



**Supporting the
Third Sector Project**



Supporting The Third Sector Project Survey (2024): Exploring the role of the third sector in Children's Services Planning

February 2025

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Introduction

This report presents the findings from the 2024 Supporting the Third Sector (STTS) Project survey, which was designed to understand the extent of third sector involvement in Children's Services Planning (CSP) arrangements in Children's Services Planning Partnerships (CSPPs) across Scotland.

Who is Children in Scotland?

Children in Scotland is a national children's charity rooted in children's rights and working to improve children's lives. Children in Scotland offers a broad, balanced, and independent voice by bringing together a network of people working with and for children, alongside children and young people themselves. Children in Scotland creates solutions, provides support, and develops positive change across all areas affecting children in Scotland by listening, gathering evidence, and applying and sharing learning, whilst always working to uphold children's rights.

What is the Supporting the Third Sector (STTS) Project?

The STTS Project provides support to third sector interfaces (TSIs) and the wider third sector to play a meaningful and influential role in national planning and decision making to improve outcomes for children, young people, and families. The STTS Project is funded by the Scottish Government and hosted by Children in Scotland.



Methodology

The structure of the survey took into consideration the challenge questions and features of highly effective practice within the 'How Good is our Third Sector Participation in Children's Services Planning?' self-evaluation tool,¹ specifically in regard to the Area of Focus 2 – Children's Services Planning: Strategic planning and delivery of services. This tool was created to support CSPPs to consider all aspects of collaboration with the third sector to improve the quality of services for children and young people. The decision to focus on specific sections from the tool also took into consideration knowledge and experience that the STTS Project gathered from working closely with the TSI Children's Services Network and other stakeholders.

The survey ran for just over five weeks, from 30 October until 6 December 2024. Overall, the survey received 67 responses in total. Of these 67 responses, 48 were completed fully enough to be included in the analysis. We received responses from 20 local authority areas out of 32. An additional four respondents operated in more than one geographical area or at a national level.

¹ Children in Scotland (2024): *Self-evaluation tool: How good is our third sector participation in Children's Services Planning?*

The survey targeted third sector interfaces (TSIs), local and national third sector organisations, members of the Children’s Services Planning Strategic Leads Network and statutory partners involved in local CSP. However, of the 48 usable responses, 44 were received from the third sector and four identified themselves as a statutory partner or a strategic lead.

We approached the analysis of this piece of work by identifying themes in the qualitative responses and aligning them with the answers to the quantitative questions. To present these results we have split the report into sections that reflect the themes identified.



