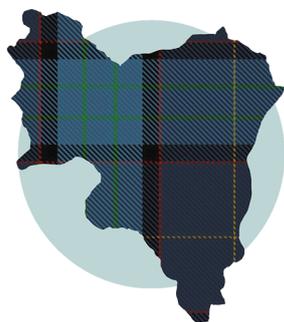




Social Enterprise Strategy: Initial Consultation Report



Voluntary Action
South Lanarkshire
Putting the Voluntary Sector **FIRST**

Following on from the launch of the National Social Enterprise Strategy, VASLan have taken the opportunity to start a conversation, using the national strategy as a basis, with the Enterprising Organisations of South Lanarkshire. We are looking to gather opinions and ideas on how the community would like to see Social Enterprise develop and grow at a local level and how VASLan can best support the community to achieve this.

This document sets out the findings of the initial consultation phase in the development of a Social Enterprise Strategy for South Lanarkshire. The survey attracted 30 unique responses from Enterprising Organisations across South Lanarkshire.

Research Methods

In order to generate a baseline of data to take forward in conversation, a Survey was developed and was launched online in November 2017. The survey was managed through the online tool Survey Monkey and was live until 31st of January 2018. The survey consisted of 13 questions with a mixture of qualitative and quantitative responses. The survey looked to both gather information on how the Enterprising Community would like to see VASLan support their development, as well as their opinions on the importance, at a local level, of each of the three National Priorities set out by the Scottish Government. This information has since been analysed, coding qualitative data to understand and pull out emerging themes and analysing quantitative responses.

Emerging Themes

The survey asked participants a series of questions as to how VASLan can best provide support to them in developing and growing within a local context. The questions and summary of responses can be found on the following page. Through analysis of the data collected, it can be seen that there are a number of strong themes of support that organisations are looking for. There was a strong focus on VASLan providing networking opportunities for a variety of reasons.

Many respondents are looking to learn from other organisations success stories, understand the work going on and use this to develop potential partnerships or collaborate on projects. There was also a great emphasis on VASLan provide a space for organisations to share information between organisations and celebrate good news stories. This is currently managed through VASLan social enterprise group, however this may be an areas that could be focused on for development. Many respondents touched on the existing trainings calendar and how they would like to see this continue to support and develop the enterprising organisations through tailored opportunities.

Continuing to provide start up and development support to organisations also arose as a key theme, with organisations commenting on this being a useful service, through the Social Enterprise Development Officer and the wider core team. A number of respondents touched on the continued dwindling of grant funding opportunities and the increasing importance of organisations becoming more aware of and taking up procurement opportunities. Many respondents felt that this would be a key role for VASLan, providing chances for organisations to engage with suitable training and support as well as developing opportunities for 'meeting the buyer'/'meeting the seller' style events.

An overarching key theme was the role respondents saw for VASLan in promoting the Social Enterprise sector within South Lanarkshire, not only within the sector but also to the wider business community. Organisations are also looking for VASLan to help them in promoting and developing an understanding of Social Enterprise to the wider community of South Lanarkshire.

“LOOKING TO THE FUTURE, HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE COMMUNITY GROW IN SOUTH LANARKSHIRE OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS?”

“WHAT SUPPORT COULD VASLan PROVIDE TO ENTERPRISING ORGANISATIONS TO STRENGTHEN THEIR VOICE IN THE LOCAL AREA?”

“HOW COULD VASLan BETTER SUPPORT ENTERPRISING ORGANISATIONS WITH THEIR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT?”

“WHAT SUPPORT COULD VASLan PROVIDE TO ENCOURAGE MORE INTERTRADING, PARTNERSHIP WORKING AND RESOURCE SHARING AMONGST ENTERPRISING ORGANISATIONS?”

“HOW COULD VASLan CREATE MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO RAISE AWARENESS OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISE IN SOUTH LANARKSHIRE?”



