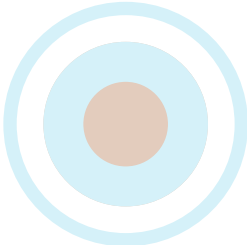
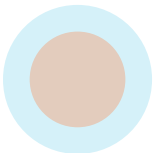
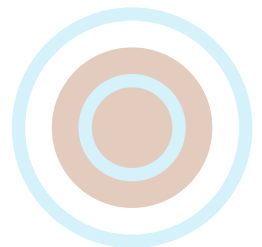
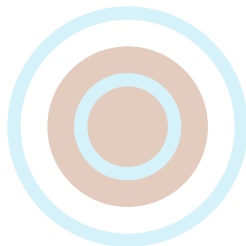
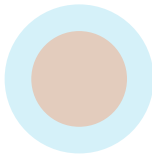
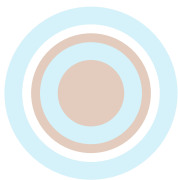


Annual Report

April 2008- March 2009



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Background

Since 2005 the Voluntary Sector Social Services Workforce Unit has worked to achieve its core aim to support and promote the development of the voluntary sector social services workforce in Scotland by working with and for service provider employers in the sector.

With a further three years Scottish Government funding agreed from March 2008, we re-examined our vision against the rapidly changing political and policy context.

Our renewed vision has two essential elements:

- To enable the voluntary sector to collaborate in the promotion and implementation of learning and development for induction, registration, CPD, PRTL (Post-registration Training and Learning) and Lifelong Learning
- To assist voluntary sector employers to participate in the wider workforce development agenda, for example through Learning Networks, our Memorandum of Understanding with SSSC, Changing Lives Work Groups and IRISS, the Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Services

During 2008-9 the Unit has continued to be very active in its work with and on behalf of voluntary sector social services. We have appreciated the help of a supportive committee and host organisation and the participation of stakeholders in achieving our five outcomes.

The outcomes we have sought to deliver on during 2008-9 are:

- Outcome 1** Improve the ability of voluntary sector social service employers to engage with the national workforce agenda
- Outcome 2** Work collaboratively to improve the knowledge and picture we have of the voluntary sector social services workforce
- Outcome 3** Add value to the national workforce development agenda through optimising the Unit's role in supporting specific voluntary sector contributions
- Outcome 4** Improve the impact voluntary sector social services organisations are able to make on the national policy agenda, through acting as a voice of and advocating for voluntary sector social service interests
- Outcome 5** Support achievement of Core Outcomes by ensuring the good governance and resource management of the Unit.

Appendix 1 sets out Executive Committee membership and staff composition.

Outcome 1 - Improve the ability of voluntary sector social service employers to engage with the national workforce agenda

One of the Unit's key work areas is to gather, 'translate' and disseminate relevant information on workforce matters and to issue updates and bulletins to employers. A variety of information is produced.

Key achievements include:

- Completing our database 'refresh'. We are now confident that all database contacts are 'live' and have signed up to receive information in a preferred format
- Quarterly themed newsletter (Themes – Skills Agenda, International Workforce Issues, Evidence Based Practice and Re tendering Research and Knowledge Management)
- Monthly E-bulletins (keeping the sector up-to-date with current information, policy and events)
- Newsflashes (21 urgent items that could not await monthly e-bulletin)
- Website review and development to ensure currency and accessibility of information
- Summaries and Briefings on
 - Skills for Scotland
 - Skills Development Scotland – summary of first operating plan
 - Mapping the Social Services Workforce organisational Landscape
- Guidance documents including:
 - Choosing an SVQ Provider
 - Funding Streams Update (2008 & 2009)
 - Guidance on Developing Student Placement Policies
 - Workforce Planning Toolkit, produced in 2006-7, but continuing to be used and disseminated
- Articles for publication –Third Force News article
 - Are recruitment difficulties in social care about to get worse?

I am emailing to let you know we are advertising your document "Choosing an SVQ provider" on our own website as we strongly believe this needs to reach as many people as possible.

