

## ***Argyll and Bute third sector interface***

# **Third sector support in Argyll and Bute**

### ***Background***

In May 2008 Council Leader, Dick Walsh, offered a challenge to the organisations supporting the third sector to access additional support to improve coverage, equality of access and quality of services provided.

The challenge laid out by the Council Leader set out the outcomes the Council wishes to see achieved. They are:

- More active third sector, supporting more community activity
- Better quality support for third sector organisations across the whole of Argyll and Bute
- Equitable access to support for all communities in Argyll and Bute
- A clear voice advocating the interests of the third sector in Argyll and Bute locally and nationally
- Stronger and more active social enterprises winning contracts to provide services

Fairer Scotland Funding was allocated to support this process.

At around the same time the Government indicated that from April 2011 current arrangements for grant funding to support CVSs, volunteer centres and social enterprise partnerships would end. Third sector organisations were asked to develop and agree an 'interface' with the CPP to improve strategic communications and to act as the body to receive future funding from the Government. Government support for the third sector is expected to be reduced in real terms from April 2011.

The main third sector support organisations formed a Third Sector Steering Group that includes the intermediary organisations and other third sector representatives. This group has tried to make progress on developing the interface, but progress has been difficult.

The Council also initiated a project arising from links with the Carnegie UK Trust and Big Lottery Fund focussed on harnessing the potential of the third sector to support delivery of Council/public service objectives (aka "The Demonstration Project"). This project is focused on the third sector weighted towards the social enterprise end of the third sector landscape (see diagram).

Research is required to provide information to support:

- dialogue on the future structure and coordination of services to support development of the third sector
- development of the interface so that the third sector has an authoritative voice and influence in the CPP and with partners individually

### ***What are we looking for – the key research questions***

The key questions that we want information on are:

- **What are the support needs of the third sector in Argyll and Bute?** (focussing on different categories of organisation)

- **Who provides what support and where?** (i.e. organisations, capabilities and geographic coverage)

Information should be reported in a way that allows us to identify gaps in service provision or duplication of services by service type and geographic area. An indication of the scale of service provided would also be beneficial.

## **Scope**

The third sector is broadly defined by the third sector landscape described in the attached diagram – i.e. ranging from voluntary organisations through to social enterprises. The research should focus on support provided to any organisations within that range.

The demand – i.e. support that organisations require – does not have to be researched from an Argyll and Bute perspective. We would expect there to be sufficient existing research that describes the support needs of different organisations across the third sector landscape. We would not expect to see detailed primary research on this aspect. Some local testing of generic conclusions would be necessary as local verification of this information.

The exploration of who provides what services and to what extent is likely to require primary research. This should attempt to provide a picture across all organisations that provide support or advice services to third sector organisations – these could be based locally, regionally or nationally (i.e. not limited to the current intermediary organisations). This picture should also highlight areas where there are gaps or duplication. We would want this information verified, perhaps with a sample of organisations that have accessed support or tried to find suitable support.

The research should also consider issues around strategic representation of the third sector to the CPP. The CPP has a view that the interface will fulfil this function.

The research report can also highlight interesting examples of service provision, current trends and models for representation that may be considered by the CPP and third sector partners in the dialogue that follows the publication of the research.

## **Exclusions**

The research should be confined to organisations and the services they deliver to provide support and advice to third sector organisations. This is not an exercise to map the third sector.

Funding arrangements for support to the third sector are not part of this research.

Recommendation on future options for supporting the third sector are not required. These will be developed by partners locally, drawing on the outputs from the research.

## **Interrelationships**

There are a range of organisations providing support to the third sector. The process must ensure these and their interrelationships are covered.

The Demonstration Project has already considered some aspects of the work to be covered by this research and the Project will also use the outputs from this research.

The Council has conducted a Best Value Review of Community Learning and Regeneration, which has therefore included third sector support provided by the Council. The outputs of this review need to be considered.

SCVO are managing the Supporting Voluntary Action (SVA) programme that is focused on building capacity and increasing effectiveness of the third sector, including work on support networks for third sector organisations.

### **Timeframe**

The research needs to be completed and reported by end of October to allow preparation and dialogue with the key players who currently provide services to the third sector and recipients of those services.

## **Assessment of responses**

Responses to this brief must as a minimum provide the information required below. The responses will be assessed using the weightings indicated in the table.

