

Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations
Mansfield Traquair Centre
15 Mansfield Place
Edinburgh
EH3 6BB
1st February 2010

Dear Cllr Dawes,

I write in response to your letter of 27th January 2010.

You refer to my letter of 26th January 2010 to The Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Sustainable Growth of the Scottish Government. This letter is part of an ongoing dialogue and bilateral correspondence with Mr Swinney regarding the state of relationships and consequent approaches to funding between community planning partnerships and the third sector across Scotland. It is also a consequence of a public, and repeated, invitation by him to alert him where there are concerns, so that he may intervene.

I am sorry if you feel I have been discourteous in not also directing these concerns to you, but generally, SCVO rightly leaves liaison with yourselves to our colleagues in EVOC/the local interface. Our role is to focus on the national picture and it was in this context, where Edinburgh's compact has been regarded as leading practice, that our concerns lie. I am very aware of the working relationships within the Edinburgh Compact.

As such our concerns stem from the lack of engagement between Compact partners on the Budget, beyond, or since, a strategic review in November, and the breaking of the news of the cuts being considered, by the Evening News – voluntary sector colleagues not having been given access to these papers until after the EEN story was published. The Compact is not due to meet again until after your Budget meeting on 11th February, and therefore will not be able to influence these critical decisions.

Since you have now been in touch, I would be pleased to offer, with EVOC, to present to you our analysis of the challenges facing public policy and services over the coming years and the solutions offered by community and voluntary organisations in this future-facing context.

Hopefully this might be of interest in relation to the decisions facing yourself and colleagues in the coming weeks and in particular the single 'budget option', currently in the public domain.

I am delighted to hear that other options are being considered and trust they include increased investment in some of the key organisations facing up to today, and tomorrow's social challenges. I know voluntary sector colleagues in Edinburgh are keen to see and discuss with you these other options.

I, and colleagues would be pleased to make ourselves available to meet with you this week.

Yours sincerely



Lucy McTernan

Deputy Chief Executive

Cc Ella Simpson EVOC, Paula Evans CoSLA, Geoff Pearson Scottish Government