(Debbie Gibb, Training Manager, ARC Training)

The Unit also continues to act as a central point of contact for enquiries from employers on workforce issues. We maintain a database of enquiries and produce six monthly analyses of the enquiries received. Popular topics for enquiries included funding issues, workforce development and qualifications.

Another key area of work for the Unit is to facilitate and gather consultation responses from the voluntary sector. This year, the Unit facilitated and submitted responses to:

- Final Dates for Registration
- Proposed Revisions to SSSC Conduct Rules

- The Role of the Chief Social Work Officer
- Migrant Worker Shortage Categories
- Workforce Response to Better Health, Better Care
- The Right to Request Time to Train for Employees in Scotland
- Sector Skills Council Re licensing

The Unit held seven well attended consultation events across the country on the final dates for registration. In addition to informing the Unit's consultation response, these events supported voluntary sector organisations to plan for implementation of mandatory registration.

Thank you Workforce Unit in leading us on this topic. As usual very valuable. Very good – eye opener. Hopefully more orgs should be made aware of changes and requirements.

(Evaluation comments from attendees at final dates for registration consultation events)

The Unit's Workforce Development Network has continued to thrive, with quarterly meetings held in both Aberdeen and the Central belt (Stirling, Glasgow or Edinburgh). Topics this year have included:

- The work of Skills for Care and Development and Skills Development Scotland;
- The new Leadership and Management Award for Care Services;
- Social Services Knowledge Scotland;
- Personalisation and the Workforce;
- Final Dates for Registration and how to register with the SSSC; and
- Re-tendering and the Workforce research.

Personalisation discussion very helpful – more is required as we are all struggling a bit! Well done.

Really enjoyed the information given – found it extremely useful and plan to take back to workplace.

(Evaluation comments from Workforce Development Network meetings)

Outcome 2 - Work collaboratively to improve the knowledge and picture we have of the voluntary sector social services workforce

Key achievements include the production of the following pieces of research:

- A Gathering Storm? Procurement, re-tendering and the voluntary sector social care workforce
- An Analysis of the Impact of the Voluntary Sector Development Fund 2003-2008
- Research Enquiry into the Impact of the Unit and Learning Network Continuous Learning Framework and CPD learning events

The Unit has worked closely with SSSC, the Scottish Government, Learning Network Tayforth, Private Sector Workforce Initiative and University of Strathclyde to improve the ability of the sector to gain accurate information about the workforce.

We have also reviewed our Memorandum of Understanding with SSSC, in its role as Sector Skills Council, as a way of optimising collaboration and the sharing of information. The Unit also collates all available workforce information and has recently produced a report on the state of the voluntary sector social service workforce.

We have also contributed significantly to the Learning Network Tayforth Workforce Planning project.

Outcome 3 - Add value to the national workforce development agenda through optimising the Unit's role in supporting specific voluntary sector contributions

Key achievements include:

- Delivering a number of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) seminars jointly with the Learning Networks
- Contributing to the development of the Network Tayforth pilot Practice Learning Qualification
- Delivering conference workshops and speeches on re tendering and the workforce

The Unit has continued to work collaboratively with the four Social Services Learning Networks to ensure the voluntary sector are fully engaged with their outcomes. We ran a series of CPD seminars, focussing on SSSC post registration and training (PRTL) requirements and the Continuous Learning Framework, with three of the four Learning Networks.

Really good day – all topics relevant – will be able to transfer the learning into practice

As a new training manager for my agency the event has been useful in developing my understanding of PRTL which I will be able to use with other staff.

(Comments from CPD seminar participants)

A member of Unit staff contributed to the development of the Learning Network Tayforth pilot Practice Learning Qualification as a critical reader and then delivered one of the group input days, which we hosted at the Unit's offices. Five voluntary sector places were secured on the pilot of this award. We worked with Edinburgh Voluntary Organisation Council and Learning Network South East to deliver the South East Workforce Engagement Initiative, which targeted smaller voluntary sector organisations and local

support networks. We hosted joint consultation events on final dates for registration with Learning Network North.

