



Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations
Mansfield Traquair Centre
15 Mansfield Place
Edinburgh
EH3 6BB

26th January 2010

Dear Mr Swinney,

I am writing to you to express my deep concern at the proposed budget cuts by the City of Edinburgh Council. You may have seen the [report in yesterday's Edinburgh Evening News](#), outlining the proposals.

Shockingly there are 100 per cent cuts planned for a number of voluntary organisations in the city, most of which are community centres and youth clubs.

One of the cuts which has concerned us at SCVO the most is the proposal to cut funding to the Eke-Out Project by 72 per cent. This project coordinates local input into the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership, which forms part of the local Community Planning Partnership. Over 260 organisations, providing over 800 local services feed into the Eke-Out Project in order to contribute to the planning of local services.

The Joint Statement on the Relationship at Local level between Government and the Third Sector points out that third sector involvement in CPPs is vital to ensure that the design and delivery of public services is user focused. Indeed, you have long been a vocal supporter of the third sector as an equal partner in service delivery.

We all understand that times are tough and finances are tight, but cutting funding to projects like this one damages the long term sustainability of the sector's involvement in service delivery. Whilst cutting back on funding to the sector may represent a short term saving for the local council, it neglects to take into account the longer term value for money that the sector – operating at community and informal level as well as service contract level provides.

We also find it astonishing that this Council finds it acceptable to make swingeing cuts to the voluntary sector in financial year 2010/11, when we know that they are still enjoying a growth in budget from Scottish Government in this year.

It is also concerning that the proposed cuts came to light in the Edinburgh Evening News, rather than being taken through the Edinburgh Compact as the appropriate channel. Edinburgh has been celebrated for its Compact, and used as an example of good practice for other CPPs.



We recognise that local authorities are within their rights to decide upon local budgets, however as strategic partners in the Third Sector Task Group, we must defend the long term interests of the sector. We're calling on you to intervene in this situation and to protect the voluntary sector as an equal partner in local planning.

I look forward to hearing from you,
Kind regards,

Lucy McTernan,
Deputy Chief Executive
SCVO