

The Third Sector Partnership Council

The Third Sector Partnership Council (TSPC) is a key mechanism for maintaining regular dialogue between the third sector and the Welsh Assembly Government.

It is always chaired by the Minister and is made up of 25 representatives of third sector networks working across 25 key areas of voluntary sector activity as well as 3 representatives from Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA).

The main purpose of the Third Sector Partnership Council is to make sure that the principles set out in the Voluntary Sector Scheme are put into practice. It also provides an opportunity for the sector to raise key issues of interest or concern. It generally does not discuss issues that relate to only one area of interest (these can be taken up through biannual Ministerial meetings) and as a national body it is concerned with issues affecting all of Wales.

The Partnership Council meets four times a year in different venues across Wales and members of the public are encouraged to come to the meetings.

Elections for the 25 voluntary sector members take place approximately every two years and are facilitated by WCVA through a ballot of its membership. All members are invited to nominate a network to represent the sector under each of the categories of interest. The network will then decide who is to be its representative at the TSPC, and if appropriate, who will act as deputy representative. If more than one network is nominated WCVA will negotiate with interested parties to achieve an acceptable solution. If necessary the decision will be put to a vote.

Ideally, the third sector members represent the most inclusive national networks working within each category of interest. This is designed to ensure that they have a good understanding of issues concerning organisations within their category of interest and are able to disseminate information to a wide number of groups.