SHARING
SUSTAINABILITY
NETWORKING
PARTNERSHIPS
COLLABORATION

SHARING INFORMATION
SUPPORT
NETWORKING
TRAINING EVENTS
MARKETING
COLLABORATION



BUILDING
RELATIONSHIPS
TRAINING
ACCESSING MARKETS
WORKSHOPS
CONTACTS
ADVICE



LINKING
ORGANISATIONS
JOINT MEETINGS
INTRODUCTIONS
PROMOTION



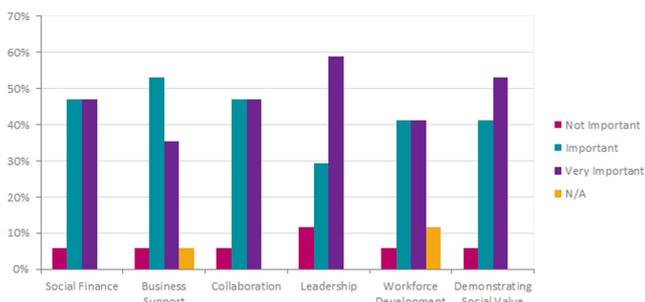
PRESS
TRAINING
CAMPAIGNS
MARKETING
SUCCESS STORIES
NETWORKING

As a part of the consultation, VASLan are keen to ensure that the National Priorities set out in the Scottish Social Enterprise Strategy are taken into consideration, gathering opinions on local level views and understanding which are of most important to Enterprising Organisations in South Lanarkshire. Each of the National Priorities set out have a collection of topics within them. As part of this survey, VASLan asked organisations to rank the importance of each priority from Not Important to Very Important (with an additional Not Applicable option if required).

With regards to the Scottish Social Enterprise strategy, Question 8 asked respondents whether they were aware of the Strategy, out of the 17 respondents to this questions only 7 said had seen the strategy. For those who had not seen the strategy before, a copy was embedded into the survey to allow those who had yet read it to answer the following questions. VASLan did promote the Strategy on its launch and will continue to signpost organisations to become familiar with it.

With regards to Collaboration, this evoked a strong response with 47% agreeing that this was important to their organisation and a further 47% believing it was very important to their organisation. Only 9% felt that opportunities for collaboration were not important to them. Organisations were asked how important they felt the development of Leadership within Social Enterprises was to them.

12% felt that it was not important which 30% felt it was important. However 59% of those who responded felt it was very important, with no organisations believing that it was entirely inapplicable to their organisation.

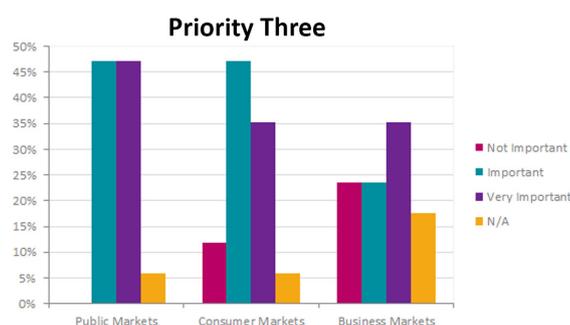
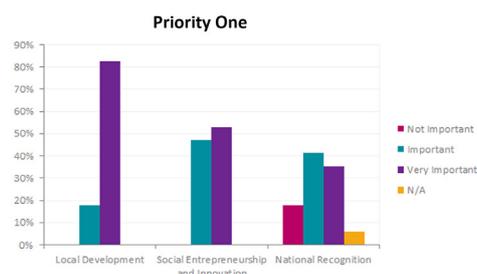


Workforce development also came under this priority, organisation were reasonably strong in response with 41% believing it was important and a further 41% believing it to be very important. 5% of respondents felt it was not important to their as an organisation and 11% believed that it was not applicable to them. The last theme within in the priority is Demonstrating Social Value, if the 17 respondents, 41% felt this was important to them while a further 53% believed it was

was very important to their organisation. 9% of those responded did not feel that there was an importance in developing their demonstration of social value. The responses to this priority very much reflected the earlier open ended questions at the beginning of the survey, with organisations looking for support in developing Collaborations, demonstrating the value of the sector through awareness raising and the importance of business support.

Priority three has three themes under it, 'Public Markets', 'Consumer Markets' and 'Business Markets.' In terms of Public markets there was an equal split of 47% of these who felt this was important and 47% who believed it was very important to their Social Enterprise. With no organisations believing it to be unimportant, however 9% did believe that it was not applicable to their organisation. With regards to consumer markets, 12% did not feel that this was an important priority to their organisation, however 47% felt that it was important to them.

35% of respondents felt that consumer markets are very important to their organisation however conversely 9% believed this is not applicable to their organisation at all. Business markets evoked a much great split in opinion with an almost event split across the ranking options. 24% believed that this was of



of less importance to their organisation, which an equal 24% believed it to be important. 35% of respondents felt that business markets were very important to them while 18% felt that this was not applicable to them as an organisation.

The responses to this portion of the survey very much reflect the differing needs of organisations depending on scale, development and length of time trading. Survey responses very much reflect the complex support needs of such a diverse sector, which VASLan will take into consideration as this consultation moves forward.

MOVING FORWARD

