

## **Argyll and Bute**

### **The Third Sector Partnership and Single Interface Progress Report**

#### Third Sector Partnership

The Third Sector Partnership came into being 28<sup>th</sup> January 2009 (formerly the Third Sector Steering Group) and is the lead body for the third sector in Argyll and Bute. The Partnership is underpinned by a Memorandum of Understanding which members can sign up to and which underlines a joint working approach for the voluntary and social enterprise sectors.

Argyll and Bute Volunteer Centre (ABVC), Argyll Council of Voluntary Services (ACVS) and Argyll and Bute Social Enterprise Network (ABSEN), have signed this joint working agreement initially to deliver the projects to be funded via the Fairer Argyll and Bute (FAB) Fund.

Through consultation, some 20 plus other organisations in the Voluntary/Social Enterprise Sector have indicated their support for the partnership and desire to become members. and these include representatives from our island communities and from each of the local authority areas across Argyll and Bute. With all having links to local voluntary sector or social enterprise sector fora, and thereby in turn to the local communities this gives an effective mechanism for information and views to flow from the ground up and for equality of access and representation on a thematic and geographic basis.

Some 8 members of the TSP have thus far indicated their willingness to commit time and resources to a pan- Argyll 'reference' group as part of and helping to inform the infrastructure organisations of the single interface, whilst others will act as a wider reference group and communication channel between local and strategic groups. As with the wider membership, it is anticipated others will also volunteer to become part of this wider interface. The TSP is fortunate to have a much wider representative base and greater membership than was achieved through the TSSG.

The attached diagrams give a starting position for discussion how the TSP and interface can link with new, proposed CPP structures and groups and we await final decisions on this from CPP. The TSP will be consulting the wider sector regarding representation at the various levels which, with the commitments indicated above, should be achievable through the various partner organisations. Outcomes of the CPP mapping exercise will also help inform developments.

#### FAB Funded Projects in Progress

Following a funding bid to the FAB partnership, largely based on commitments given by Cllr Dick Walsh to the infrastructure groups in May 2008, the first phase of 'Strengthening the Third Sector' is ready to move to delivery by TSP partners.

A draft Service Level Agreement has been issued by Argyll and Bute Council (ABC), which once finalised will enable the subject projects to proceed. These projects are:

- website development: improving the structure and content of local websites serving the sector in order to improve retrievability and flow of information
- coordinated training programme, to ensure that training provided in the county meets customer requirements and is available to all.

Some partners (TSP) are able to join with delivery of parts of the joint training programme and all will help inform the website development.

Currently the TSP is waiting for a response to comments on the SLA, for this to be finalised and for advice on funding availability and mechanism before the wider TSP is able to implement phase one of 'Strengthening the Third Sector'. It is hoped we have the clarity needed by September 2009.

### Mapping of skills and competences

Following a meeting of representatives of the Sector, ABC, and Scottish Government on June 2nd, 2009, ABC will coordinate and lead a mapping exercise to catalogue intermediary skills and competences in the county. This will add to the development of the Single Interface, in particular, identify where specific knowledge and support can be accessed by way of centres of expertise.

### Local Voluntary Sector Fora (VSF)

VSFs have been held throughout the county and have been well supported by individuals and organisations. Much useful data and feedback has been collected by this means. VSFs clearly have a significant place within the links between the communities, Third Sector Partnership, the Social Enterprise and Voluntary Sector and the Community Planning process

### Office presence in Oban, Lochgilphead, Campbeltown, Helensburgh, Dunoon

ABVC and ACVS through their co-joined working agreement, have good office and drop-in facilities in most of the mainland population centres. In particular, the Oban office provides a hub facility with meeting space and a full range of advice and support services.

### Compact

Much of the above will be, the Partnership believes, achievable through a local Compact and we are engaging in discussions with EVOG through their STEPS programme to design a Compact which best serves the needs of the third sector in Argyll and Bute. There are many good examples of successful compacts between the local authority and voluntary sector, which can be used as a models as well as the compact guides to aid developing such an agreement for Argyll and Bute The wider membership of the TSP hope that our statutory partners including Health and AB Council will collaborate on the development of such a Compact.

