**Minutes of the meeting of the TSI Board, 22nd April 2025, Teams**

**Present –**Michelle Mundie (MM), Nicola Hackett (NH), Alison Gildea (AG), Hilary Pearce (HP) Takki Sulaiman (TS) - CEO, Lauren Martin (LM) - Business Manager

**Welcome and Apologies**

Apologies were received from the Chair Nicola Porciani (NP) and Luke Winter(LW). It was agreed that MM would chair in NP's absence. The Chair welcomed HP to the meeting. HP has joined as a paid Finance Advisor to the board.

**3.Declaration Of Interests**

No changes to the declarations of interest.

**4. Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The actions from the previous meeting were reviewed and all in attendance agreed they were accurate, Proposed by NH and seconded by MM.

**5. Standing Items**

**5.1 CEO Report (TS)**

TS presented the CEO Report, covering activity from 5th February to 15th April 2025. Key updates included ongoing national lobbying for fair funding and preventative investment through the TSI Network, and preparations for an emerging third sector manifesto ahead of the Scottish elections.

Locally, a draft Fair Funding Charter has been developed for the Community Planning Partnership, aiming for adoption in September. TS also provided an update on the Poverty Alliance's "Scotland Demands Better" campaign, in which he now sits on the steering group.

The Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill was published in March, with the TSI contributing to local implementation and submitting a corporate response.

On internal matters, TS reported:

- 5 grants were awarded through the Resilience and Transformation Fund, with follow-up support underway.
- The TSI has received its 2025–26 core grant letter, alongside two-year funding for the Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund (Years 5 and 6).

- The 2025–2030 Strategy tender will be posted by end of April, shaped around co-production and CWB principles.
- Local area plans have been drafted by Third Sector Support Advisers, supporting place-based working.
- The board was asked to extend the 4-Day Week pilot until July, when final evaluation results will be presented.
- A new Financial Adviser to the Board, Hilary Pearce, has been appointed.
- A Walking Development Coordinator has been recruited.
- All TSI staff have now completed trauma-informed training, with Positive Destinations staff identified for progression to Level 2.

TS also highlighted ongoing financial pressures, particularly within the IJB, and the importance of continued preventative investment.

MM requested that the TSSA area plans be circulated.

**5.2 Management Accounts**

TS read through the notes to the Q4 Management Report, highlighting key financial activity for the period ending 31st March 2025. Income for the quarter was £212,744, significantly exceeding the budgeted £116,682 due to higher-than-expected interest income and unbudgeted grant income from the Community Assets for Living Well project.

Direct expenditure was also above budget, primarily due to additional Resilience Fund activity, equipment costs for Positive Destinations, and unbudgeted grant administration costs. Despite this, the organisation reported a quarterly surplus of £13,950 and a year-end surplus of £51,188, against a previously projected deficit.

Reserves increased to £575,780.

HP commented that the document was clear, explanatory, and easy to follow, and queried whether a reserves policy was in place. TS confirmed that the policy is to maintain reserves equivalent to one year's operating costs—approximately £330,000 (or £30–35k per month) and confirmed that plans are in place for spending down.

**5.3 Business Management report**

LM presented the Business Management Report, providing a snapshot of operational progress and strategic activity from the past quarter.

Key highlights included progress on the Volunteer of the Year (VOY) Awards, with 198 nominations across 17 categories and £3,500 secured in sponsorship. Strong engagement continues, and preparations are on track for the June event.

At the Inveraray Hub, legacy contractor issues have resulted in delays securing a completion certificate. Remedial work is underway, and a building warrant extension may be required depending on progress.

LM updated the board on the organisation's AI integration work, noting that a staff member is due to begin a free trial of Microsoft Co-Pilot. If successful, a full readiness assessment and training rollout will follow. This forms part of wider efforts to boost productivity and assess the long-term feasibility of a four-day working week.

New Disclosure Scotland legislation now requires all board members involved in decisions related to vulnerable adults to have PVG membership. LM confirmed she will coordinate this process and provide further updates in due course.

Finally, communications performance continues to be strong, with a 200% increase in social media reach and email open rates exceeding 42%. Campaigns focused on VOY and recruitment generated particularly high levels of engagement.

MM offered to review the outstanding work required at the Inveraray Hub and explore whether ACHA could provide support. LM will share a list of the required works with MM. NH acknowledged the progress on AI integration and queried whether many local organisations were also exploring AI. She also offered to assist with the VOY Awards.

**6.1 Positive Destinations programme update**

TS read through the Positive Destinations report prepared by Kirsten Johnston, confirming that UK Shared Prosperity Fund support has been secured for a further year, enabling the programme to support 20 participants in 2025–26. Since launch, 103 referrals have been received, with many progressing into volunteering, education, or employment.

Key improvements include updated onboarding processes, mentor and mentee packs, trauma-informed training, and post-placement support. Staffing capacity is under review in high-referral areas such as Oban and Dunoon.

The programme is financially on track, operating under a full cost recovery model, with further funding applications pending to support expansion. The report was noted by the board.

### 6.2 Policy and Procedure Review

LM presented the updated Policy and Procedure Review for board approval as part of the organisation's regular review cycle. All policies were reviewed against current Scottish legislation, including GDPR and the forthcoming Worker Protection Act, with updates guided by HR and governance best practice.

Two new policies were introduced: a Capability Policy to support staff wellbeing and performance management, and a Record Retention and Disposal Policy to ensure data is managed securely and in line with statutory requirements.

Key updates included:

- Health and Safety Policy – now includes support for remote workers, updated vaping definitions, and improved safeguarding language.
- Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy – updated to reflect upcoming legal duties around sexual harassment prevention.
- Complaints Policy – minor updates for clarity, including a defined appeals timeline and reference to external escalation.

If approved, these policies will be added to the staff handbook and shared as part of a formal consultation process. The board approved the revised and new policies as presented following NH email to LM with some minor suggestions.

**6.3 Business Plan 2025–2026 Submission**

TS presented the updated 2025–2026 Business Plan for board approval ahead of its submission to the Scottish Government by the end of April. The plan maintains continuity with key workstreams, including Community Wealth Building, the Living Well programme, and capacity-building support, while also incorporating new focus areas aligned with government priorities such as Public Sector Reform and Quality Assurance.

The business plan reflects net zero, sustainability, and anti-inequality commitments, and aligns team activity with strategic outcomes. It supports a lighter-touch reporting process and integrates with the TSI's upcoming five-year strategy.

The board reviewed and approved the business plan for submission. NH asked whether the Scottish Government would require the business plan to be updated once the new strategy is introduced later in the year. TS confirmed this would not be necessary, as any updates would be captured in the end-of-year report.

**AOCB**

The upcoming meeting dates were reviewed, and it was agreed that the July board meeting date would be confirmed closer to the time, with a poll to be issued nearer the date due to the school summer holidays.

**Actions**

| Action Item | Description | Responsible Person | Status (RAG) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Area plans to be circulated | TS | |
| 2 | Board member PVG process | LM | Green |
| 3 | Share completion certificate details with MM | LM | Green |
| 4 | Poll for July board meeting date | LM | Green |