

**community**  
enterprise

---

---

## A new Approach to SEN Collaboration

A research report for

# SEN SCOT

August 2017

 The Scottish Government

---

## Contents

## Page

---

<b>Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Background, Context and Drivers for Change .....	3
Methodology .....	3
Findings .....	4
Recommended Model .....	5
<b>1. Introduction and Background .....</b>	<b>6</b>
1.1 Background and Original Drivers.....	6
1.3 The Italian Consortia Model.....	7
1.4 Methodology .....	8
<b>2. Research Findings .....</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1 Summary of Research.....	9
2.2. Detailed Summary of findings .....	13
2.2.1 Transferrable Learning from the Italian Model .....	13
2.2.2 Challenges Identified in Scotland .....	13
2.2.3 Opportunities Identified by the Sector in Scotland .	13
2.2.4 Potential Concerns to Address.....	14
<b>3. Recommendations.....</b>	<b>15</b>
3.1 Options Appraisal .....	15
3.2 Recommended Option and Timeframe.....	16
3.3 Detailed Recommendations .....	17
3.4 The Model .....	19

---

# Executive Summary

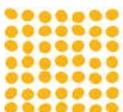
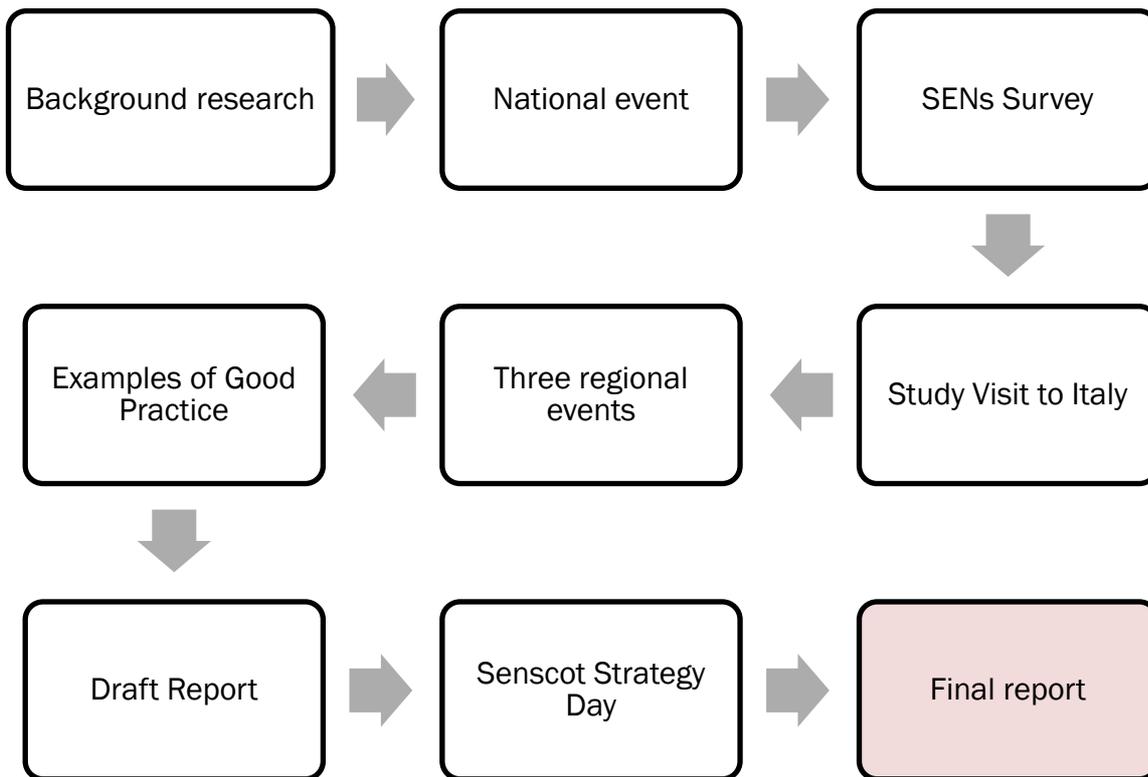
## Background, Context and Drivers for Change