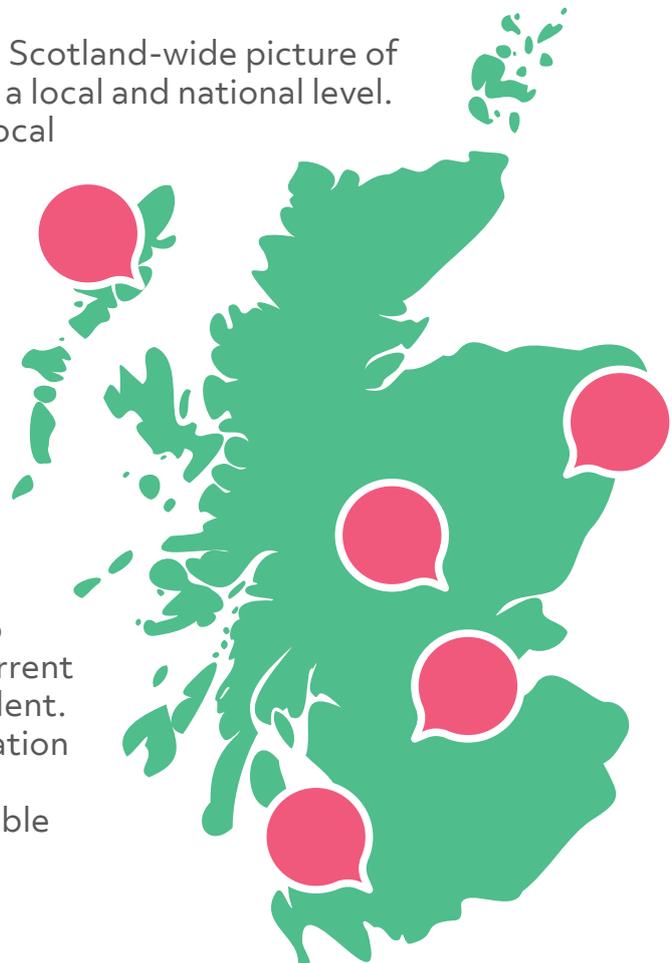
Limitations

There are several limitations to this survey that should be noted when considering the findings within this report. It is acknowledged that the findings do not represent the full range of views of the third sector and other strategic partners involved in the delivery of CSP duties. Moreover, it is also recognised that, although the survey was shared and promoted to TSIs, local and national third sector organisations, and CSP Strategic Leads, the responses were predominantly from those working in the third sector and highlight their perspectives and experiences of CSP. However, what has been identified throughout this report remains an important contribution to the discussion surrounding third sector involvement in CSP arrangements and will further inform the STTS Project moving forward.

An aim of this research was to establish a Scotland-wide picture of third sector engagement and planning at a local and national level. The survey received responses from 20 local authority areas out of 32. Additionally, the majority of the responsive local authority areas were from urban areas, with 16 urban areas compared to four rural areas being represented.

We acknowledge that the lower turnout of responses may have resulted from ‘survey fatigue’ at a time where a large number of surveys and consultations were being conducted.

We kept survey responses anonymous to encourage honest assessments of the current activity and experiences of each respondent. However, this does prevent the identification and analysis of distinctions between individual geographical areas and being able to establish area-specific challenges and positive practice.





Findings

Participation of the third sector – Leadership, collaboration and communication

This section of the survey included questions adapted from the ‘features of highly effective practice’ statements in the HGIO tool, using a five-scale rating. The response options for these questions were: ‘Very Well’, ‘Fairly Well’, ‘Not Very Well’, ‘Not at All’ and ‘Don’t Know’. This was followed by the opportunity for respondents to provide further optional comments. The statements are grouped into three areas: third sector representation, collaboration, and communication. The following themes emerged under each sub-area.

Representation

We received a variety of responses when asking respondents about third sector representation. Respondents were asked how well third sector partners are involved in developing and embedding a shared vision, values, and culture for the CSPPs; the majority of respondents selected ‘Fairly Well’ (53%). A total of 64% selected a positive option with 23% selecting ‘Not Very Well’ or ‘Not at all’.

When asked about how well a large variety of third sector organisations are involved in CSP through co-ordination, facilitation and representation, most respondents still said ‘Fairly Well’ (46%). However, it was evident that a large proportion of respondents were not as satisfied with this, with 33% selecting ‘Not very well’. In total, 54% responded positively, with 37% selecting one of the more negative options.

Positive examples of third sector representation highlighted included existing structures involving third sector representation in workstreams, working groups, networks, and strategic groups. Examples of good practice included having regular meetings held throughout the year, and the TSI being involved on strategic groups, having a positive impact. This involvement at a strategic level helped to improve representation of the third sector and supported it to identify opportunities for third sector involvement in other decision-making groups.

Other examples of good practice that were highlighted included the third sector representatives assuming clear roles within the partnership, such as chair or vice chair, which, as described by one respondent, has **“enabled stronger links to third sector engagement”**.

Some respondents also noted ongoing efforts to enhance third sector involvement in collaboration with strategic partners, either through work with the STTS Project or directly with partners (e.g. other third sector organisations, the local authority etc). This shows a willingness and active buy-in in some areas to improve third sector participation and representation in CSP and the value of working collaboratively across sectors and organisations.



However, the comments from respondents also showed that there continues to be variation across localities. While representation in various groups was noted, some feedback indicated representation often reflects a limited number of representatives from the same organisations, rather than the wider third sector. In addition, funding complexities and constraints were cited as barriers to broader representation. For example, a lack of staff capacity to engage in these groups, or changes in staffing that impacts consistency of contact or losing those contacts altogether. Moreover, some areas continue to experience barriers through the inconsistent manner of organisation and support for groups they are involved in. Where capacity is already stretched across the sector, as reflected in this report, these groups need to be meaningfully supported in order to be impactful and worthwhile.

