

## Council for Voluntary Service Fife

# ... Briefing Bulletin ... Briefing Bulletin...

### What's the Brief?

In the recent evaluation report entitled 'CVS Fife: Operational Effectiveness and Strategic Capability' compiled by Dr. Eleanor Burt, St Andrews University, and Professor John Taylor, Caledonian Business School, a number of potential focus areas for CVS Fife were identified:

- raising awareness within Fife's statutory sector of the voluntary sector's capabilities,
- the dilemma of how to ensure compliance to policy measures as a partner whilst also retaining and perhaps strengthening the sector's independent voice
- efforts to develop relationships at national level in Scotland, through dialogue with MSPs ... and through engagement in national consultative processes.

Coincidentally, at around the same time, a number of issues were coming to the forefront of the political agenda - Charity Law; Changes to Lottery Funding; Health Service Review (creation of Community Health Partnerships); the imminent ending of the European Structural Funding Programme. Each of these changes will have a major impact on Fife's Voluntary Sector, and just as importantly will impact on the level and quality of services provided to Fife residents via the Voluntary Sector.

As part of our response to Burt & Taylor's report we plan to produce a regular Briefing Bulletin for our Community Planning partners and Fife's political community. We would welcome responses to this briefing and in particular we would be pleased to provide respondents with a Voluntary Sector perspective and further information on any of the issues included in this Bulletin.

**CVS Fife** is the Fife-wide Council for Voluntary Service, which seeks to support and strengthen the role of the voluntary sector and, in doing so, to promote and support social justice in Fife.

### Fife's Voluntary Sector

Fife's voluntary sector is made up of approximately 1,500 voluntary, charitable and community organisations. These organisations deliver vital services, provide a broad range of leisure and social activities and promote volunteering.

#### What Services & Activities Are Provided?

- **Children's Services**  
Including local branches of national charities such as Barnardos and locally-based services like the Cottage Family Centre in Kirkcaldy
- **Learning & Training**  
Including community-based adult education services like the Workers' Educational Association and vocational training services for unemployed people such as West Fife Enterprise
- **Health Services**  
Including condition-specific support services like Cancer Network Fife and wellbeing-focussed organisations such as Fife Society for the Blind
- **Substance Misuse Services**  
Including Fife Alcohol Support Service and the Drug and Alcohol Project Levenmouth
- **Social Enterprises**  
Including FEAT Enterprises, providing employment services to people excluded from the labour market due to mental ill health or disabilities
- **Older People's Services**  
Including local day care services such as Arden House Projects and advocacy and advice bodies like Age Concern Fife
- **Equality Organisations**  
Including Fife Independent Disability Network which campaigns for equality for disabled people and Fife Community Interpreting Service which provides interpretation and translation services for clients with little or no English

And that's just a selection of the activity taking place! CVS Fife has a Directory of Voluntary and Community organisations available on its website which gives a much fuller picture: [www.cvsfife.org](http://www.cvsfife.org)

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## European Funding

The Scottish Objective 3 Programme is a significant source of European funding which helps disadvantaged groups in the community who are excluded both economically and socially. Here in Fife, voluntary organisations including CVS Fife have benefited enormously from Objective 3 money since 2000. The Colleges, Fife Council and Scottish Enterprise Fife have also drawn down a considerable amount of Objective 3 funding to boost initiatives aimed at some of our most disadvantaged citizens.

The current Structural Funds Programming period ends in 2006 and a debate is ongoing around the shape of EU regional policy after 2006. The debate takes place within the context of enlargement, which has increased the size of the EU from 15 to 25 Member States. It is not yet clear how Scotland will be affected by this debate, but it seems likely that some funding opportunities will be lost. This obviously has serious implications for a number of agencies in Fife. In terms of the voluntary sector, the £1,290,752 that voluntary organisations drew down from Objective 3 in 2005 is going to be a difficult sum to replace.

In terms of CVS Fife, the change in funding opportunities has led the organisation to review its activities, and we have recently drawn up a new Business Plan following on from the comprehensive Evaluation Exercise conducted by St Andrews University. This Business Plan focusses on providing a range of clearly-defined, specialist services to the voluntary sector, as follows:

- **Governance and Compliance**
- **Human Resource Management**
- **Information & Communications Technology**
- **Finance**

CVS Fife also plans to offer general advice and support to smaller organisations and community groups through our Information Service. We are now exploring alternative funding opportunities to support the implementation of this Business Plan.

In the meantime, Fife will continue to play a role in the debate on the future of European Structural Funding, and we await the outcome with interest.

## The Big Lottery Fund

The Big Lottery Fund in Scotland is currently analysing the responses to its Second Phase of Consultation on future funding programmes which took place earlier in the year.

**Since 1993, lottery funding has been vital to Fife's voluntary sector, with voluntary and community organisations receiving over £11m in grants from the Community Fund, the former lottery distributor with dedicated programmes for the voluntary sector.**

Following the Community Fund's merger with the New Opportunities Fund to create the Big Lottery Fund, the voluntary sector's share of lottery funding has been seen by many to be under threat. While the BLF has undertaken to reserve at least 60% of its fund for the voluntary and community sector, there is a concern amongst the sector that this undertaking could be compromised through political pressure. The decision earlier this year to award the government's programme to improve school meals £45 million of lottery funding underlined this concern.

While we await the announcement of new funding programmes from the BLF, the sector is facing a gap in funding opportunity, as the last deadline for applications to the Community Fund was in May (the last awards will be announced in November), and The Big Lottery Fund is unable to say exactly when applications will open for its new grants programmes because it needs to wait for the Lottery Bill to be passed. The intention is that the majority of programmes will have been launched by April 2006.

