

From: Nicolson S (Stuart) Special Adviser

Sent: 07 February 2017 07:43

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: Online copy

Hi Philip,

I'm assuming you're best placed to pick up stuff regarding online issues, but if not I'd be grateful if you could pass this on. Also cc'ing Brian, Kirsten and Glenn for info.

Just to say I'm a bit perplexed at the BBC's online coverage previewing today's Holyrood debate and vote on Article 50.

In all there are about 10 paragraphs of quotes from Kezia Dugdale, John Lamont, a UK Government spokesperson and the PM.

Meanwhile, there are precisely 10 words of quotes from the FM and Mike Russell.

I'm aware of the fact that comments won't always exactly balance, but this story seems very skewed, not least since some of the other quotes are dated, while the FM words that I issued were fresh, with a midnight embargo. This is also a Scottish Government debate, but there is far more opposition comment about it than there is from the FM explaining the rationale for bringing the debate in the first place.

I'd appreciate it if the story could be updated to include more of the FM's overnight comments.

Thanks,

Stuart

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 22 February 2017 07:18

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Re: Charities story for BBC

Hi

I've made a change to the second par here to reflect the fact that the move to three year funding is from the whole of our Equalities budget, not just those combating violence against women. Can the copy be updated please? Thanks a lot

[REDACTED]

A Scottish Government spokesman said:

"The Scottish Government is supporting Scotland's strong and dynamic third sector. We have protected core funding for the sector of £24.5 million next year, an investment in prosperity and social cohesion across the country.

"We will continue to work in partnership with the sector to ensure our support continues to be effective. Last week, for the first time, we announced three year rolling funding from our Equalities budget. That will give organisations more financial security and enable better planning for the longer term."

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 21 February 2017 23:23
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Charities story for BBC

Nicola

Here you go thanks.

A Scottish Government spokesman said:

"The Scottish Government is supporting Scotland's strong and dynamic third sector. We have protected core funding for the sector of £24.5 million next year, an investment in prosperity and social cohesion across the country.

"We will continue to work in partnership with the sector to ensure our support continues to be effective. Last week, for the first time, we announced three year rolling funding for third sector equality and violence against women and girls organisations. That will give organisations more financial security and enable better planning for the longer term."

Regards

[REDACTED]

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone.

[Original Message](#)

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 21 February 2017 18:49
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Charities story for BBC

Hi [REDACTED]

Here's the press release I'm working from. Can you send any response to newsonlinescotland@bbc.co.uk

Many thanks



The economy of Scotland's third sector is failing to grow and just 1% of people working for Scottish charities optimistic about the financial future for the sector.

New figures compiled by the Scottish Council for Organisations (SCVO) show that just 53% of Scottish charities saw their turnover go up last year and the average increase was far below inflation at just 0.0001%.

The majority of the growth was recorded by organisations with an annual turnover over £500,000. Smaller charities recorded a decline in turnover.

A recent SCVO survey of people who work for Scottish charities reveals financial confidence is at rock bottom. Only 1% of people working in the sector believe the economy of the whole sector will improve and only 12% believe their own charity's finances will improve.

The survey also reveals that 41% of organisations are unable to plan ahead because of inadequate and short-term funding problems. A further 32% claim they are unable to plan ahead for more than 12 months.

With 72% of organisations expecting demand for their services to increase in 2017, SCVO, says the sector has gone into "survival mode". It suggests organisations are getting by rather than developing.

John Downie, director of public affairs at SCVO, said: "Our research clearly shows that Scotland's third sector has given up on the idea of growth and has gone into survival mode.

"Organisations feel they will have to do more with less as demand for services increases at a time where funding streams are squeezed. There is a strong expectation of growing competition to secure unstable hand-to-mouth funding and this is hampering the sector's ability to develop."

It is calling for the Scottish Government, local authorities and other funders to help the sector by awarding fairer funding packages.

"Given the relatively small amounts of money the sector relies on, an increase in funding is not necessarily required to improve things," said Downie. "We know it's possible to provide more stability and security to third sector bodies with more straightforward funding processes and three or five year awards."

"SCVO has been calling for funders to commit to long-term funding for decades. It's time to move on from empty promises to actual solutions."

Funding Survey

Experience of funding processes

Funding application processes are reported as too onerous: almost three in ten of the respondents who chose not to apply for funding, or not to complete an application - perceiving or finding the process too complicated or time-consuming.

Applications for funding are being made very frequently: 73% of respondents said they apply for funding to local authorities/health boards/other regional public bodies at least once a year, with 26% of them applying (on average) a whopping three times a year or more.

Most grant-funded organisations apply for small grants - over eight in ten grant-funded respondent organisations asked for less than £50,000; and over half asked for less than £10,000. Most grant-funded organisations appear to apply for funding that covers less than a year's activity - with almost 80% seeking funding for one year or less.

Core costs, inflationary uplifts, and minimum wage uplifts still continue to be a struggle for the sector. Lots of funders don't cover these elements, putting strain on organisations

Analysis and key asks

It is evident from the survey findings that there has been a sharp drop in the sector's confidence as the economic outlook remains gloomy and EU negotiations continue to cause uncertainty. One-year budgeting cycles through current national/local government budgeting mechanisms also make it difficult for third sector organisations to plan ahead and think strategically about the work they wish to undertake.

It is evident that most voluntary organisations feel they will have to do more with less and as demand for services increases at a time where funding streams are squeezed, this presents a 'perfect storm' for the sector. There is also a prevailing sense that there will be growing competition between organisations to secure unstable hand-to-mouth funding. This too is hampering the sector's ability to fully realise its potential dynamism.

At first glance it would seem oxymoronic that individual organisations are extremely concerned about finances but remain optimistic about their future. Looking more closely, it seems that the sector is now less focussed on 'growth' and is, instead, looking at sustainability. In essence, the sector has gone in to 'survival mode'. This is in keeping with findings which show larger charities decreasing in size and other organisations planning to cut spending and retreat from developing new services

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