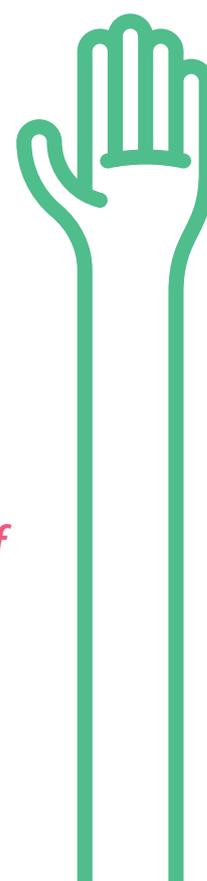
A number of respondents shared that decisions were often made prior to consultation with the third sector. Respondents also highlighted poor communication and information sharing as a key issue that impacted opportunities for the third sector to meaningfully contribute to discussions and decision making. Some respondents described having to push for representation and meeting resistance from partner organisations.

“We have had to push for representation on the Children’s Services Board and are still not included in each of the working groups. The role of the third sector is not valued and certainly not viewed as equal partners in the Children’s Services Planning process.”

It is clear from the feedback given that the work and influence of a TSI holds an important role when it comes to representation of the third sector. Whether that is being a representative for the third sector themselves on relevant strategic groups, or supporting and co-ordinating other organisations to do so. Where relationships and communication have broken down or they are very limited, effective representation is hindered. Respondents highlighted that this can have a significant impact on effective working relationships between the TSI, the wider third sector and statutory partners.

Building and maintaining strong relationships emerged as a key theme in this survey. This echoes what the STTS Project has heard at TSI Children’s Services Network meetings across the 2024-25 financial year. Organisations or individuals who foster strong relationships are more likely to be represented, while areas with strained or limited relationships lead to reduced collaboration and involvement in children’s services planning and delivery. A factor that can contribute to this is high turnover of staff, in particular with those who hold strategic and leadership roles.

“It can be excellent but remains variable. High turnover of staff in strategic/leadership positions alongside staff absence, has led to a disconnect and potentially a lack of understanding regarding the role, values and potential of the third sector to contribute as more than providers i.e. to be invited in to planning as partners.”



Collaboration

When asked whether third sector data is used alongside statutory data to identify needs and priorities for children and young people, the results were mixed, with a slight positive majority. Similarly, when asked about the third sector's opportunities to contribute to evaluation work for the local children's services plan, responses were more split between this working well and the contrary.



Some areas reported difficulties in collecting third sector data due to the lack of a clear system or approach, while statutory data is still preferred due to better support systems for data collection.

“We have struggled to find a measuring tool suited to gather the wide variation of data collated by the third sector into one format. [The local authority] do value the outcomes of the work carried out but work still needs to be done to capture the full outcomes and value of the third sector.”

“We have opportunities to contribute but more importance is put on data provided by statutory partners, and they have better support systems to gather this.”

The importance of clear communication was highlighted across responses. In particular, when a request for data is made, it is important that the request is clear and an explanation is provided about what the data will inform or be used for. While some third sector partners reported sharing data, they added that they were left unsure how that data was being used and noted that sharing of data is not reciprocated to the third sector from statutory services. Others expressed that they have not had the opportunity to share their data or had not been asked.



Additionally, it was noted that key information can be missed due to the volume of emails that third sector organisations receive.



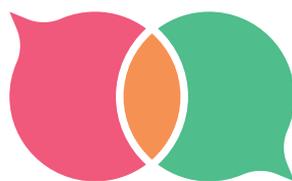
Examples were given of positive practice regarding how data can be collected and shared, in particular the use of case studies. Examples were shared of new funds and mechanisms currently in place that were described as drivers for improved collaboration, such as the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund and Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund. In addition, some reiterated the importance of being involved in and part of different groups and forums focused on Children's Services, with one respondent highlighting forums and networking acting as powerful mechanisms to working collaboratively, using resources wisely and avoiding duplication.

“This year, as Community Mental Health and Whole Family Wellbeing policies and funds are acting as drivers, collaborative practice across sector is beginning to happen. This is another major development area in next few years.”

Communication

When asked how transparent and effective the systems in place are for representing a range of third sector views in planning processes, no respondents selected 'Not at All,' and only 4 out of 47 answered 'Don't Know.' The majority answered 'Fairly Well' (49%), followed by 'Not Very Well' (25%) and 'Very Well' (17%).

