SLCVO REVIEW

June 2020 - responding to Covid-19

Skye, Lochalsh, Wester Ross
Third Sector Support

Welcome to Skye and Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisation's newsletter. Issued every two months, the SLCVO Review will include guidance to help groups respond to Covid-19, keep you updated on third sector support services and review SLCVO's work with the third sector across Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross. To sign-up for SLCVO's newsletter email info@slcvo.org.uk or call 01478 612921.

How Skye and Lochalsh CVO can help Covid-19 emergency response groups

Skye and Lochalsh CVO work with the Highland Third Sector Interface (HTSI) to support community groups, charities and volunteers providing Covid-19 response services in Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross. We can help groups with:

- Funding applications and monitoring.
- Writing polices and ensuring best practice.
- Setting-up as a formal group.
- Volunteer management.
- Governance and compliance to legislation.
- Review and planning.

As the third sector support organisation for Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross we facilitate local representation in regional discussions about third sector response to Covid-19 and work with community groups, funders and the public sector to develop strategies to help groups recover and develop from Covid-19.

We monitor and collate information about Covid-19 support services being provided in the 29 Community Council areas across Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross, and work with third sector groups, faith organisations and the public sector to ensure the most vulnerable in our communities are supported.

SLCVO SUPPORT If you would like to discuss how we can support your group in response to Covid-19 email info@slcvo.org.uk or call 01478 612921.

John Finlayson Skye and Rassay Councillor meeting with Jo Ford SLCVO Chief Officer and Claire Nairn Community Calls Co-ordinator on the 18th March before the introduction of Covid-19 measures

Community Calls

In addition to third sector support services, Skye and Lochalsh CVO run a befrienders service supported by the Highland Hospice. The service has been running for three years and offers in-person befriending to people across Skye and Lochalsh. As Covid-19 restrictions were introduced we changed from in-person befriending to telephone befriending, which lead to the development of a new Covid-19 response service 'Community Calls'.

Community Calls is a regular check-in call service that is grant funded by the National Lottery and Highland Council Skye and Raasay Committee. Since its set-up at the end of March, volunteers have made around 700 calls to 40 people across Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross

To find out more about Community Calls email SLCVO's Community Calls Co-ordinator, Claire Nairn at communitycalls@slcvo.org.uk.

What's in June's Review?

Covid-19 has changed the way many charities and community groups operate. Some have ceased running activities, some have changed their focus to deliver Covid-19 responses services and some have been set up just to provide support for the shielding period.

No matter how your group is responding to Covid-19 maintaining good governance and planning is key for your group's future. This edition looks at the main

enquiries we have been supporting groups with since the introduction of Covid-19 social distancing measures. We also take a look at specialist organisations who are providing support to third sector groups and review SLCVO's work over the last 15 months.

If you have any topics you would like to see in future issues please email info@slcvo.org.uk.

Committee and Trustee Meetings

Face to face committee and trustee meeting are not possible at the moment due to Covid-19 restrictions. There are however, alternative ways to hold meeting during this time unless your governing document specifically prohibits you from doing so.

Video and telephone conferencing systems are a good option for holding meetings. Continuing meetings in this way will help your group quickly respond to changes in Covid-19 measures, continue to deliver quality services and ensure good governance. However, before you use these methods you need to check your constitution allows you to.

If your constitution does not allow you to hold meetings electronically the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) advise groups to hold the meeting, minute their decision to meet electronically, the reason why and consider amending their governing document in the future.

OSCR have supported the use of virtual meetings for charities and SCVO Pro Bono Service partners Burness Paull believe regulatory bodies will take a pragmatic approach to meeting and decision making processes as '*these are extraordinary times, and the key thing is that boards should be able to fulfil the role expected of them in providing strategic leadership and oversight notwithstanding that conventional board meetings are not currently an option*' (see their blog Virtual board meetings for third sector organisations - technical tips for legal compliance).

At your first virtual meeting agree meeting protocols such as keeping microphones muted and giving participants time to comment in discussions. Ensure meeting documents are accessible and committee members/trustees who are unable to join the meeting have an opportunity to comment and ask questions beforehand.

