# Fair Work
## in the Third Sector in Scotland

Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector

Research carried out by The University of Strathclyde for GCVS

## Our Call To Action

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## Our Call to Action

### Introduction

GCVS recently commissioned research from the University of Strathclyde about Fair Work in the Third Sector across Scotland. The original research was supported by The Robertson Trust and is available here.

The research demonstrates that the third sector is a champion of Fair Work in Scotland, and highlights strong evidence of good practice in the sector, across multiple dimensions of Fair Work policy.

However, we need to learn from and act upon the findings in this research; to identify and overcome barriers to embedding Fair Work in practice and to drive forward further improvement.

The third sector is a vital part of our social fabric and a key partner in the design and delivery of people-centred public services. Charities, voluntary organisations and social enterprises tackle economic and social inequalities, improving the lives of citizens. Employees in the third sector deserve Fair Work.

There is strong evidence of good Fair Work principles at play within the third sector. There is also room for improvement e.g. – in job security, in career progression and fair pay. We cannot be complacent.

Improving Fair Work in the third sector and throughout our economy can only benefit all of us – driving prosperity and improved health and wellbeing for all.  Our ambition is that the third sector continues to lead the way, and that it shares its experience more broadly.

GCVS believes Fair Work is hampered in the third sector because public bodies too infrequently make strategic and long-term investments in the capacity of the sector to deliver change, instead making decisions about resources for the third sector on a short-term basis.

Third sector organisations want to be Fair Work employers but need practical support to do this, alongside sufficient & sustainable income.

### Our Call to Action

Responding to the research, GCVS has developed twelve actions which we believe the third sector and our stakeholders should take forward to embed Fair Work in the sector. Achieving this will require support from Scottish and Local Government as well as other public bodies and independent funders.

## **Action:** Fair Funding

Scottish & Local Government, funders, SCVO and TSIs should continue to work together to implement Fair Funding of third sector organisations, recognising that Fair Funding is critical to achieving Fair Work.

## **Action:** Procurement and Ethical Commissioning

The principles of Fair Funding should be applied to all public sector procurement of the third sector. Commissioning and procurement practices should realise the vision of the Public Procurement Strategy and allow public bodies, third sector and communities to shape procurement together.

## **Action:** Strategic Planning

The Third Sector must be more meaningfully involved in the commissioning and design of public services, developing a culture of collaboration and partnership and moving away from approaches which treat third sector organisations solely as service providers.

## **Action:** Sharing Risk Fairly

Too often the financial risks associated with the delivery of services are passed entirely down to third sector organisations. Third sector organisations don't operate solely for profit, and so the usual balance of risk and reward does not apply in the way it might with private sector organisations. More balanced approaches to managing risks are needed.

## **Action:** Living Wage & Fair Pay

All funders and commissioners should work towards the payment of the Real Living Wage as the minimum in the third sector. This should be done in a way that is supportive to organisations, recognising that many organisations have multiple funders for different projects and it may take them time to achieve this for all staff. Where public bodies commission services that are directly comparable to their own provision, they should resource these at a level sufficient to pay a comparable salary to public sector staff.

## **Action:** Secure Jobs

Third sector organisations and the bodies that fund & commission them should work together to eliminate all uses of non-voluntary zero-hour contracts and to reduce the use of fixed and short-term contracts. This would be significantly enhanced by the actions above to improve the income security of organisations.

## **Action:** Learning and Development

Develop purposeful cross-sector engagement and exchange opportunities, creating opportunities for professional development amongst staff in both the public and third sector, while developing a shared understanding of the challenges of working in both sectors. Third sector organisations themselves should consider how they can create opportunities for staff to take on additional responsibilities, commensurate with remuneration.

## **Action:** Practical Support

Third sector organisations and funders need practical support to enable them to implement and support Fair Work practice. GCVS will commit to developing a Fair Work in the Third Sector Resource Hub, welcoming offers of support from other partners.

## **Action:** Good Governance

TSIs across Scotland, alongside relevant partners, should consider how to better support trustees in their duty of care to employees, and in understanding the wider benefits of the Fair Work principles, including security for employees and generous terms and conditions. This should include specific training to support third sector Trustees / Directors in their role as employers, taking cognisance of all aspects of Fair Work.

## **Action:** Modern Employers

Third sector organisations should consider how they can become model employers for a new approach to work. This should include discussions including looking at the four-day working week, flexible working, carer and family friendly practice.

## **Action:** Inclusion and Diversity

To best meet the needs of citizens and communities, the third sector's workforce must reflect the diversity of the society we live in. Organisations should take action to improve inclusion across our sector and partners should consider how they can best support this approach. The work of the Third Sector Human Rights & Equalities (THRE) project in supporting third sector organisations to embed a human rights and equality approach can help to take this forward.

## **Action:** Employee Voice

Organisations should consider how current approaches to employee voice are working for employees in the third sector. Sector leaders should share good practice examples including trade union involvement and other models which work well for different sizes and types of organisations.