Breakfast Club Consultation - 18 November 2025, 9:30-12:30.

Forth Valley College, Stirling

Facilitators:

Eman Hani, CSREC

Gordon Mackenzie, SVE

Janette Mitchell, Inspiring Communities

Kainde Manji, SVE

Kate Hudson, Stirling Council

Kevin Harrison, Artlink Central

Laura Johnstone, Forth Valley Welcome

Maciej Kornobis, Bannockburn RFC

Matty Millar, SVE

Natalie Masterson, SVE

Neil Fergusson, Kilmadock CDT

Sam Neary, Stirling Council

Consultation premise:

Stirling Council has commissioned SVE to develop a structured model to support engagement and joint working between the Council and community organisations.

The model will set out different levels of involvement — from simple communication and recognition, all the way through to planning together and jointly delivering services or projects. Each level will explain what community organisations can expect from the Council, and what the Council can expect in return.

Although the final outcomes will be shaped jointly as the model is developed, the overall aims are to:
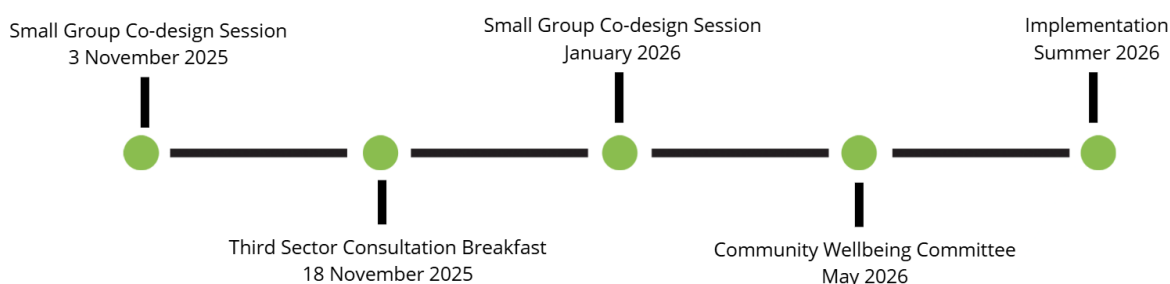
- Build stronger trust and more effective collaboration between the Council and community organisations
- Allow community organisations to take part at a level that suits their capacity, ambition, and experience
- Highlight and support the vital role community organisations play in improving outcomes for local people, and promote greater community empowerment

The model will also help ensure that support — including grant funding, in-kind help, and access to Council-owned community assets — is offered in a consistent and transparent way.

Finally, the model will be designed so it can grow and adapt over time. This may include adding tools such as capacity-building resources, recognition and reward opportunities, and other supports that help community organisations thrive.

SVE's Breakfast Club on 18 November formed a key part of the development of this process. This paper provides an overview of the discussions that took place on the day.

Project timeline

Small Group Co-design Session 3 November 2025		Small Group Co-design Session January 2026		Implementation Summer 2026
	Third Sector Consultation Breakfast 18 November 2025		Community Wellbeing Committee May 2026	

It was important that this model was something that was co-designed by the local third sector. An initial session took place in early November with a 'co-design group' made up of representatives from nine third sector organisations. The organisations were chosen on the basis of a scoping exercise that looked at the makeup of the third sector locally, ensuring that those involved were reflective of the diversity of the sector. The initial session led to the development of a set of principles and a vision statement for the project.

The co-design group also attended the Breakfast Club meeting as table facilitators. **Vision Statement:**

"Strong, collaborative partnership between Stirling Council and the third sector has created a bold, interconnected network of support and opportunities for local people, valuing everyone's strengths and making the most of shared resources — a place where everybody can thrive."

Principles:

Trust – Open, reliable, and transparent relationships.

Respect – Valuing all contributions and perspectives.

Inclusion – Ensuring diverse voices and experiences are heard and represented.

Courage & Disruption – Willingness to challenge assumptions, take considered risks, and create space for transformational change.

Outcomes-Driven – Focus on delivering high-quality impact and improvement for people and communities.

The purpose of the Breakfast Club consultation session was to seek input from a wide variety of SVE members as to the extent to which these principles match the ambitions of Stirling's Third Sector.

Session 1

Activity 1: Defining 'Thriving'

Stirling Council's 10 year strategy document, Thriving Stirling describes an ambition for Stirling as "Somewhere everyone can thrive." The consultation session began with an icebreaker asking participants to describe in a few words 'what does thriving look like for people and communities in Stirling?'.Points and shared ideas were noted on flipcharts.

Key themes noted:

- Thriving means more than survival: feeling valued, having opportunities, and community spirit.
- Empowerment and community agency are central to thriving.
- Key conditions include inclusion, equity, fairness, stability, safety, community spirit, and access to services.
- Barriers must be removed, including bureaucratic, communication, and access barriers.
- Tension between thriving for individuals vs for communities; conditions differ.

While recognising the importance of lived experience in service design within the third sector, it is important to note that this model focuses on strengthening relationships between third sector organisations and Stirling Council. While improved partnership working may support better public engagement more broadly, it does not replace the need for the direct involvement of people with lived experience in the design and delivery of services.

Activity 2: Feedback on draft vision statement

The participants were shown the daft vision (see p3 above) and asked to discuss it in detail, looking at whether they agreed with this vision, why or why not. Participants were encouraged to look closely at both the intent as well as the specific wording, and how this could be refined. Participants noted this in a variety of ways, such as ideas on post its or flipcharts, scoring out and rewording parts of the vision statement, or redrafting entirely.