### Work to be done for the Single Interface

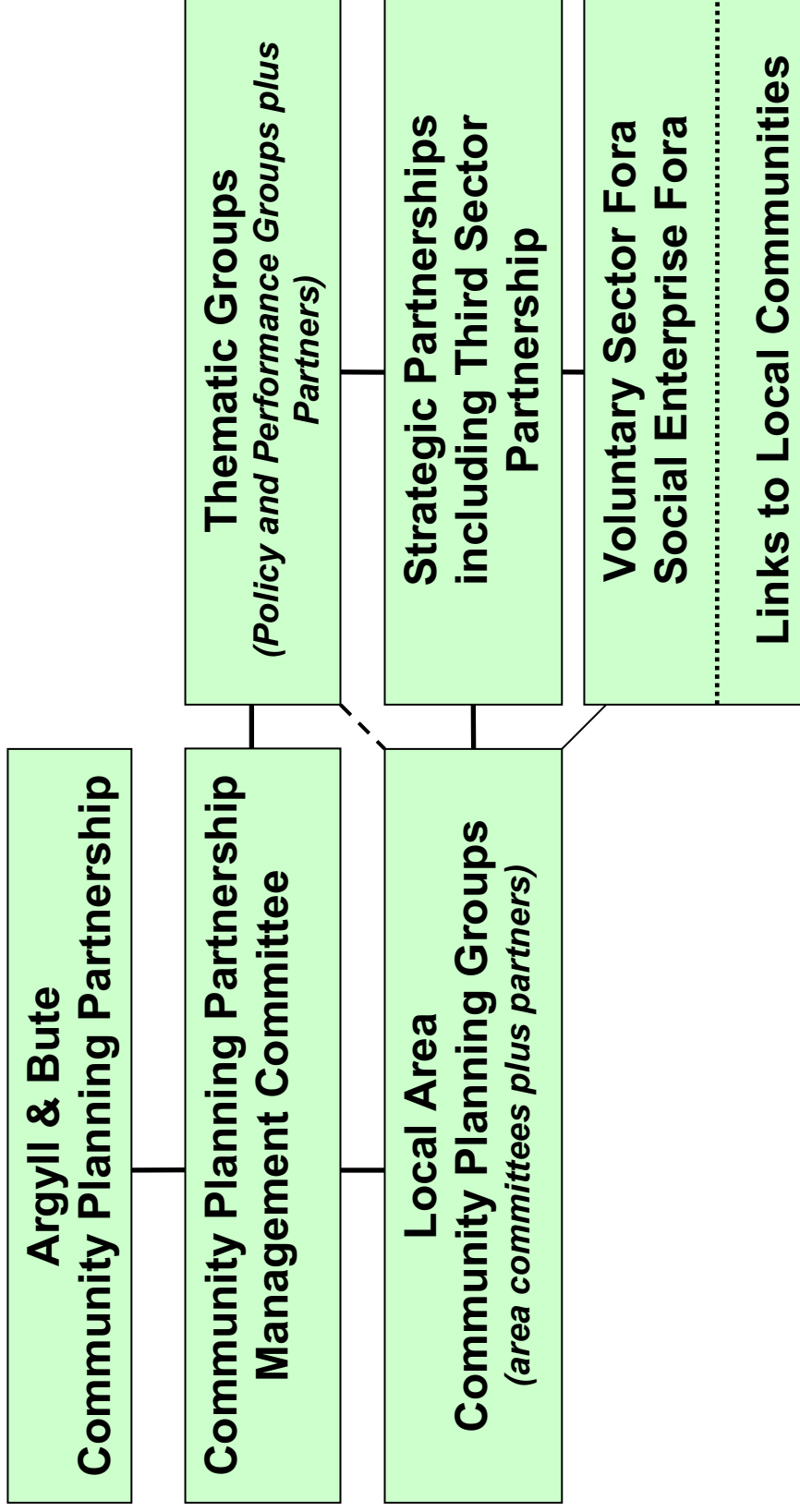
- Core funding management: A local core funding distribution model will be required to be developed and agreed
- Communication and representation protocol: Perhaps the most important outstanding activity is the development of a Compact which would include protocols for information flow, consultation, agreement and representation on Community Planning.

A draft Compact discussion document will be prepared for review by CPP in October 2009, with a view to having the Single Interface fully developed, agreed and in place by March 2010.

### References material

Through the work of TSSG and other sources there is now a vast library of information and resources to inform this journey and the opportunity to benefit from existing research and experiences.

# Third Sector Partnership Links



## Third Sector Partnership Links (2)