Senscot first received funding from Scottish Government in 2004/5 to help establish local Social Enterprise Networks (SENs). There are currently **17** local SENs with approximately **800** social enterprises signed up as members or engaged. The fortunes of these SENs has varied over the years - some have developed into established organisations; others have had more fluctuating fortunes. The networks strengthen and weaken over time due in part to resource issues and local conditions. In 2010, Senscot received its first funding to support the setting up of thematic SENs. There are now 6 thematic SENs - with a joint membership of around **500** social enterprises.

Over the last couple of years, Senscot has been considering what the next stage of development of the SENs could be - leading to greater stability and sustainability. The recent SE Strategy acknowledges the role that SENs play in the SE support infrastructure; and the supporting SE Action Plan is explicit in its intention to 'extend and strengthen' SENs across Scotland.

The purpose of this paper is to stimulate thinking around how to do this better. In light of the above, Senscot has been carrying out a Feasibility Study that would propose a national strategy for the growth and co-ordination of Scotland's SENs with specific reference to the Italian Consortia Model

## Methodology



## Findings

The following table is a high level summary of the detailed findings that should be read in section 3.

Finding	Area	Detail
1	Learning from Italian Model	The consortia model in Italy has taken many years to develop
2		The structured formality of the consortia model, with resources, has been key to its success
3		The direct link between the sector and an effective national body has been vital
4		Practical and commercial considerations are the drivers
5		The formal structure encourages an ethos of partnership and collaboration rather than the growth of individual enterprises to the potential detriment of others
6		Delivering centralised services has resourced the sector
7	Current Issues in Scotland	Variability and vulnerability of local SENs
8		Lack of resource in most areas
9		Low levels of joint working and communication between SENs
10	Opportunities identified in Scotland	Sharing central costs was well supported as was shared commissioned services
11		Sharing and centralising information and resources
12		Stronger voice
13		Joint work with national providers
14	Challenges in adopting a new model	Agreeing a shared vision for the SEN community across Scotland
15		Smothering local innovation by creating too strict a structure
16		Variable willingness to collaborate among membership of different SENs
17		Lack of resources to make it work properly



## Recommended Model

Phase	Action	Time frame
1	Senscot to increase SEN representation on its Board.	2017-18
2	Set out the guiding principles of creating an ethos of a 'Sharing Economy' - where established social enterprises and/or SENs provide support to less established ones – out of a sense of being a contributor to a bigger vision for a family of social enterprise. This encourages active members to support enterprises experiencing short-term challenges.	2017-19
3	Implement the commitment in the Social Enterprise Action Plan for a social enterprise network (SEN) in every area that wants one, and provide a modest baseline investment in each network – in keeping with local variations.	2018-20
4	Establish light touch regional consortia (networks of between 3 and 6 local networks) to meet regularly - linking directly into support and lobbying networks at a regional and national level. Light touch resources (expenses, room hire and a secretariat etc.) should be secured for regional networks.	2018-20
5	Policy makers and stakeholders to review effectiveness of national intermediary bodies and their links to and from the grass roots sector.	2021



# 1. Introduction and Background

---

## 1.1 Background and Original Drivers

Senscot has been facilitating networks since the first one was established in Fife in 2004. Their approach is firmly a grassroots one rather than a top down one. Where momentum begins to emerge, they will nurture and advise to support an emerging network but will not move into an area to establish one. As a result, support is light touch (especially geographically), encouraging the local networks to be independent. Though good practice, this can leave the local network potentially vulnerable. This is largely due to lack of resources

The SENs original purpose is to provide members with opportunities for:

- peer support
- resource sharing, joint working and development of markets
- a focal point for issues specific to social enterprise
- a collective voice both locally and nationally
- raising the awareness and profile of social enterprise both locally and nationally.