Here at CVS Fife we are continuing to monitor developments at the BLF, and we will produce updates for colleagues in Fife as required. In the meantime, any voluntary or community organisation that needs help identifying alternative funding sources and putting together a funding application can contact us for assistance on the number given above.

**Carole Patrick, Information Officer**

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## Charity Law Changes

### What is the Story So Far?

The Charities and Trustee Investment Bill (Scotland) was passed by the Scottish Parliament in June. The Bill modernises the regulatory framework for charities in Scotland, and includes new definitions of charity, a test to prove public benefit and it defines the role of Charity Trustees.

### What Will This Mean for Fife?

There are over 900 charities in Fife. While legislation has been in place since 1990 requiring all registered charities to make available a copy of their accounts to the public on request, little has been done to enforce this. However, the new Bill gives the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator the power to require charities to lodge a copy of their annual accounts, as well as completing an annual return. From April 2006, all charities in Fife, whether large or small, will be expected to lodge their accounts and submit an Annual Return to OSCR.

Full implementation of the Bill is not expected until early in 2006, when the function of granting charitable status is expected to be moved from the Inland Revenue to OSCR. In the meantime, OSCR is keen to work with local organisations to raise awareness amongst charities of the new requirements.

CVS Fife is currently considering how it can best support charitable organisations in Fife to deal with the changes brought about by the new legislation, and would welcome input to this debate.

**Caron Hughes, Governance & Compliance Advisor**

## Community Health Partnerships

As most of you will now be aware, Local Health Care Co-operatives have now evolved into three Community Health Partnerships in Fife as part of the National Health Service Reform, and the new CHPs will be at the centre of health care planning and delivery. As the Scottish Executive called for one voluntary sector seat on each CHP, CVS Fife has been working from the beginning of 2005 to ensure that voluntary sector health and wellbeing organisations are effectively represented around the table.

Voluntary sector organisations decided to hold Fife-wide elections for the role of Voluntary Sector Representative on the CHPs, after having drawn up a Representative Role Profile. It was felt that this democratic approach was the best way to select representatives who would be prepared to advocate for the sector as a whole, and who would be respected by the CHP committee as having a valid mandate to act on behalf of the sector.

The sector also favoured the creation of three Voluntary Sector Health & Wellbeing Forums which will match the same geographical areas as the CHPs. The Voluntary Sector Health & Wellbeing Forums will not only provide support to the Representatives, but also provide a structure for voluntary sector involvement in the wider Health & Wellbeing agenda.

The Fife-wide election of the Voluntary Sector Representatives attracted a strong turnout, and produced the following result:

- \* **Dunfermline & West:**                    **Jessie Roberts, PAMIS**
- \* **Kirkcaldy & Levenmouth:**        **Stuart Pryde, Fife Families Support Project**
- \* **Glenrothes & NE Fife:**            **Isabel Wilson, Leonard Cheshire**

CVS Fife's Network Support Officer has a key role in supporting these representatives, as well as facilitating the meetings of the Voluntary Sector Health & Wellbeing Forums. The first meetings of the Kirkcaldy & Levenmouth and the Glenrothes & North East Fife Forums took place in June, and the first meeting of the Dunfermline & West Forum took place in August. If you have any questions on any of the above, please contact Douglas McLellan, Network Support Officer, at our Buckhaven Office.

**Douglas McLellan, Network Support Officer**

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## Disclosure Checks

The Central Registered Body in Scotland (CRBS) has been providing free Disclosure checks on volunteers for voluntary organisations who work with children and vulnerable adults since 2002. However, the introduction of the new Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003 in January 2005 has raised new concerns around Disclosure issues amongst voluntary organisations AND their funders, and there seems to be some confusion as to who in an organisation should be checked and how the whole process should be handled.

CVS Fife is working through the Voluntary Sector Task Group with Volunteering Fife to ensure that all voluntary organisations working with children and vulnerable adults can access the appropriate advice regarding Disclosure checks for staff and volunteers. Link Officers and Development Staff working with voluntary organisations attended training delivered by CRBS at the end of April to boost their own knowledge of Disclosure issues. CVS Fife has since delivered two local sessions in Methil and Crosshill for voluntary organisations and community groups. A further two sessions are planned for September in Cupar and Abbeyview.

Many small community organisations running kids clubs and sports groups are worried that this new legislation will place too great a burden on them, and that volunteers will stop coming forward due to excessive red tape. Here are CVS Fife we are keen to promote a positive message regarding Disclosure checks - with appropriate support all voluntary and community organisations can meet the requirements and ensure that the most vulnerable in our society get the best possible protection. Our Resource Worker, Mary Cormack, specialises in working with small community groups and can provide support on Disclosure issues.

CRBS can be contacted on 01786 849777, or see the website at [www.crbs.org.uk](http://www.crbs.org.uk)

Here are some key facts on the voluntary sector in Fife:

- The voluntary sector in Fife provides around 3,500 full-time equivalent jobs
- 22% of Fife's residents (76,000) offer their time and skills on a voluntary basis at some point during the year
- An analysis of 188 voluntary organisations in Fife shows a minimum annual turnover of £30.17m
- In CVS Fife's database, the income band with the highest number of organisations within it is <£15,000p.a.
- The higher proportion of groups with less than £15,000 pa reflects national research, which show that 65% of voluntary organisations receive less than £25,000 pa.

We are aiming to use our database to build as full a picture of the voluntary sector as possible. If you know of charitable and community organisations that should be on our database, please encourage them to contact us. To see a full listing of the organisations already benefiting from being on our database, log on to our website: [www.cvsfife.org](http://www.cvsfife.org)

CVS Fife would like to hear from you if you would like any more information on the items carried by this bulletin, or if you would like to feedback to us. Please contact our Manager, Alison Cameron, or Deputy Manager Bryan Poole, on the number given below.

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