The next question, which focused on good local communication and whether all third sector organisations understand their role in supporting families and local CSP processes, received a majority of positive responses. Although over half responded 'Fairly Well' or 'Very Well', 14 respondents felt this was not done very well in their area, with two people responding 'Not at All'.



The responses became more mixed when respondents were asked if third sector organisations are clear who represents them at the CSPP and if they know the routes to contributing via their representatives. There was a slight increase in 'Don't Know' responses (28%), however just under half of respondents still answered positively.

The TSI was identified as an essential element in supporting the third sector's work, by providing administrative support to relevant forums and groups, supporting representatives to be included on external groups and sharing opportunities. It was identified that a particular focus may be needed to clarify the difference between an individual representing their organisation on these groups, and representing the sector as a whole. However, it was highlighted that representation of the broader third sector will continue to be challenging due to the limited capacity of staff and resources of smaller organisations to be directly involved in this type of engagement.

In addition, many areas do not have dedicated funding or resources to support the forums and groups that have been shown to be an important part of engaging the third sector in conversations surrounding CSP, and therefore are stretched to provide this.

However, some respondents reflected that their TSI could be more transparent and proactive, in particular in clarifying the role of the TSI to the sector and its partnerships with the statutory sector. Some had more negative experiences, which reflected information not being shared effectively, outcome groups not meeting regularly, and limited engagement of the wider third sector.

Participation of the third sector – Commissioning and procurement processes

Recent research from the Scottish Government, Scotland Excel, and feedback from Children in Scotland's networks and stakeholders highlight the importance of third sector involvement in commissioning and procurement to improve outcomes for children, young people, and families. The survey therefore included questions on third sector involvement in commissioning, procurement, and financial decision making in respondents' areas.

When asked how well both commissioned and non-commissioned third sector organisations are involved in the scoping of services and identification of gaps for the CSPP, we received a mixed picture. A small majority of 40% were negative, with 36% stating 'Not Very Well'. Whereas overall 36% were positive, with 29% stating 'Fairly Well'. Similarly, we also received a fairly even split of opinion when asked whether the current commissioning and procurement processes encourage collaboration and joined-up working between the third sector and statutory partners. Across both questions, 'Don't Know' received 24% and 19%, respectively.

When asked to elaborate on their answers, the following themes were identified.

- We heard that third sector involvement in commissioning and procurement continues to be challenging in many areas.
- Multiple respondents shared that negative past experiences with partners around commissioning and procurement processes have resulted in mistrust.
- Some respondents informed us that the third sector in their area is not involved in these discussions, and it can be difficult to understand the local authority processes if not involved.
- In addition, non-commissioned services were seen not be involved in children's services planning, compared to commissioned services who are more likely to have solid relationships with commissioners and were regarded as valuable partners.

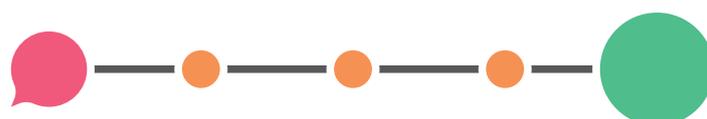
“Not all third sector services are valued or included in the delivery of joined-up working for the best outcomes for children.”

“Scoping and identification of gaps tends to happen under pressure at the point prior to the procurement process starting rather than being a continuous process.”

However, for some areas the development of the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund has resulted in some positive development to the current processes. It has encouraged collaboration between partners and supported the development of strong relationships and networking across the third sector.

“We have some excellent examples of this, particularly around our Whole Family Wellbeing approach. Where organisations have been brought together to share their work and find opportunities to work together to meet the same goal.”

Lastly, we asked participants to identify how the third sector is involved in finance discussions and decision making, specifically asking for examples. Out of 34 responses to this question, 15 respondents provided feedback that they are currently unaware of how or if the third sector is involved in these discussions. Eight respondents provided examples of various strategic groups or joint commissioning groups that contain TSIs or third sector representatives. However, there were an additional six respondents who expressed their experience that the third sector involvement felt tokenistic or limited. The remaining five respondents said that they are not involved in any financial decisions or discussions.