There is also a strategic objective for networks to work together with other networks. The website states “The vision is of a growing community of frontline social enterprises across Scotland - connected and energised through a network of Networks”. In reality the networks strengthen and weaken over time due in part to resource issues and local conditions. Without a more structured approach, this pattern is likely to continue. However, an overly structured way of working has not historically fitted with the traditional light touch Senscot approach.

An important element therefore in the future growth, development and sustainability of social enterprises in Scotland will be finding a way to work more constructively together and this may require the creation of specific collaborative structures. The purpose of this research is to stimulate thinking around how to do this better. It is inspired by a consortia model in Italy, though the idea is to learn from this and develop something bespoke, rather than replicate it.

Senscot wants to support small and community-based social enterprises make a greater social, economic and environmental contribution within their local communities. If these organisations are going to increase their sustainability, the assumption is that one effective way to achieve this is not through individual growth, but through mutual collaboration. Key objectives are;

1. Creating economies of scale amongst SENs and their members
2. Supporting the growth of SEs – and increasing the critical mass of SEs allowing for greater and more effective participation in delivery of public services in specific markets/sectors.
3. Strengthening local networks and helping to support and sustain less established social enterprises as they seek to expand or develop their services.
4. Fostering new and innovative approaches to the delivery of public services locally.
5. Building a stronger profile/brand for social enterprise at a local and regional level.



### 1.3 The Italian Consortia Model

Senscot made contact with Consorzio Light via the EUSEN and a representative presented the model to an event in Edinburgh in November 2016<sup>1</sup>. An 'Italian Consortia Model' is the main tool used by Italian Co-ops to create economies of scale and sustain growth. It could provide a framework on which Scotland can build consortia. There are two types of consortia:

1. 'Light' consortia – providing basic services and support to members (i.e. training opportunities, administrative support, inter-trading, sharing of resources etc.).
2. 'Heavy' consortia – providing a more structured approach with the key function being supporting members in jointly bidding to deliver public services (via consortia)

Social Co-operatives (SC) represent 4% of active non-profit organisations in Italy but employ more than 50% of total workers (EURICSE, 2011). Between 2001 and 2011 the non-profit sector grew by 28% while SC grew by 98%

There had been a tendency of SC towards structured forms of collaboration whereas in Scotland these have tended to be loose and informal.

#### Functions of Co-operatives in Italy

- Representation from the grassroots to policy makers
- Creation of new cooperatives including stimulating mergers
- Legal, administrative and financial advice
- Access to credit and funding
- Collaboration in specific markets segments to develop business together
- Exchange information and services
- Share services

#### Key features

- Strong local and regional identity: Consortia built by SEs working within the same geographical area (usually at local or regional level but, potentially, also national)
- Mutuality: Actions of consortia are socially as well economically relevant to local communities
- Cross-sector composition: they can create synergies among different types of SEs and can explore innovative approaches in existing or new sectors – as well as acting as 'lead partner' in tenders – enabling smaller SEs to participate in public sector tenders and supply chain development.
- With support from academia, they have been able to build up a substantial evidence base on the social and economic impacts achieved – both in the short and long-term.
- Sharing resources; as well as sharing knowledge and expertise, there are practical benefits i.e. back-office functions and digital solutions etc.
- Pooling finance: exploring the 'pooling' of financial resources – either to invest in new initiatives; provide seed-funding for new ventures; or to support smaller SEs in need of short-term capital

Specifically, Senscot is keen to explore the feasibility of SENs in Scotland adopting the Consortia 'light' model.



## Projected Benefits of Consortia Working

- Creating economies of scale amongst SENs and their members
- Supporting the growth of SEs – and increasing the critical mass of SEs allowing for greater and more effective participation in delivery of public services in specific markets/sectors.
- Strengthening local networks and helping to support and sustain less established social enterprises as they seek to expand or develop their services.
- Fostering new and innovative approaches to the delivery of public services locally.
- Joint purchasing of goods and services on behalf of the members
- Easier access to competitive tenders including acting as a general contractor in public tenders
- Building a stronger profile/brand for social enterprise at a local regional level.
- Providing support services (e.g. technical, administrative consultancy etc.)
- Promoting and managing relations with public authorities
- Promoting access to credit and funding

## 1.4 Methodology

The feasibility study has been undertaken through a highly participative process as follows:

**Stage 1 – Induction and Familiarisation** – An initial meeting was held with Sencot to agree the parameters of the research and the background information that would be required.