Key themes:

- Vision praised for ambition and collaboration but seen as council-led and complex.
- Needs clearer wording, inclusivity for all audiences, and rural as well as urban focus.
- Calls for shared ownership, accountability, and visible council commitment.
- Suggested redraft emphasizes bold, innovative partnership valuing strengths and resources.

Activity 3: Feedback on draft principles

Again, participants were asked to look closely at the draft principles one by one and look at their importance alongside the vision. Discussions focused on how these principles could be put into action within the partnership, and if participants had examples of principles *not* being applied in their partnership work, and the impact this had. This gave an insightful look into how partnership working with the council may be improved. Participants were also asked to imagine the vision and principles in action, and what difference this could make to the people and communities in Stirling.

Key themes:

- **Trust** requires consistent and transparent decision-making processes. There was a lot of discussion about the current lack of, and need for trust rebuilding.
- **Respect** requires equitable treatment across organisations of different sizes and open dialogue.
- **Inclusion** must be active and involve diverse voices, including those seldom heard.
- **Courage & Disruption** requires trust, clear expectations, and system-level (not individual) challenge.
- **Outcomes-driven work** needs clearer outcomes, open data sharing, and inclusion of both qualitative and quantitative impact.

Session 2 – Making the model work for our diverse sector.

This session used fictional 'avatars' which acted as stand ins for some of the different sorts of third sector organisations that exist in the Stirling Area. These were used to facilitate discussion on the different needs and potential of partnership for our diverse sector.

The Avatars:

Grassroots volunteer group – "The Buttercup Brigade"

An informal community gardening group based in a suburban location. Formed during lockdown, it's run entirely by local volunteers who meet weekly to maintain shared garden plots and organise seasonal planting days. The group has no formal committee structure or paid staff but runs on enthusiasm and neighbourly spirit. They rely on small donations and local support in kind, like compost from the council and tools borrowed from members.

Small Local Organisation – "Bridgeview Youth Project"

Bridgeview Youth Project is a small charity supporting young people in a urban area through after-school activities and mentoring. The area is described as 'deprived' under the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. Bridgeview has two part-time staff members and a dedicated group of volunteers who help with sessions and fundraising events. The team constantly juggles funding bids, session planning, and local partnerships to keep the project running. Despite limited resources, Bridgeview is a trusted presence in the community and has deep local roots. established organisations

Established Organisation – "Together in Wellbeing Scotland"

Together in Wellbeing Scotland is a medium-sized charity with services across the Stirling area. With around 20 staff, it delivers several programs commissioned by the Health and Social Care Partnership and by Stirling Council. The organisation has clear governance structures, regular reporting requirements, and a mix of funding from service contracts and grants. It's recognised regionally for its quality of delivery and its ability to attract investment into Stirling.

Shared Governance Organisation – "Earl of Marr's Trust"

Earl of Marr's trust is an umbrella body jointly overseen by representatives from the council and the third sector. It exists to support young people in the area to engage in cultural heritage and to learn traditional skills. It is also regularly commissioned by Scottish Government and private building contractors to carry out heritage and preservation works within the area. The organisation balances public accountability with community and customer-led priorities

Social Enterprise – "Re-Dress Stirling CIC"

Is a social enterprise based in the town centre. They recycle used clothing and scraps to produce bespoke fashion items, and their aim is to counteract fast fashion and build sustainability in the fashion industry. They work with young people who have experience of the criminal justice system providing volunteering, employability and training opportunities. They have a small retail space – the Re-dress boutique - where they showcase the work produced by the young people. All profits are reinvested in their work.

The activity:

Each table was given one of the avatars, as well as the table below which uses the framework of Opportunity, Responsibility, and Accountability (ORA) to prompt discussion based on the questions in each of the boxes..

Opportunity - recognising and combining strengths.
Responsibility - taking ownership and enabling others.
Accountability - creating transparency and mutual learning.

	Your example organisation	Stirling Council
Opportunity	What unique strengths, skills, or resources does this organisation bring to the partnership?	What enablers could the Council offer to support the group's impact?
Responsibility	What responsibilities or actions would help this organisation step into leadership within the partnership?"	What practical actions can the Council take to share responsibility, support leadership, and build the capacity of all partner organisations?
Accountability	How could your organisation demonstrate progress or success in the partnership?	How can both sides make accountability practical rather than bureaucratic?

Key themes summary:

Opportunities

- Shared spaces and resources (e.g. co-location, equipment).

- Joint funding bids and collaborative projects across organisation types.

- Knowledge exchange and mentoring between large and small organisations.

- Council visibility and active involvement to strengthen trust.

- Grassroots innovation feeding into strategic planning.

Responsibilities

- Council: provide clear communication, proportionate governance, and capacity-building support.

- Organisations: commit to transparency, share learning, and engage in co-design.

- Shared responsibility for safeguarding and inclusion across all activities.

- Ensure lived experience voices are embedded in decision-making.

- Balance flexibility with agreed standards for service delivery.

Accountability

- Develop proportionate reporting mechanisms tailored to organisational size.

- Regular feedback loops with action tracking and visible responses.

- Shared evaluation framework focusing on outcomes and learning, not punitive measures.

- Clear milestones and evidence of partnership effectiveness.

- Transparency in funding decisions and resource allocation.

Next steps

A draft model will be developed by SVE prior to the next small-group session on 8th January 2026, with the co-design group providing feedback, used to solidify the model proposal. The next SVE breakfast club will take place at the beginning of March. This session will be a more traditional Breakfast Club format, with a short presentation of the proposal to seek wider consensus, before presentation of the final model at the Community Wellbeing Committee on 21st May, and implementation from summer 2026.