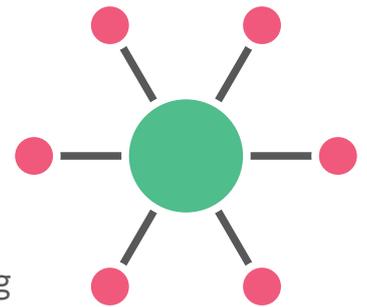


Third sector representation within planning structures – Roles and expectations

We asked respondents to choose a statement that best described the extent to which the third sector is represented at different levels in the local CSP approach in their area of operation. Positively, 80% of respondents answered that the third sector experienced some representation or involvement in different levels of the CSPP. When breaking this down however, 46% felt that while there is representation, it is limited or inconsistent. 10% who answered said that representation was minimal or non-existent and 10% answered 'Don't Know'. 34% of respondents provided a more positive response, telling us that the third sector is represented at all levels of the CSPP.

Respondents were given the opportunity to elaborate on their answers via an optional open-ended question, with twelve respondents choosing to do so.

Overall, the feedback showed a recent positive movement towards including third sector representation at various levels through different groups, in particular the TSI being a part of those groups. However, the feedback also highlighted that this continues to be limited due to a range of challenges. Firstly, lack of funding and capacity of the TSI and other third sector organisations reduces their ability to be able to meaningfully engage with CSPPs. This includes attending planning groups and responding to opportunities.



It was also felt that this representation was not consistent, often because of a disconnect between groups and priorities. An example of this included Child Protection being separated from the Health and Social Care Partnership and the Child Poverty Programme for the local area. This further complicates an already complex landscape, resulting in a lack of adequate opportunities for meaningful representation.

Respondents were asked if there is a shared understanding and reasonable expectation of the role of TSIs and the third sector representatives within the CSPP. While more respondents chose 'Agree' (38%) than any other option, no respondents selected 'Strongly Agree' and 50% of respondents selected a 'Disagree' option or 'Neither agree nor disagree'.

Various respondents felt that there needs to be a shared understanding of what the role of the TSI and a representative of the third sector is, what they can realistically achieve, and that they cannot fully represent the whole of the third sector, and for this to be articulated clearly to partners. However, the current funding situation and time constraints are seen as barriers to achieving this.

“I think that ultimately the current situation of funding and time constraints often mitigate against genuine use of voice in decision making. However, models are being shared to some extent and there is good practice.”

Similarly, a respondent shared the example that recent cuts to third sector services have resulted in several CSP groups losing third sector representation. This has resulted in a mapping exercise to identify where this representation is most needed to ensure it continues with current reduced capacity levels.

Lastly, this section asked respondents whether the third sector is able to amplify the voices and experiences of children, young people, and families to influence CSP arrangements locally. The majority of respondents (56%) agreed with this, with 15% selecting 'Strongly Agree' and 41% 'Agree'. Conversely, only 2% selected 'Strongly Disagree', 15% selected 'Disagree', and 24% chose 'Neither Agree nor Disagree'.

Some respondents shared how they are able to achieve this and identified that they can see evidence of how children and young people's voices are used within CSP approaches. One respondent shared that it is valued part of their shared partnership work with the public sector.

“Third sector is able to amplify the voices and experiences of children, young people and families meaningfully, with evidence integrated into the planning strategies. Although there is no resource allocated for this.”

Others shared that while the intention is there, there is room for improvement. One respondent shared that these voices and experiences predominantly tend to come from commissioned services, however there are pockets of great participation work elsewhere. Some respondents shared that they were not sure how these voices are represented at that level, if at all. While another respondent identified that it tends to be education services rather than the third sector that feed in the voices and experiences of children, young people and families.

“This can be selective, and decisions are made without timely engagement – again the wealth of knowledge and experience in third sector is not used to its full potential.”

Third sector representation within planning structures – Support and resources

We asked whether the local TSI is adequately resourced to co-ordinate representation from the sector and provide necessary support to representatives. While 44% answered 'Agree', no respondents chose 'Strongly Agree'. 49% of respondents were split between 'Neither agree nor disagree', 'Disagree' and 'Strongly Disagree'. When asked to elaborate on why, the following themes were identified as explanations.

