Notes the positive outcomes in regard to the work undertaken by West Lothian Social Enterprise Network in supporting and representing the interests of the social enterprise sector within West Lothian.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs. Being honest, open and accountable. providing equality of opportunities; developing employees; making best use of our resources; working in partnership.
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	The report does not raise any health or risk assessment issues. No strategic environmental assessment is required.
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None.
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	None
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	We live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities
VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	£31,500 has been awarded to WLSSEN from the Voluntary Organisation budget for 2021/22.

VII Consideration at PDSP

The Voluntary Organisations PDSP is updated on a quarterly basis.

VIII Other consultations

None.

D. TERMS OF THE REPORT

D.1 Background

West Lothian Council is committed to supporting the development of more enterprising and sustainable third sector that contributes to the key Community Planning Partnership outcomes.

D.2 Current update

A report from WLSSEN on the activities they have undertaken since the previous meeting of the panel is attached to this report as Appendix 1.

E CONCLUSION

The Panel is asked to note the update report but the West Lothian Social Enterprise Network (WLSSEN) that the PDSP will receive regular updates going forward.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None.

Appendices/Attachments: Appendix 1 WLSSEN update

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Craig McCorriston
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3 February 2022

Report to Voluntary Sector Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel

4 February 2022

(Report period 21/10/21 to 20/01/2022)



WLSSEN's Mission

At WLSSEN we are supporting our Network members to recover from the impacts of the pandemic and help them thrive. We are also raising awareness of the social enterprise sector's role in delivering a fairer, more inclusive, and sustainable economy.

1. WLSSEN Board

We held our AGM on 7 December 2021, and the following appointments were confirmed: Maria Throp as WLSSEN Chair; Adele Prendergast as Treasurer and Angela Moohan (Trustee). We are delighted to welcome Jane Deary (Spark) and Silence Chihuri (Fair Justice System for Scotland) as Trustees. Sarah Cameron (SENScot) will continue to act as a co-opted member.

2. WLSSEN Achievements

We would like to take a moment to reflect on achievements made in Q3 and Q4 with appointment of Network Manager and Network Coordinator. We have prepared an infographic to show key deliverables from July/Sept (Annex 1). Of course, this does not capture all WLSSEN activity but it's a good indication of the variety of activities delivered, impact and work in progress. Here are highlights across our three action lines: amplify; empower; and collaboration.

- **Amplify** - Our membership has grown with six new Network members (Diversify, Cyrenians, Health in Mind, Linlith_Go-Solar, Your Pay Your Way and FJSS) joining since July 2021 and we are working to on board more organisations. We said in our last report that we would like to place a spotlight on a particular Network member in our quarterly PDSP report. Today we spotlight Spark (formerly Craigshill Good Neighbour Network) and provide an overview of their what they do, how they are building more connected, positive and connected communities (see Annex 2).
- **Empower** – We continue to share funding, learning and collaboration opportunities with our Network via our regular news, delivering 3 weekly bulletins and 1 newsletter per month. Annex 3 captures provides examples of news items. In addition, WLSSEN hosted Network events including: Shaping WLSSEN's Future Directions; meet [Fair Justice System for Scotland](#) and WLSSEN's AGM.
- **Collaboration** – We contributed to the successful Third Sector Summit (Nov. 2021) with organisations from across the Third Sector, facilitating a session on improving mental health and wellbeing in West Lothian through our new signposting service (Paragraph 3), and the Council's [Third Sector Annual Report 2020-21](#). We also joined SENS Scot in hosting the Future Series COP26 event with Net Zero Nation, and continue to support our Third Sector led project team concerned with third sector readiness for engaging with the Young Person's Guarantee.

3. Mental Health & Wellbeing Project

We are moving towards the launch of our mental health and wellbeing pilot project in collaboration with NHS Lothian's HSCP and local partners. Funded by West Lothian Council, this project will connect adults, experiencing mild to moderate mental health issues, with partners able to offer support and advice. This new signposting service is person-centred. It will identify an individual's needs and, through discussion, find a pathway that can help build self-confidence and personal coping strategies.

Our local partners are helping to shape and deploy the project with additional, valuable inputs from Wellbeing Scotland, SENScot and Community Enterprise. A Steering Group made up of representatives from our local partners is providing strategic advice and support. A Mental Health Co-ordinator is now in place to manage the signposting service on behalf of the WLSen and partners. A Memorandum of Understanding and Protocol will provide a coherent framework for guiding operations. Project outputs will be reported quarterly to NHS Lothian's Health & Social Partnership.



We invited West Lothian College students to share their ideas to help us create a new name and an instantly recognisable image for the project. Going forward, the project will be called West Lothian Well-Being, and we will work with partners and other stakeholders to raise the project's profile and its reach. We will share more details later about our landing page and how to access the contact form via WLSen's website, a new project domain and social media.

4. Social Enterprise Landscape

This year is of considerable significance to the social enterprise sector as the Scottish Government actions its commitment to create a 'Single National Intermediary' for the social enterprise sector in Scotland. Competitive bids have been submitted by SENScot and Social Enterprise Scotland to become Scotland's single intermediary for the sector.

[Respondents](#) to a recent Scottish Government consultation have called for the Government to deliver a 'single entity' that would not only build on the significant achievements of the sector over the last two decades but also bring a fresh dynamic to the national infrastructure based on a genuinely collaborative and inclusive approach.