There are many different types of video call systems you can use and groups need to ensure they are following robust security practices when setting these up. Ability Net have a free helpline for groups looking to set-up online meetings and working you can call them on 0800 048 7642 or go to their website https://abilitynet.org.uk/

Being Quorate
A quorum is the minimum number of people you need to hold a committee meeting. If you are unable to form a quorum because some board members are unable to participate in a virtual meeting, you may be able to make decisions by email. Check your governing document to see what you are able to do, for example make decisions in writing, change the number of people required or appoint new committee members.

SLCVO SUPPORT If you are a member of SLCVO and would like help hosting a video call meeting for your group email info@slcvo.org.uk

Annual General Meetings

Annual General Meetings are a key activity for community groups. They bring together a groups governing body and members to review its financial position, hear about the group's performance and make decisions that will direct its future.

Restrictions on public meetings due to COVID-19 could impact your group's ability to hold an AGM. However, your group may need to finalise its accounts, urgent decisions may need taking and governance protocols may need completing.

Your governing document will detail the frequency and governance of your AGM. If your governing document does not specify you need to hold an AGM then your committee will be able to proceed as normal. However, many governing documents will require a group to hold an AGM as they are the mechanism for the retirement and election of board members, adoption of the annual report and accounts and passing of resolutions.

You may be able to delay your AGM if your governing document gives you flexibility on the length of time between meetings. However, if this is not possible you will have to look at alternative options, while taking into account Covid-19 measures.

You may be able to hold your AGM with a small number of people in compliance to current social distancing measures. Check what you quorum is and if you have any restrictions on where your AGM can be held. You may also be able to hold your AGM using electronic means such as video or telephone conferencing facilities.

The wording of your governing document is very important when considering what you can do. Burness Paulls blog ['Virtual AGMs for third sector organisations - technical tips for legal compliance'](#) looks at legislation and constitutional wording that may prohibit a group from holding a virtual AGM. They however acknowledge that *'given the current circumstances we find ourselves in, you may have to take a pragmatic view (i.e. in proceeding with a solution which goes as far as*

you can towards fulfilling the requirements of your constitution and any wider legal requirements) if the alternative would be to have no general meeting at all.'

If you hold your AGM with a smaller number of members or using video/telephone conferencing facilities, you must give all your members an opportunity to comment and ask questions before it.

- Issue documentation such as your draft accounts and annual report in good time before your AGM and have a way your members can comment on these.
- Ask your members to submit questions before the AGM and share these discussion points with your wider membership before the meeting.
- Issue any resolutions that need action and, if your governing document allows, encourage members to use proxy voting.

If you are not able to hold your AGM you may find you are late in meeting your regulatory reporting requirements, the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) have stated that *'It may be that by postponing your AGM, you are not fulfilling what it says in your governing document. However, we would be understanding and proportionate about that.'*

For more information about AGMs and running your charity while COVID-19 measures are in place go to the OSCR website https://www.oscr.org.uk/guidance-and-forms/covid-19-guidance-for-charities/

For advice about filing your accounts with Companies House visit their website https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/companies-house

SLCVO SUPPORT If you would like help to review your governing document email info@slcvo.org.uk with a copy of your governing document and details of what you want us to take a look at.

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Looking after Volunteers

The last two months have seen many people volunteer for Covid-19 response initiatives. Keeping in touch with your volunteers on a regular basis will enable you to assess volunteer well-being, capacity and needs.

A simple way to keep connected to your volunteers is through a regular volunteer check-in assessment. This can be an informal chat, a short email or more detailed questionnaire. What you ask will depend on what your volunteers do, there are however, two key questions groups should ask Covid-19 volunteers:

Are you well enough to volunteer? Volunteer safety and limiting the spread of the coronavirus should be the main priority of a group. Ensure your volunteers follow government advice on social distancing and have guidance you can give out.