The uncertainty and unsustainability of funding continues to have a negative impact. The respondents who shared that they receive funding to deliver children's services expressed that this funding is limited and not sustainable.

“The TSI as a whole has been on a standstill budget for many years. Funding for CYPF [children, young people and families] work from local authority is still well below in 2011 level in real terms. The policy environment and culture has improved a lot in last 7-8 years. However, funding has not.”



Some respondents shared that their funding will be finishing soon or that with current discussions about funding cuts there is no certainty surrounding future funding. Others shared that they receive no funding to facilitate and undertake this work in their local area. In addition, respondents told us that they felt that their capacity and resources were stretched and are unable to be involved and contribute to everything, with children's services being only one part of their role.

The survey also asked respondents if they are aware whether their local TSI has a dedicated Children and Families Officer or a similar role. Of the 41 respondents that answered, 51% responded 'Yes' and 21% responded 'No'. Therefore, respondents from nine different TSIs are aware of a dedicated children and families role compared to respondents from seven TSIs that do not have a dedicated role.

In comparison, 28% of respondents did not know whether their TSI had a dedicated Children and Families Officer in their local area.

When asked to comment on the current arrangements, the responses provide examples of the positives of having such a role as part of the TSI.

“Strong feedback from both statutory and third sector partners that TSI dedicated role has improved communication across sectors and increased third sector voice.”

We heard that those that have the dedicated role experience strengthened links and respect from partners and is vital in supporting both organisations and Children Services Planning partners to maximise third sector involvement.

However, there was concern shared by some respondents that the funding for some of these roles is limited and in one example is set to come to an end in 2025, with uncertainty whether the role will continue to be funded. The loss of this role may result in loss of connections and progress made by the TSI.

“Unsure if connections are strong enough yet to continue without the TSI link to facilitate and share information cross sectors. Concerned that if post not re-funded strong work so far will be lost!”

Furthermore, reduced capacity and limited funding in this area means the children's services focus for some TSIs fall within roles with a very wide remit. This can often result in stretching resources thin, and limited capacity to deliver children's services related work.

“CYPF [Children and Young People Forums] are under-resourced compared to the complexity of policy environment and the demand for services. Staff are continually outside the 'window of tolerance' that supports workforce wellbeing. There are 26 fields of children's services policies, and it is a challenge for one part-time staff member to prioritise.”



Conclusions and recommendations

The survey provides a valuable snapshot of the nature and extent of current third sector involvement in CSP across Scotland. While we were not able to capture data from every area of Scotland, the findings in this report display important reflections from the children's sector and third sector involvement in CSP and delivery in 2024, building on our previous 2023 Survey.²

Comparing the 2024 results with last year's survey, it is clear there continue to be very mixed experiences across the country. However, we can take away the following:

- The importance of a strong, well-funded TSI, including having a dedicated role for children's services, in the quality and scope of work that can be achieved.
- Building and maintaining relationships across the children's sector including between TSIs, the wider third sector and statutory partners is essential to positive and meaningful collaborative working.
- Local commissioning arrangements continue to present barriers to local collaboration between partners in CSP and delivery, with complex processes, respondents concern about exclusion of third sector partners in discussions and mistrust between the third sector and statutory partners as key issues.
- Data collection and sharing continues to be a challenge across localities resulting in valuable evidence and experience from the third sector not being recorded and included in strategic decisions.

From these findings, we recommend the following:

- Children's Services Planning Partnerships should continue to review third sector participation in key tasks over the three-year CSP cycle and identify where this could be strengthened.
- CSPPs should consider using the 'How Good is our Third Sector Participation in Children's Services Planning? Self-evaluation Tool' which provides a useful framework to identify and support local improvement conversations and activity.
- The third sector must be a meaningful partner in the discussions and the development of new Children's Services Plans for 2026-2029. This work should begin as early as possible. Statutory partners should have a clear plan of how they could engage with the third sector and involve TSIs in developing these engagement plans.
- Children's Services Planning Strategic Leads and TSIs should work together to ensure effective and meaningful representation of the third sector in planning and delivering groups and processes.
- Appropriate funding for TSIs is needed to ensure they have the capacity to engage fully with local CSP and delivery processes. In particular, this includes ringfenced funding for a dedicated Children, Young People and Families Officer or similar role who can meaningfully engage with statutory partners and the wider third sector.