A decision is expected by the end of January, and the new body is due to come into effect during July 2022. We will keep you advised of changes.

5. Strategic Direction

From an operational perspective, our 'new' Board has come together over two strategy sessions, facilitated by Community Enterprise, to determine our strategic approach and how best to support our Network members while fostering growth of social enterprise sector in West Lothian. Collaboration and peer support will be vital in supporting start-ups and organisations to grow their market share, enhance their environmental credentials and financial sustainability.

We will be kicking off a year of Network engagement in collaboration with the [Scottish Business Resilience Centre](#) who will help members develop the skills and knowledge to protect themselves against online attacks.



July - December 2021

AMPLIFYING

Social Media:

103 New followers

22,346 Impressions

Average 14 posts per month



WLSen.org.uk

http://



1.6K Website visitors

669 /Find-a-Social-Enterprise/ visits

95 /Support/ for Social Enterprise visits

NEW MEMBERS



FJSS GROUP



cyrenians

EMPOWERING



6 Sector newsletters

22 Weekly opportunity alerts for members



13 support and assessment meetings

4 Network Events:

- Community Enterprise Accelerator Event
- Shaping WLSen's New Direction Forum
- Fair Justice System for Scotland Forum
- WLSen AGM

COLLABORATING

Supported sessions with:



Presented at



Wellbeing project brand design competition with

west lothian college

Contributed to



APPENDIX 2



WHO ARE OUR SERVICES FOR?

- All people experiencing social isolation and loneliness in the communities in and around Craigshill.
- It is our vision that each individual feels valued and has the chance to spark their potential.

HOW DO WE DO IT?

Connected

- We create spaces for people to connect and build relationships so that they feel supported, encouraged and valued – and can then help others feel the same in return.

Positive

- We encourage fun and a sense of hope in everyone who walks through our door so that they know this is a place where they can thrive.

Inclusive

- We believe everyone deserves the chance to feel better about themselves and make a change to their lives.

WHAT DIFFERENCE DO WE MAKE?

- **Everyone is welcome** whatever their social and ethnic background, gender and sexual orientation.
- We help them **connect and build relationships**.
- We nurture their **confidence** and develop their **skills and creativity**.
- We spark possibilities for **a different way of seeing themselves**.
- We are **where people thrive** and should they wish, we help them make changes to have the life they want.

WHAT IS OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE?

- Increase our support.
- Increase our capacity.
- Increase our activities.
- Increase our membership.
- Increase our volunteers.
- Increase our IMPACT!

This year's activity development focus is in the areas of inclusion, mental health and employability.

we bring people  together

APPENDIX 3

WLSEN NETWORK ENGAGEMENT – OVERVIEW OF TOPICS

Grants, Funding and Learning Opportunities including:

- Social Investment Scotland in partnership with Zero Waste Scotland have announced The Social Enterprise Net Zero Transition Fund. The fund is designed to support social enterprises and the wider third sector to make the transition to become carbon neutral, and to develop the circular economy. Through the fund, they are supporting activities that will reduce carbon footprint. The fund provides loans from £10,000 and small grants to SE's who have a particular circular economy focus. [Find out how to apply.](#)
- Zero Waste are investing £18 million as grant funding to small and medium sized enterprises who are helping to create a more circular economy. The Circular Economy Investment Fund is a funding opportunity for businesses and organisations in Scotland working in all business and social economy sectors. They are looking for innovative projects that can deliver carbon savings, leverage investment and creates jobs. [Find out how to apply.](#)
- The webinar - Impact of the voluntary sector in creating employment - will showcase the impact employing young people, via Community Jobs Scotland and other employability programmes, has on voluntary sector organisations and the transformational effect the sector can have on young people's lives.

Members News including:

- Smile Counselling will be delivering another cohort of the Mental Wellbeing and Health course. Registration details provided.
- [The Larder](#), launched an online Christmas Bakery, with 100% of profits going to support disadvantaged people across West Lothian. Feel good about buying sweet treats this festive period as your support will help some of the most vulnerable in our society. Visit The Larder shop now to place your order and help to change lives for the better.
- The Larder won [Newcomer of the Year Award](#), Living Wage Scotland. Congratulations!

Engagement Opportunities including:

- Community Enterprise is working with a consortium, formed by WLSen, The Larder, West Lothian Youth Action, and the Voluntary Sector Gateway West Lothian, to identify opportunities for the third sector in West Lothian in the employability sector. The employability sector and the funding that invests in job outcomes, is complex and is changing. With the advent of Scottish Government policies such as [No-one Left Behind](#) and the [Young Person's Guarantee Scheme](#), there are new opportunities that third sector groups and social enterprises can exploit to support their beneficiaries.
- The Scottish Government has commissioned research to gain a better understanding of [the experiences of third sector organisations of public procurement](#) in Scotland. They're asking organisations to detail their experiences and are also inviting people to take part in interviews. Deadline 21st December 2021.
- The Social Enterprise in Scotland Census 2021 is underway. This is the fourth official study by the Scottish Government into enterprising charities and social enterprises across the country. Every two years it combines publicly available information from regulators with survey and financial data, to help understand the characteristics and needs of the sector and inform future support. You can influence future policy and funding decisions for our sector. [Have your say and contribute.](#)