If a volunteer is unable to carry out their role make sure they have a simple way to get in touch with you and are able to stop volunteering immediately. Keep their emergency contact details up-to-date and encourage volunteers to undertake simple risk assessments before carrying out their volunteer duties.

Are you still available to Volunteer? As Covid-19 measures are relaxed volunteers may find they have less time to volunteer or may simply want to take a break for their own self-care. You need to make it easy for your volunteers to step away from volunteering as some may find it hard to say they want to stop or change.

To help, ask your volunteers on a regular basis if they are still available to volunteer or if they want to change their volunteering schedule. Ensure you have a bank of reserve volunteers who can help fill volunteer roles as circumstances change.

SLCVO SUPPORT If you would like help to support your Covid-19 volunteers contact SLCVO's Development Officer, Sammy-Jo McArthur at volunteerofficer@slcvo.org.uk or call 01478 612921

Volunteer Risk Assessments

Carrying out volunteer risk assessments will help to protect your volunteers and service users, reassure funders and identify potential issues. There are many considerations to include in a risk assessment, how detailed these are will depend on what services you are delivering. For Covid-19 response services consider including health & safety and infection control checks, risks to beneficiaries if your service is interrupted and risks to your group if there is a breach of confidentiality.

SLCVO SUPPORT SLCVO can help you to develop volunteer risk assessments. If you would like support email Sammy-Jo at volunteerofficer@slcvo.org.uk.

Volunteering Matters has comprehensive guidance on volunteer safety and risk assessments. They have risk assessment templates for different volunteering roles including delivering and cooking hot meals. https://volunteeringmatters.org.uk/volunteer-safely/

PVG Assessments

If your volunteers are carrying out regulated and regular work with children or protected adults it is likely they will need a PVG check in accordance with the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007

The Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) membership scheme is managed and delivered by Disclosure Scotland. It helps "*ensure people whose behaviour makes them unsuitable to work with children and protected adults cannot do regulated work with these vulnerable groups*".

For more information about the Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme visit the Scottish Government website https://www.mygov.scot/pvg-scheme/

Volunteer Scotland's website has guidance on PVGs and a FAQ section specifically for Covid-19 www.volunteerscotland.net

Data Protection and Covid-19

No matter what your group has been set-up for or how long it will be delivering services. If you are holding personal details about an individual you will need to ensure you meet data protection regulations. The Information Commissioners Office have guidance for Community Groups acting in response to Covid-19. Their blog helps to clarify some of the basics of data protection.

Keep it clear You should be clear about what you are doing with personal information. Explain why you need it, what you'll do with it and who you're going to share it with. It's best to have this written down in a document called a privacy notice

Keep it lawful If you're not sure whether you should be handling personal data, ask yourself:
- Has a person given me their clear and unambiguous consent to use their personal information?
- Would the person expect me to use their information in this way?
- Is the person's health or safety at risk if I don't use their personal data?

If the answer is yes to any of these questions, then you can handle and share personal data.

Keep it secure You must look after the personal data you collect. That means keeping it secure on a device or in a locked cabinet, for example. Security measures needn't be so onerous that they prevent you carrying out your work. Think about the impact on a vulnerable person if the information they entrusted you with becomes lost or stolen. Then apply measures to reasonably reduce the risk of that happening.

Keep it to a minimum Only use and keep what you need to provide help to vulnerable people during the COVID-19 crisis. When the emergency is over, make sure you and your volunteers securely delete or destroy any personal information that you no longer need.

Keep a record of what you've done. Finally, you should keep a record of any decisions you make that involve the use of personal information.

For more information about data protection go to the Information Commissioners website https://ico.org.uk/ or call them on 0303 123 1113.

Covid-19 Emergency Response Services – what next?

There have been many community-led initiatives set-up in response to Covid-19. From prescription delivery servcies to community food sharing schemes. Many of these initiatives will have a short life cycle due to funding timescales and the opening up of services as recovery phases are introduced.

As we move out of lock-down and initial emergency response activity starts to slow, groups providing Covid-19 response activities will need to consider what they do next. Will they look for further funding to continue delivering services? Will they change services to become more focused on where there is most need? What will they do with surplus funds? Will they stop delivering services all together?