² Children in Scotland (2023): *Supporting the Third Sector (STTS) Project Survey 2023: Third Sector Participation in Children's Services Planning*.

- Further consideration must be given as to how the third sector can be supported to effectively manage and share data to inform and improve local CSP processes, including the planning, delivery and evaluation of activity.
- Local commissioning processes should be reviewed to ensure ethical processes are in place that support collaboration between organisations and focus on improving outcomes for children, young people and families. These processes should reduce some of the barriers that currently exist for third sector partners.
- Further work should be undertaken to support local areas to identify ways to improve, build and maintain relationships between third sector and statutory partners. From the experience of the STTS Project, we have heard from our members on the benefits of in-person networking, third sector exhibits, forums and regular cross-sector meetings that have improved relationship building between partners.



Appendix: STTS Project Survey (November) – SurveyMonkey questions

Survey (2024): Exploring the role of the third sector in Children’s Services Planning

About the Supporting the Third Sector (STTS) Project

The Supporting the Third Sector (STTS) Project supports third sector partners to become more meaningfully involved in local and national planning and decision making relating to improving outcomes for children, young people, and families. This involves strengthening local structures and ensuring clear paths for effective engagement with the third sector locally, with the aim of improving the local Third Sector Interfaces (TSIs) and their members’ contribution to relevant policies and priorities. The project also aims to enable strengthened awareness, impact, and influence of the third sector, through the provision of training, information sharing, guidance, and peer support.

What is this survey about?

Following on from our previous annual survey in 2023, we want to build on our understanding of the current extent of the third sector’s involvement in Children’s Services Planning structures across Scotland.

We would like to provide a robust Scotland-wide picture of third sector engagement and planning at a local and national level. This will help us to understand the areas of strength in relation to participation and engagement for the sector and areas for further development.

This survey is based on the ‘How Good is Our Third Sector Participation in Children’s Services Planning?’ self-evaluation tool. This tool supports Children’s Services Planning Partnerships (CSPPs) to consider all aspects of collaboration with the third sector to improve the quality of services for children and young people.

To find out more about the STTS Project and to access the ‘How Good is Our Third Sector Participation in Children’s Services Planning?’ self-evaluation tool, please [click here](#).

Sharing survey results

The survey is anonymous but we have asked for details about your role and area so we can understand further the needs of the third sector. The STTS Project team will use this information for planning the delivery of our work. We will also share this information with Scottish Government and other key stakeholders.

Who is this survey for?

This survey is for Third Sector Interfaces (TSIs), local and national third sector organisations, members of the Children Services Planning Strategic Leads Network and other statutory partners involved in local Children's Services Planning.

Closing Date: Friday 6th December 2024

About you

1. Type of organisation

2. Area of operation

Please answer this questionnaire with reference to one/your main geographic area of operation only (using local authority boundaries) OR

If you are a national organisation operating in more than one Local Authority area, you can either:

- Answer from a national perspective and tick 'national/more than one area' in the drop-down box, or
- Complete more than one survey, relating to each of the LA areas that you would like to comment on (i.e. if you wish to respond with reference to more than one local authority area, it will be necessary to complete another questionnaire).

Thank you.

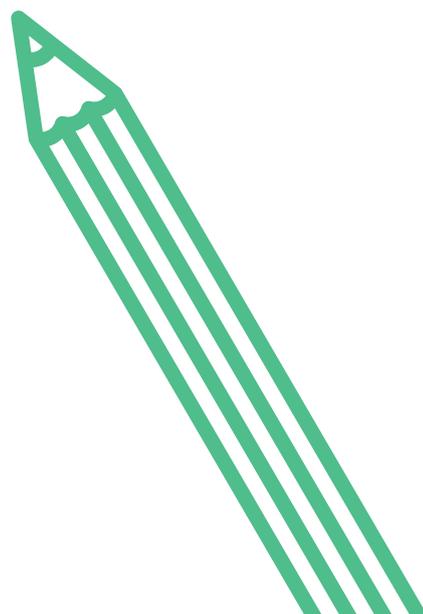
3. Area of operation

Part 1: Participation of the third sector – Leadership, collaboration and communication

This section focuses on the participation of the third sector in Children's Services Planning specifically surrounding leadership, collaboration and communication. Please rate how well or otherwise you feel it works in your area of operation.

- ### 4. Third sector partners are involved in developing and embedding a shared vision, values and culture for the CSPP.
- Very well
 - Fairly well
 - Not very well
 - Not at all
 - Don't know

5. Through co-ordination, facilitation and representation, a large variety of third sector organisations are involved in Children's Services Planning.
- Very well
 - Fairly well
 - Not very well
 - Not at all
 - Don't know
6. If you are able to, please use the space below to elaborate on your answers.
7. Third sector data has been used alongside statutory data to identify needs and priorities for children and young people, and to work together collaboratively to improve outcomes.
- Very well
 - Fairly well
 - Not very well
 - Not at all
 - Don't know
8. The third sector have effective opportunities to contribute to evaluation work undertaken as part of the local Children Services Plan.
- Very well
 - Fairly well
 - Not very well
 - Not at all
 - Don't know
9. If you are able to, please use the space below to elaborate on your answers.
10. There are transparent and effective systems in place (e.g. local third sector networks/forums) to enable a range of third sector views to be properly represented in all planning processes.
- Very well
 - Fairly well
 - Not very well
 - Not at all
 - Don't know



11. There is good communication locally, ensuring all third sector organisations understand their role in supporting families and local Children Services Planning processes.

- Very well
- Fairly well
- Not very well
- Not at all
- Don't know

12. Third sector organisations are clear who represent them at the CSPP and know the routes to contribute via their representatives.

- Works very well
- Works fairly well
- Does not work very well
- Does not work at all
- Don't know

13. If you are able to, please use the space below to elaborate on your answers.

Part 2: Participation of the third sector - Commissioning and procurement processes

This section focuses on the participation of the third sector in Children's Services Planning specifically surrounding commissioning and procurement processes. Please rate how well or otherwise you feel it works in your area of operation.

14. Both commissioned and non-commissioned third sector organisations are involved in the scoping of services and help to identify gaps for the Children's Services Planning Partnership.

- Very well
- Fairly well
- Not very well
- Not at all
- Don't know

15. Commissioning and procurement processes encourage collaboration and joined up working between the third sector and statutory partners for the best outcomes for children and young people.

- Very well
- Fairly well
- Not very well
- Not at all
- Don't know

16. If you are able to, please use the space below to elaborate on your answers.

17. How is the third sector involved in finance discussions and decisions? For example, which strategic groups are you involved in?

Please say if you do not know.

Part 3: Third sector representation within planning structures – Roles and expectations

This section focuses on third sector representation within planning structures specifically surrounding roles and expectations. Please rate how well or otherwise you feel it works in your area of operation.

18. To what extent is the third sector represented at different levels of the Children's Services Planning Partnership (CSPP)?

Please choose one statement below which you believe best describes the extent to which the third sector is represented in local Children's Services Planning in your area of operation.

- The third sector is represented at all levels within the CSPP e.g. delivery groups, strategic groups, leadership.
- The third sector is involved but its representation and engagement is limited or inconsistent.
- The third sector is consulted with but not represented in any strategic planning groups.
- The third sector's involvement is minimal or non-existent.
- I do not know how the third sector is involved in Children's Services Planning.

19. If you are able to, please use the space below to elaborate on your answers.

20. There is a shared understanding and reasonable expectation of the role of Third Sector Interfaces and the third sector representatives within the CSPP.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

21. The third sector are able to amplifying the voices and experiences of children, young people and families to influence children's services planning arrangements locally.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

22. If you are able to, please use the space below if you are able to elaborate on your answers.

Part 4: Third sector representation within planning structures – Support and resources

This section focuses on the third sector representation within planning structures specifically surrounding support and resources. Please rate how well or otherwise you feel it works in your area of operation.

23. The local Third Sector Interface (TSI) is adequately resourced to co-ordinate representation from the sector and provide necessary support to representatives.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

24. If you are able to, please use the space below to elaborate on your answers.

25. Does your areas Third Sector Interface (TSI) have a dedicated Children and Families Officer or a similar role?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

26. Do you have any comments or observations about the current arrangements?

27. Is there anything else you want to tell us?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.