**Stage 2 – Desk-based research** – Desktop research was undertaken to analyse the Italian model and to consider the base line position of the SENs.

**Stage 4– National launch meeting** – a facilitated event took place in Perth with representatives of 12 Social Enterprise Networks

**Stage 5– Online survey** – An online survey was designed and distributed to all SENs to encourage transparent input to the research

**Stage 6 – Study Visit to Milan** – a visit to SIS, one of the 70 consortia of social enterprises (co-operatives) in Italy along with a tour of various members to identify the benefits and challenges of the Italian collaboration model

**Stage 7 – Regional Summits** – Three regional summits were held to discuss how networks could collaborate more effectively. These took place in Tayside, the Lothians and wider Aberdeenshire to ensure a good spread of geography.

**Stage 8 – Report Writing** – The final stages of the assignment involved drawing together the findings of the research and preparing this Research Report and Recommendations.

**Stage 9 – Final Report** – Sencot debated the draft report at a strategic Away Day and fed back comments leading to this final report.



## 2. Research Findings

### 2.1 Summary of Research

A separate appendices document contains the full data. The following is a summary of key research outcomes;



#### Launch Event

Representatives of 12 social enterprise networks gathered in Perth for an initial meeting to consider what rolling out a more formal consortia model might mean.

There was a feeling that individual networks were working well, though there was room for improvement (a barometer showed 75% contentment) but that networks of networks working together and broader collaboration was really in its infancy, with only a 39% satisfaction rate estimated. Most people felt it was improving.

Limited resources, lack of leadership and low capacity were seen as the main reasons why networks went through periods of peaks and troughs. There is too much silo working, and limited joint working in regions which was viewed as a real loss of opportunity.

Benefits of collaboration were seen as very practical including joint contracting, shared resources (intellectual and practical) and bulk purchasing. In addition, better unity was seen as a route to a strong national brand.

#### Survey

An online survey was distributed to all social enterprise networks. 14 out of the 17 SENs responded to the survey. The following were the key findings;

There was a significant appetite to share resources. Nearly 90% identified staffing and policies and procedures as key priorities. Premises and equipment also scored very highly. Some representative quotes;

*"We all really need to step up our game, work more closely, identify skills within our networks that can be utilised and identify opportunities for collaboration."*

*"Sharing staff resource is particularly important as this allows for the maximization of knowledge potential."*

*"Any collaboration needs to have a clear 'why?'. This vision along with local objectives are important."*

*"Time saved creating policies and procedures by using a central resource would be of huge benefit."*



All respondents saw the benefit of joint and bulk purchasing to make potential savings, though those linked more closely to TSIs saw less benefit. The opportunity most in demand was marketing and PR at 69% but stationery, professional fees and utilities were also highly demanded.

*"Working together for joint purchasing would be a huge benefit, not only for financial gain but also time and effort gain."*

*"I think joint purchasing would be beneficial to all, and particularly useful to smaller social enterprises and those just starting out."*

*"Marketing and PR is always very expensive, sharing the cost of this can only be a positive move!"*

*"Great, as long as you don't get bogged down in inflexible policies."*

There was a substantial appetite to be working together and there were clear specific benefits. The area most supported were training and learning, and joint funding proposals (at 94%). Many other areas were also very high from jointly raising awareness of the sector to joint funding proposals.