SLCVO are working with groups to help them answer these questions and explore what they can do next while ensuring support is available for those who still need it.

Throughout June Skye and Lochalsh CVO will be contacting Covid-19 response groups and initiatives across Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross to offer support to help review provision and plan what they will do next.

This is a free service funded by the Highland Third Sector Interface. Support will be a combination of 1:1 group support, peer support activities and online self-directed tools. It is open to any voluntary group or third sector organisation in Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross and is led by SLCVO staff and Highland Third Sector Interface colleagues/partners who have expertise in third sector review, planning and change management.

SLCVO SUPPORT If you would like to find out more about Covid-19 support email SLCVO's Chief Officer, Jo Ford at jo.ford@slcvo.org.uk or call 01478 612921.

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Skye and Lochalsh CVO Service Review 2019/2020

Skye and Lochalsh CVO are commissioned by the Highland Third Sector Interface (HTSI) to support third sector organisations and community planning in Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross. We have 40 HTSI targets and a local work plan we report against each quarter.

2019/2020 saw SLCVO carry out 370 episodes of support to 102 groups, with 65 taking advantage of our free 1:1 support service. We assisted in writing governing documents and funding applications, compliance to legislation, setting up groups and charities, developing volunteer management frameworks, operational development and strategic planning.

To promote volunteering opportunities we produced a quarterly volunteer opportunities booklet for Skye and Lochalsh which was held in GP surgeries, Service Points and waiting in rooms. We worked with groups in Wester Ross to produce a similar booklet which was to be launched in March 2020 however, this has been delayed due to Covid-19.

We participated in and encouraged third sector involvement in 34 community planning and co-production meetings and worked on eight projects to bring together the third sector with public services and national bodies including:

- The development of the North Skye Day Hospital for Portree Medical Centre.

- Setting-up of a social prescribing pilot in Kyle with NHS Green Health Partnership.
- Facilitating third sector participation in the local review of NHS 24.

SLCVO's Community Development Officer Samantha-Jo McArthur is pictured with Dr MacDougall, Malcom Mathieson, Dr Lankston and Julia Rudram for the North Skye Day Hospital

We worked with local, regional and national organisations to encourage local participation in 47 consultations and developed a dedicated community planning section on the new SLCVO website www.slcvo.org.uk.

Skye and Lochalsh Community Directory

The Skye and Lochalsh Drug and Alcohol Forum brings together health and well-being third sector groups, Police Scotland and NHS Highland to share information, identify training needs and develop local support.

In the summer of 2019 SLCVO facilitated a workshop to map drug and alcohol support services across Skye and Lochalsh and look a gaps in provision. We found there were many services supporting people however, information on these was not readily available.

To remove this barrier SLCVO produced the 'Skye and Lochalsh Health and Well-being Community Directory' which was published in October 2019.

The directory will be updated every 12 months and funding from the Skye & Lochalsh Mental Health Forum enables us to offer printed copies for free.

If you would like a printed copy of the directory email info@slcvo.org.uk or visit the SLCVO website to download a copy www.slcvo.org.uk

For more information about the Skye and Lochalsh Drug and Alcohol Forum visit the Highland Alcohol and Drug Partnership website. Here you can access support toolkit, local profiles and Covid-19 advice. http://www.highland-adp.org.uk/

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2020/2021 Third Sector Support

As a Third Sector Interface, the HTSI work with eight partners to deliver third sector support across four specific themes of work agreed with the Scottish Government:

- Volunteering development.
- Social Enterprise development.
- Supporting and developing a strong third sector.
- Building the third sector relationship with community planning.

Skye and Lochalsh CVO have worked with the HTSI since 2012 to deliver support services tailored to local need in Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross.

In 2020/21 we will continue to deliver services in line with HTSI core targets as well as our local work plan which includes:

- Starting a new mentoring programme for young people to become board members.
- Developing third sector profiles for Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross which groups can use in their development plans and funding applications.
- Awareness raising activities about community planning and co-production processes and facilitating third sector participation in these.

