



## **Speech by John Swinney MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Sustainability.**

*The following is the minuted highlights of the speech delivered by John Swinney at the Inspiring Volunteers conference. As Mr Swinney did the speech from skeleton notes no full transcript is available.*

Mr Swinney discussed what has been the impact of the volunteer sector on him personally as a minister.

He took part in event on Volunteer Centre Angus in his constituency. There he heard from a young woman her individual story of how volunteering had changed her life. Volunteering had transformed her from a young woman with a drug dependency and a chaotic life style into someone who was a successful, happy and productive individual. The Volunteer Centre had been the first people who had taken any interest in her or that she had a contribution to make to society. It started her journey of recovery.

There are many ways we can assist individuals back into mainstream society. Volunteering has a central role to play in ensuring that people are able to reach their full potential of what they can contribute to society. Helping them recognise the significance of the contribution they can make. Volunteering matters to the government because the impact it has on society is evident. Administration will be acting to ensure that it continues to have a strong place on our society.

Current economic circumstances: We will face some difficulties.

Three aspects of how the government will support the third sector.

1. Recognise the significance of the voluntary sector.
  2. Support this sector.
  3. Engage with those involved in volunteering.
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1. Government economic strategy recognises that volunteering has a significant role to contribute. There is an implicit recognition of volunteering as being central to challenges in our society. That it is better placed to provide some services. Shading the boundaries of public service provision.
  2. Support the process of volunteering. The Administration funds the Scottish Centre of Excellence (VDS). This is significant in developing new ways of volunteering, it also funds the Voluntary Action Fund. Commonwealth Games of 2014 give us an opportunity go look forward to an imaginative strategy of volunteering for that event.
  3. Here in Edinburgh the Community Planning Partnerships will establish a seat for the third sector on the committee. That is the model of what should be happening around the country. As we proceed towards the formulation of SOA that the third sector will be very much involved in those agreements. As we formulate our wider public sector services we involve the voluntary sector and the administration will insist upon this.

The three sectors cannot work in isolation. Through the SOA we are seeing that by working together we can make a greater impact than otherwise could be done. We are going into a period which is going to be difficult in area of public funding and funding from private companies must continue.

In 2009/2010 funding is secure. But there is a reduction up to tune of £500 million in 2010/2011 in the Government's budget..

It is essential to find ways of ensuring money makes a greater impact than it has done in the past.

Ways of maximising impact of our resources. Limited resources should not affect our ability to create a cohesive and collaborative society.  
There is still an absolute requirement of the private sector to contribute to voluntary sector.

The Scottish Government will make a commitment to ensure that resources available are maximised to support the development of the sector.