*"Apart from the obvious financial benefits there are other benefits that are just as valuable such as the learning to be gained."*

*"Smaller social enterprises can gain the confidence to grow and expand by being involved in the same work as that of larger social enterprises."*

*"Each organisation will have different levels of experience/knowledge of the sector so joint working could introduce mentoring."*

*"Up and coming opportunities could be shared across the network which allows potential partnerships to come together."*

### Italian Study Visit

Consortia are the main tool used by Italian cooperatives to create economies of scale and sustain their growth. Even though their objectives may seem similar to those of cooperatives networks, their scope is in practice much wider and they represent a more stable structure with a greater impact on growth. In general terms the creation of consortia has three main economic functions:

1. Productive integration
2. Joint purchasing of goods and services on behalf of the members
3. Participation and access to tenders and contracts





The Study visit allowed us to experience the Italian model from the three perspectives of varying kinds and scales of operational enterprises; the regional network; and the national representative body. The findings are contained in 2.2.1.

In summary, Italian consortia have built a more formal structure joining local, to regional to national collaborative structures which have really boosted the commercial success of their social enterprise sector. There are of course challenges and the model is one that is changing and adapting in response to external circumstances.

## Regional Events

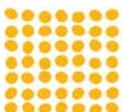
Three regional focus groups took place to identify what the benefits and challenges of regional joint working have been and could be. These were Tayside, Edinburgh and the Lothians, and Aberdeenshire and Moray. Nine SENs were represented in three regional focus groups and others contributed separately.

Key benefits and opportunities were seen as;

- Making savings by bulk ordering – increased buying power of IT, HR, utilities, accountancy, stationery etc. This can be managed by a network of networks.
- Sharing centralised staff costs.
- Joint tendering and joint service development – creating regional SE partnerships.
- Potential to link with other regional consortia on national programmes where stronger networks should help the weaker ones.

Challenges and Barriers were seen as:

1. Resources - Joint working works well until people get too busy and SENs are not resourced enough to make this happen.
2. Leadership – as well as resources it needs a clear champion and leader locally who understands and is willing to be a catalyst for involvement and action.
3. Territorialism/parochialism - despite warm words, a culture of openness and co-operation needs to be stimulated and supported.
4. Lack of parity across Scotland which will need to be addressed.



## Exemplars

Learning from success;

### **Strategic Cross Border Initiative SESSEZ**

The South of Scotland Social Enterprise Zone (SESSEZ) was originally established to respond to the opportunity arising for the City Region Deal which has now been signed off .

This is at concept stage only but one of the practical examples of mutual benefit was identified as links between Edinburgh and the Borders. In simple terms, the manufacturing element of a produce could be sited in the cheaper location of the Borders, whilst the retail side could happen in the city. Working together can have clear commercial benefits. In addition, the considerations for setting up a “social enterprise zone” for the region can relate to a branded campaign (similar to a Fair Trade Town) to raise awareness and drive consumers to purchase more ethically within the region by making goods and services more visible and more available.

### **A Mutual Supply Relationship : GCP and CCI**

Grassmarket Community Project (GCP) manufactures wooden items for sale at a high premium. They have a strong staff team and trained members as an effective workforce. Their workshop is full to capacity but additional space is expensive in Edinburgh. They are reluctant to turn work away as this could start to impact on new leads and the success of the enterprise.

Clydesdale Community Initiatives (CCI) have a workshop near Lanark. It has been recently constructed and has significant capacity to deliver further production. As a result, GCP is passing commissions to CCI who fulfil them on GCP’s behalf, making profit from each item, while GCP manages to sustain a strong order book and reputation. As a result both social enterprises benefit.

### **Consortia Tendering : Scottish Communities for Health and Well-being (SCHW)**

SCHW came together initially as the Health Living Centre Alliance. As well as joint learning, information distribution and peer support, one key function has been their role as a conduit for health contract tendering. Prior to its establishment, individual community-led health social enterprises were unable to tap into larger contracts due to low capacity to deliver or ineligibility. In this model the SCHW acts as the lead, operating at scale with “branches” across the whole of Scotland and providing comfort to commissioners.

The actual delivery is done by the members of the consortia who are brought in technically as sub-contractors. They have had significant success with medium-sized contracts.