- Capacity building sessions about funding, change management and village halls deeds of trust.

We will continue to provide 1:1 governance and organisational support to groups and develop our online Community Toolkit self-help guides.

In response to Covid-19 we are:

- Supporting the HTSI in the placement of volunteers registered with national and regional schemes.
- Collating and sharing information on covid-19 response initiatives for the 29 community councils across Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross.
- Supporting with groups to responded, review and plan services in response to Covid-19 measures.
- Working with third sector groups and public bodies to identify gaps/risk points in provision and develop support services to ensure everyone who needs support receives it.

During the next few months we may need to change our focus and direction however, we will continue to provide core support services to groups. If you would like to know more about these please contact Jo Ford, SLCVO Chief Officer, at jo.ford@slcvo.org.uk

Skye and Lochalsh in person befriending continues to be core funded by the Highland Hospice and during the next year we will introduce two new befriending services.

Garden Share Befrienders - As social distancing measures are relaxed funding from the Highland Green Health Partnership will enable us to develop a befriending garden share scheme.

Telephone Befriending - Funding from the National Lottery will enable us to gradually develop our Covid-19 response service 'Community Calls' to a core befriender's service.

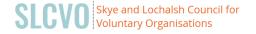For more information about our befrienders service contact Claire at communitycalls@slcvo.org.uk

Skye and Lochalsh CVO's project 'Advancing Active Journeys' is funded by Paths for All and the Highland Green Health Partnership. The project aims to:

- Raise awareness of the health benefits when choosing to walk or cycle for everyday journeys.
- Promote opportunities to get outdoors for everyday journeys.
- Produce everyday walking and cycling leaflets for Kyle of Lochalsh as part of the Green Health Social prescribing project.

The project has been delayed due to Covid-19 but we are hoping this will start late summer.

For more information about the project email jo.ford@slcvo.org.uk

Support for Community Groups

HTSI Covid-19 Helpline and website https://www.covidhelp4highland.org
HTSI's website 'Highland Community Covid-19 Response' provides information to assist individuals and community groups undertaking work to support people experiencing the impacts of Covid-19.It includes fact sheets for groups to reference as they develop and sustain their activities, volunteering opportunities and the Highland Covid-19 Community Response Directory. The Helpline is open 10am - 4pm, Tuesday - Thursday 01349 808022

SLCVO Website and Community Toolkit www.slcvo.org.uk
The new Skye and Lochalsh CVO website includes SLCVO's Community Toolkit guides to help groups in their set-up and running, information about community planning and volunteering in Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross and essential information about Covid-19.

Scottish Community Development Centre https://www.scdc.org.uk/supporting-communities-safely
SCDC is the lead body for community development in Scotland, their online resource 'Supporting Communities Safely' provides advice on how to virus proof the fantastic things communities are doing and reduce the risk of indirect spread.

Volunteer Scotland https://www.volunteerscotland.net/covid-19
Volunteer Scotland's website provides clear and accurate information that will help volunteers and volunteer involving organisations during Covid-19. It also provides advice and guidance on volunteer management, PVGs and volunteering opportunities.

Highland Council, Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Highland https://www.highland.gov.uk/coronavirus
The Highland Council website includes the latest news and updates about Covid-19, advice and guidance about shielding, key services and business support.

Sports Scotland Covid-19 Online Resource https://sportscotland.org.uk/covid-19/
Sports Scotland online resource has specific Covid-19 guidance on how to undertake sports safely, information on support for community sports organisations and advice on how to get facilities fit for opening.

Creative Scotland Covid-19 Online Resource https://www.creativescotland.com/
Creative Scotland have developed a dedicate funding and resource directory for those in the creative community who have been affected by Covid-19. It provides up to date information and news, as well as a Covid-19 focused Support for Scotland's screen sector.

Skye and Lochalsh CVO working in partnership and supported by:

SLCVO working with the Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross Community Partnership: