

NATIONAL THIRD SECTOR GIRFEC PROJECT

THIRD SECTOR INTERFACE CHILDREN'S SERVICES NETWORK

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background

National Third Sector GIRFEC Project (NTSG) was established in 2013 following the launch of the Getting it Right for Every Child policy. Its objective was to support the third sector, to enable it to play a full role in the development of Children's Services planning and delivery of the GIRFEC provisions within the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

In April 2018, the Project Advisory Group (involving various stakeholders, including The Scottish Govt as project funders) agreed to strengthen the project's work and further its aim by transferring the project's management from Barnardo's Scotland to Children in Scotland.

From the start, the NTSG has adopted a collaborative approach and has worked with local partners to support third sector's participation in the local children's services planning process. Given the core role of the Third Sector Interfaces (TSIs) in local landscapes, they have become one of the project's main stakeholder groups.

"Third Sector Interfaces (TSI) play an important role in the third sector landscape. They are a key point of intelligence about local third sector organisations. They understand the local landscape and how it affects the third sector's ability to contribute to local outcomes and national strategies. They are well positioned to identify support needs for the local third sector. TSIs can identify third sector issues and perspectives that can feed into both local and national policies including Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)."

*Source: Third Sector Interface Outcomes Framework September 2018
(co-produced by the Scottish Government Third Sector Unit and the TSI network)*

Following the introduction of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, the Statutory Guidance on Part 3 (Children's Services Planning) was published in 2016. In the Guidance, there are specific references to the role of TSIs during the children's services planning process and consultation.

To better understand the support needs from TSIs to fulfil these roles described in the Guidance and beyond, the NTSG project conducted a survey in 2016. The results highlighted a need for peer support, learning and networking opportunities for TSIs, specifically aimed at officers whose policy remits include children's services. In response, the NTSG project facilitates networking opportunities for TSIs across Scotland. This paper outlines the Terms of Reference for the TSI Network.

Aim of the TSI Network

To strengthen Third Sector Interfaces' capability to support the local third sector's engagement in children's services planning and their confidence to contribute to children's services policies and practice issues.

Objectives of the TSI Network

The Network will

1. Bring together Third Sector Interfaces to exchange knowledge and best practice in third sector's engagement in children's services planning and delivery;
2. Disseminate information regarding national policies and strategies of children's services to local third sector organisations;
3. Identify and discuss common issues affecting the third sector's (including TSIs') effective contribution to children's services planning;
4. Initiate ideas and develop solutions together to address issues and challenges;
5. Be a collective voice, bringing issues faced by the third sector children's organisations and TSIs to the attention of the NTSG Project which in turn inform Children in Scotland's wider policy influence work and representation at national strategic groups, e.g. the National GIRFEC Implementation Support Group;
6. Provide a platform for public sector partners (e.g. Scottish Government, Education Scotland) to engage and communicate with TSIs regarding GIRFEC and children's services;
7. Provide a space to develop formal and informal collaborative arrangements i.e. sharing resources and mentoring arrangements.

Membership

Membership is open to all Third Sector Interfaces in Scotland. They do not have to be members of Children in Scotland. No membership fee is required.

Meetings

The Network aims to meet quarterly – dates advised in advance. Although the Network meeting is primarily for the TSIs, representatives of local third sector children's services networks/forums and other partners are welcome to attend the meetings to provide support to the Network.

Places are booked via the NTSG Project.

The agenda is co-developed between the NTSG Project and the TSI Reference Group ¹, as well as informed by feedback from the Network members.

¹ The TSI Reference Group is a small group consists of TSI Network members working with the NTSG project on a voluntary basis to advise on project events and activities, so that they are relevant, fit-for-purpose and effective. See TSI Reference Group Terms of Reference [insert URL] for details on remit, membership and expectations.

Expectations of the TSI Network members

Network member is expected to:

- Read and respond to relevant papers and correspondence when appropriate;
- Contribute to the discussions at the Network meetings;
- Cascade relevant information to their own local third sector networks;
- Suggest agenda items;
- Shape the future of the Network.

Support from NTSG Project

NTSG will provide the following support:

- Deliver administrative support to organise the meetings;
- Provide a venue and refreshments;
- Organise agenda items and speakers;
- Offer to chair/facilitate meetings (although Members can also do this);
- Provide follow-up information after each meeting;
- Inform Children in Scotland's policy and strategic influence work with feedback from the Network;
- Support the set-up of any short-life working groups if required.