### **Consortia Commissioning : Fife Employment and Training Consortium (Fife ETC)**

The Fife ETC has been operational for two years now and is made up of eight third sector employability providers who are contracted with Fife Council to deliver employability pathway activities via its Opportunities Fife pathways. This has been a huge success for Fife with over 600 people from areas of deprivation moved into jobs. This happened because the council itself made a conscious decision to test this and put money up to trial the concept rather than going out to open tender.

### **Practical Assistance from large enterprises to small : Link and Centre for Health and Well-being**

Link Housing is a large multi-faceted registered social landlord with a portfolio of additional activity. They are headquartered in Edinburgh and have high quality office space. They are members of the Edinburgh Social Enterprise Network. Link is able to offer space to smaller enterprises which allows



them to trade and, ideally, enables them to grow to the point where they can afford to rent a more permanent base.

## **2.2. Detailed Summary of findings**

### **2.2.1 Transferrable Learning from the Italian Model**

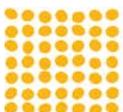
1. It has taken many years to develop and is still an evolving model changing in relation to external circumstances.
2. The structured formality of the consortia model, with resources, has been key to its success.
3. One strong national agency controlled by grassroots members has been vital to lobby for change and investment from the Government and EU, and to stimulate new consortia. The consortia model has created a critical mass that has raised awareness of ethical purchasing for businesses, the public sector and consumers.
4. The centralised, then cascaded, delivery of services has been beneficial.
5. The main (though not only) driver to create consortia and collaboration has been a business imperative, to help social co-operatives trade better. Joint working is practical. Collaboration happens largely in specific markets segments. Information and services are shared where there is mutual benefit.
6. Growth through merger as well as collaboration with a purpose has happened concurrently. Individual growth at the expense of other social enterprises is prevented by having a structure where the local consortia acts as broker.
7. The model has facilitated the sharing of costs, such as administration which has enhanced sustainability for members.

### **2.2.2 Challenges Identified in Scotland**

8. Local Social Enterprise Networks rise and fall over time and vary in different areas, including many areas which don't have that resource at all. There is a need for them to strengthen and become consistent across the country as a priority. This is directly related to lack of resources and the need for leaders. Opportunities are missed.
9. There are poor levels of communication between individual SENs and other partner agencies. There is a need to resource this to stimulate joint working.
10. There is a strong ethos amongst SENs, but a lack of clarity of a single national vision of what they are trying to achieve. There is no proper representative collective voice directly linked to the sector.

### **2.2.3 Opportunities Identified by the Sector in Scotland**

11. Sharing costs of central services (HR, IT, Accountancy etc.) and sharing of central admin costs was seen as an easy win and an obvious reason to come together round consortia. Pooled resources to fund marketing was seen as a key opportunity. The opportunity most in demand for consortia purchasing was marketing and PR at 69% but stationary, professional fees and utilities were also highly demanded.



12. A stronger more structured consortia model was seen as giving a stronger voice to relate to larger (public) authorities.
13. Centralising information and policies in a central repository would be of great benefit.
14. The move to Self-Directed Support from block contracts and SLAs is an opportunity for structured joint working.
15. Consortia like the Italian model would be a good conduit to negotiate a “buy social” type brand from within the sector itself rather than one being imposed upon social enterprises. As well as a brand to drive sales, a regional and national identity could mutually push quality as all members will want to be associated with high-quality offerings and will be motivated to help newer members achieve a similar level of quality.
16. Skills can be audited at a wider level and training provided centrally to enhance efficiency and impact.
17. Joint funding bids and consortia tendering (both at nearly 90% in the survey) were very strongly supported by the networks. Collaborative bids to Scottish Government from a network of networks, to delivery national programmes, was seen as a strong opportunity. Sub-contracting arrangements could be created with national specialists feeding in intelligence from the sector.