Unit staff have engaged with voluntary sector leaders to learn about and promote the specific strategic workforce development needs of voluntary sector social services providers. We ran a workshop on the impact of re-tendering on the workforce at the CCPS annual conference. We hosted a meeting between the SSSC Convenor and Chief Executive and voluntary sector leaders to discuss workforce issues. The Unit Director was a main speaker at the ADSW Workforce Seminar, presenting key findings from the research on re-tendering and the workforce. The Unit's networking database evidences the wide range of contacts and issues discussed during the year with voluntary sector leaders.

We have also participated in and ensured representation at the new Third Sector Skills Advisory Committee.

Outcome 4 – Improve the impact voluntary sector social services organisations are able to make on the national policy agenda, through acting as a voice of and advocating for voluntary sector social service interests

Key achievements include:

- Representing the views of voluntary sector social service organisations at a national level through a variety of different groups

The Workforce Unit is well-placed to gain and represent the views of voluntary sector social service organisations, or to ensure that there is representation of their views at national level. Unit staff have been members of the Changing Lives Workforce Development Group, the Recruitment and Retention sub-groups the Continuous Learning Framework Steering Group and the Voluntary sector Development Fund (VSDF) Advisory group. Staff have also engaged in key voluntary sector policy groups, such as the Supporting Voluntary Action (SVA) Better Collaborations Think Tank, the SCVO Policy Officers' Network and worked closely with CCPS and the Housing Support Enabling Unit in order to strengthen our collective impact on the national policy agenda.

Outcome 5 - Support achievement of Core Outcomes by ensuring the good governance and resource management of the Unit

Key achievements include:

- Generating income through research and consultancy work
- Successful Executive Committee recruitment
- Strategic away day for Committee and Staff
- Development of Unit risk management plan

Following a review of the Executive Committee Protocol we held two committee membership drives this year and successfully recruited and

inducted members from small and medium sized (SME) voluntary sector organisations.

The Executive Committee Protocol is very helpful in making new Executive Committee members aware of what their role is.

(Jason Glass, Executive Committee member, recruited June 2008)

We held our first committee strategic visioning and planning away day in December which provided clear direction for the development of our 2009/10 work plan and started to look to the future for the Unit beyond 2011. Regular support and supervision, team meetings and team away days have taken place and all staff members have individual learning and development plans and are undertaking professional development courses. Careful financial planning and budget management meant our financial outturn was within 5% of the annual budget. For the first time, the Unit started to income generate through research and consultancy work. We secured agreement from the Scottish Government that any income generated over and above the delivery of our core outcome focussed objectives could be placed in reserves for post 2011. The Unit has developed a risk management plan which will be regularly monitored by the committee.

Looking Forward

As the Unit enters its fifth year we will continue to deliver on the outcome focussed strategy on which we secured further Scottish Government grant funding for 2008/11, whilst continuing to develop our income generating capacity through our new consultancy service to individual organisations.

In a changing political landscape where the voluntary sector continues to be valued but often insufficiently resourced and informed, the need for the Unit is as great as ever.

Appendix 1
Voluntary Sector Social Services Workforce Unit Executive Committee
Members and Staff 2008/09

Executive Committee

Cathy Fallon (Loretto Housing) –Chair
Celia Carson (SCVO)
Annie Gunner (CCPS)
Jason Glass (Camphill Blair Drummond)
Nigel Henderson (Penumbra), replaced by Neil Falconer from December 2008
Christine McGarvey (representing ARC Association for Real Change)
Donald Mackinnon (Key Housing)
Sandy Mathers (AVSTN – Aberdeen Voluntary Sector Training Network)
Billy Renfrew (Scottish Government)
Niall Smith (Caithness Voluntary Group), until September 08
Adrian Snowball (Independent Consultant), from September 2008
Addie Stevenson (Aberlour)
Edith Wellwood (SSSC), replaced by Frances Scott from December 2008

Staff members

Judith Midgley (Director)
Caroline Sturgeon (Development and Policy Officer)
Marie Rose (Information and Communications Officer) until March 13th 2009.
Laura Weir (Administrator)
Linda Hamilton (Administrator, maternity cover)