<b>Required information</b>	<b>Assessment weighting</b>
Overall price	40%
Methods to be used to undertake the research	10%
Detail of timeline, including key dates/interactions, leading to delivery of the final report	5%
An estimate of the work days required to complete the work	0%
Detail of professional, technical and support expertise provided to support the research: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the number of staff working on the research</li> <li>• details of their relevant qualifications</li> <li>• details of their experience</li> </ul>	5% 10% 10%
Experience of work on similar research for other clients	20%
Details of clients who will provide references	0%

### **Brian Barker**

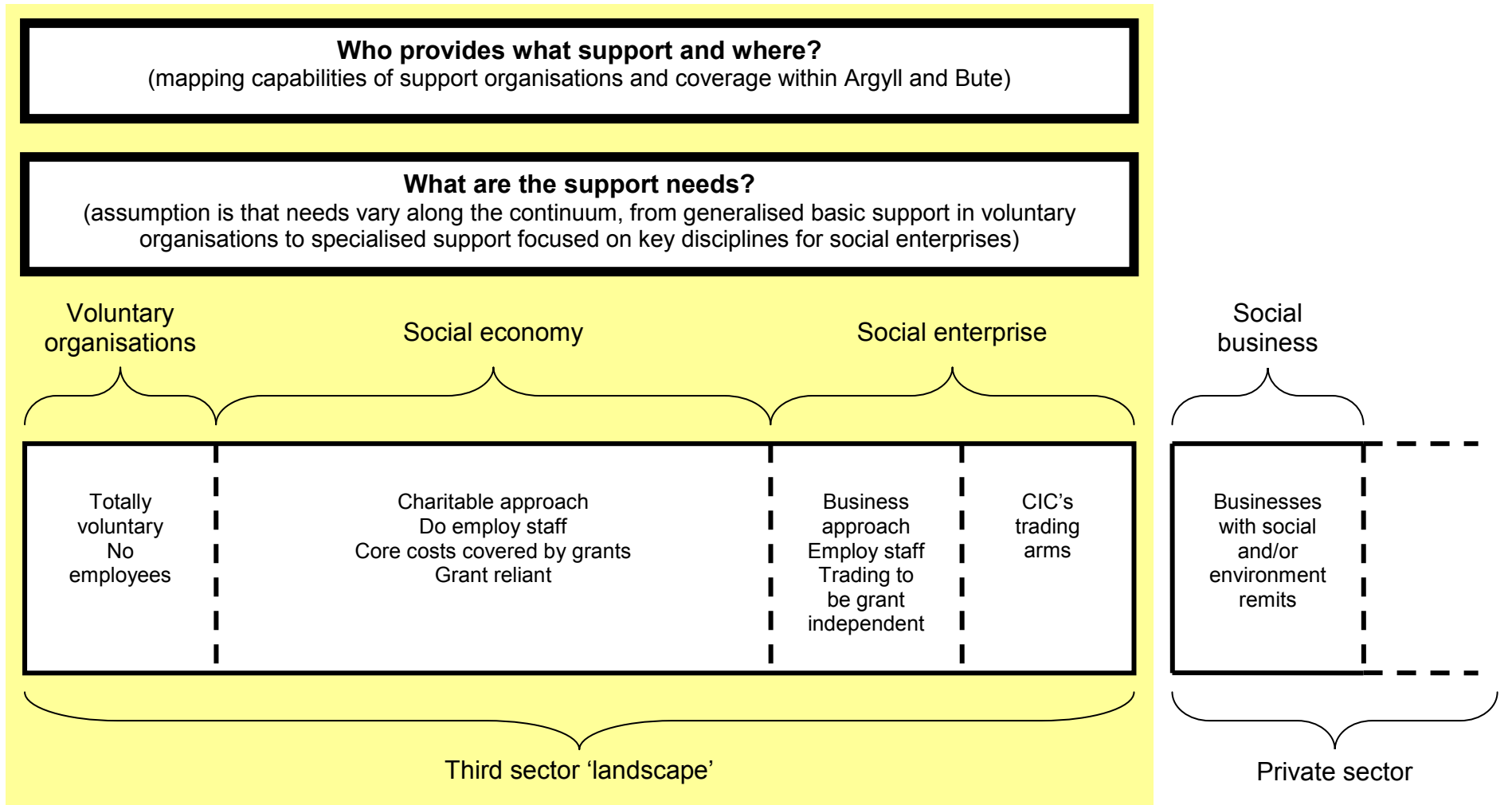
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**Key research questions and relationship to the third sector landscape**



Core model adapted from Colin Campbell – Assist Social Capital and Mike Geraghty – ABSSEN