#### **2.2.4 Potential Concerns to Address**

18. Agreeing a shared vision for the SEN community across Scotland might be difficult to achieve. A survey respondent noted “This vision along with local objectives are important as there is no point in deploying resources until we know what we are hoping to achieve and that there is a demand for what is being offered.”
19. There was a concern amongst social enterprises that too formal a structure could threaten the identity of current networks and could stifle innovation and the uniqueness of individual areas. Too uniform a structure could also restrict the operational nimbleness of local social enterprises. There is a need to balance the potential mutual benefit with avoiding over-centralisation. The independence of local networks is a major strength.
20. Developing another talking shop. Any new model would need to be focused on practical impact to secure involvement.
21. There is a danger that the stronger, more resourced social enterprises will be more likely to collaborate. The lack of a SEN in all areas creates concerns about equity and some areas growing more quickly than others. Lack of willingness to share was identified as a fear. Competition and conflict of interests would need to be monitored and managed.



## 3. Recommendations

### 3.1 Options Appraisal

A number of potential structural options were considered during the analysis of the research. Three main options emerged and these were assessed carefully to ensure the strongest way forward. The recommended model ended up being an amalgam of options one and two and that is articulated in section 3.2. The following shows the thought process in considering options.

Option 1	
A more formal relationship is established between the SENS (both local and regional) and Senscot. In effect, this option would see Senscot becoming the representative voice/body for SENS and their members while keeping the name, brand and legal structure.	
<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
A natural evolution of the SE sector – making the grassroots stronger and establishing a direct link between operational social enterprises on the ground and a national policy voice. This would legitimise lobbying and policy work.	<p>Evolving Senscot into the lead representative voice while there are other national intermediaries could become complex and confusing for the sector and its stakeholders.</p> <p>This would involve buy in from all SENS and, in turn, their members - which may be challenging.</p>
Option 2	
A brand new entity is created that represents the voice of grassroots SEs in Scotland. This new body with a new single vision and purpose which would result in other relevant national agencies ceasing to function in their current form.	
<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
<p>There is an opportunity to sweep away the perceived “cluttered landscape” and unify different perspectives on SE round a single vision.</p> <p>The lead body is sector-led (grass roots rather than top down) which brings a strong mandate in its dealings with policy makers.</p> <p>There is clarity for funders, particularly the Scottish Government, with only one agency to deal with.</p>	<p>Ideas coming from the various bodies would stop.</p> <p>Other intermediaries will have their own vision for the future and getting national agreement on this will be complex and potentially unachievable.</p> <p>An apparent neatness can actually stifle innovation and progress. There being more than one voice offering differing perspectives is good for the strength of the sector and this would be lost.</p>



	Depends on agreement by funders
<p>Option 3</p> <p>Rather than a new body being established, all representative bodies leading on Social Enterprise in Scotland merge assets and liabilities into a new entity.</p>	
<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
<p>Clear lines of responsibility/accountability to, for and from the sector. The cluttered landscape will have been addressed.</p> <p>Brings capacity and assets (from staff skills to equipment and facilities) under one roof.</p>	<p>There is a real question mark over whether one voice can represent the diversity of the sector.</p> <p>The legal, financial, ethical and practical issues involved in such a merger could be challenging.</p>

### 3.2 Recommended Option and Timeframe

As a consequence of weighing up the different potential options, the recommendation is for a phased approach, bringing the most positive elements of more than one option, largely options one and two. The following table shows what is being proposed in overview and the detailed recommendations can be read in section 3.3.

Phase	Action	Time frame				
		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
1	Senscot to increase SEN representation on its Board.					
2	Set out the guiding principles of creating an ethos of a 'Sharing Economy' - where established social enterprises and/or SENs provide support to less established ones - out of a sense of being a contributor to a bigger vision for a family of social enterprise. This encourages active members to support enterprises experiencing short term challenges.					
3	Implement the commitment in the Social Enterprise Action Plan for a social enterprise network (SEN) in every area that wants one, and provide a modest baseline investment in each network - in keeping with local variations.					



4	Establish light touch regional consortia (networks of between 3 and 6 local networks) to meet regularly - linking directly into support and lobbying networks at a regional and national level. Light touch resources (expenses, room hire and a secretariat etc.) should be secured for regional networks.					
5	Policy makers and stakeholders to review effectiveness of national intermediary bodies and their links to and from the grass roots sector.					

### 3.3 Detailed Recommendations

The evidence gathered in this report leads to recommendations to;

#### 3.3.1 Create a Strategic Context

1. Articulate a single vision and purpose for a new consortia model in consultation with the sector and backed up with challenging but achievable milestones and outcomes. This vision should be commercially and practically focused around strengthening organisations and securing financial sustainability through better business.
2. Create an ethos where more established social enterprises provide some support to less established ones out of a sense of being a contributor to a bigger vision for a family of social enterprise. This means that active members can support enterprises experiencing short term challenges.

#### 3.3.2 Build a Model That Works In Scotland

3. Implement the commitment in the Social Enterprise Action Plan for a social enterprise network in every area that wants one, and provide a modest baseline investment in that network. This will be in response to different regional funding arrangements.
4. The roles of SENs will remain largely similar in principle but their purpose will also be;
  - a. Being more open to collaboration regionally and nationally.
  - b. Brokering deals with other areas and supporting members to gain access to growth areas and partnership opportunities.
  - c. Working with Partnership for Procurement (P4P) to encourage consortia tenders – and partnership working.
  - d. Pulling intelligence from the sector to feed into Scottish government and other agencies.
  - e. Negotiate sharing of resources including staffing, marketing retainers etc. to encourage savings at a local level.



5. Establish light touch regional consortia (networks of between 3 and 6 local networks) to meet regularly. The purpose of regional consortia to be
  - a. Encourage inter-trading and joint working across a larger area.
  - b. Brokering deals with other regions and supporting members to gain access to growth areas and partnership opportunities.
  - c. Run or influence regional programmes in partnership with national providers. Influencing the design of and brokering what kind of local support is provided at a local level by national intermediaries and support providers, based on their knowledge of their members.
  - d. Commission marketing services across the region on a call on call off basis.
6. Construct a model that links operational social enterprises into support and lobbying networks at a regional and national level through increased engagement with Senscot.
7. Working in a close and mutual relationship with other national intermediaries, Senscot will utilise this greater mandate to assist them in;
  - a. Liaising with Scottish Government and other strategic partners.
  - b. Exploiting international opportunities as they grow over time.
  - c. Stimulating thoughts around the provision of central services including IT and accountancy.
  - d. Creating a repository of data, intelligence, policies etc., perhaps in partnership with the Social Enterprise Collection.
  - e. Contributing to thinking around a national branded directory of products and services including and on-line sale outlet.
  - f. Lead on promotion and facilitation the SE Voluntary Code as it evolves.
  - g. Facilitate SEs, through regional consortia, to influence national initiatives from Just Enterprise to the SE Census.

### 3.3.3. Resource it Properly

8. Invest in the local social enterprise networks backed on the commitment within the three-year Social Enterprise action plan for “a social enterprise network in every area that wants one”. Modest core funding should be provided (within or outwith the TSI funding settlement) to ensure minimal sustainability of local Social Enterprise Networks.
9. Light touch resources (expenses, room hire and a secretariat etc.) should be secured for regional networks – could include small contributions/fees from individual SENS.

### 3.3.4 Phase It In So That It Develops Sustainably

10. Implement the changes over the first two operating plan timescales as noted above in the recommended option section.



### 3.3.5 Build a partnership model with other providers

11. Embed crucial partners into the consortia system particularly the TSIs alongside each SEN
12. Link closely with national intermediaries and support agencies to ensure national delivery is consistent but also locally responsive.
13. Buy in from local authorities and other statutory bodies.

### 3.3.6 Make sure it is working

14. Invest in impact measurement to evidence the difference this model is making.
- 15.

### 3.4.1 The Model

