

## PESTLE TABLE/QUESTIONS - 2026

**POLITICAL** - 2026 will see Scottish Parliament elections, and local government elections in 2027.

### **Main question:**

What impact could the political environment have on your organisation over the coming months and years either:

- Directly – perhaps through changing government priorities and reallocation of funding; or
- Indirectly – perhaps through increasing demand for your services due to public sector cuts or changing public sentiment?

Other prompts:

1. Will you seek to influence the upcoming elections? What do you need to do now in preparation? A change of MSP will mean building new relationships for organisations?
2. Progress remains slow on fairer funding for the sector by 2026 (this includes increasing multi-year funding arrangements, making reporting and monitoring proportionate, ensuring prompt notification, while reviewing grant conditions). How are your current relationships with UK/Scottish/local governments? What are the implications of that?
3. How do the issues your organisation works on relate to government priorities? What impact might that have in the coming year?

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**ECONOMY** – UK and Scottish economies still feeling the impact of Brexit, Covid and the cost-of-living crisis.

### **Main question:**

How is the economic situation impacting on your charity in terms of your:

- Ability to attract and retain staff and volunteers;
- Ability to keep pay awards in line with inflation and avoid burnout;
- Ability to meet rising costs;
- Potential competition from other providers – public, private and voluntary.

Other prompts:

1. Household budgets are stretched and impacted by rising costs. Governments at all levels operating standstill budgets and/or cuts in public spending and many independent funders are oversubscribed. How realistic are your fundraising targets for 2025/26? What will impact on your ability to generate income in the same ways as you have in the past?
2. The SCVO Tracker showed an increase in the number of organisations using their reserves in 2024. What is your organisation's reserves position? Is this sustainable?
3. Employment costs. As living costs continue to rise, many voluntary organisations want to reflect this in staff salaries. Changes to the level of Employers' National Insurance contributions and increased National Minimum Wage—have had a significant impact. How has this affected your organisation?

## PESTLE TABLE/QUESTIONS - 2026

### SOCIETY

#### Main question:

How are societal changes likely to impact on the work you do in terms of:

- An ageing population;
- Adapting to how people are living and working post-pandemic;
- Polarisation and culture wars.

#### Other prompts:

1. Health and income inequalities remain a significant aspect of Scottish society, underpinned by structural inequalities. While social unrest has been less prevalent in Scotland than other parts of the UK, England and Wales has seen increased social unrest and a rise in the popularity of the Reform Party. How are the communities you work with impacted by social change?
2. In [Autumn 2024](#), more than three quarters of voluntary organisations reported issues with volunteer recruitment or retention. How reliant is your organisation on volunteers? Is that model sustainable?
3. 25% of Scottish charities reported that [recruitment of trustees](#) was one of their top 3 challenges in 2022 and 85% of respondents to a [recent NCVO survey](#) said they found it somewhat difficult or very difficult to fill vacancies on their board. Trustee recruitment is a particularly challenging for smaller charities. Is this an issue in your organisation?

## PESTLE TABLE/QUESTIONS - 2026

### TECHNOLOGY

**Main question:**

Do you feel you're able consider the impact of technological change on what you do and how you do it, given the rapid pace of change? Where do you need to start?

**Other prompts:**

1. Some organisations are experimenting with AI for content creation, funding applications, etc. What experience does your organisation have of AI? Are you aware of the opportunities and risks it brings?
2. The scale and range of cyber threats grows each year. Is your organisation prepared for a cyber attack? Could it continue to operate if it happens?
3. Are your digital platforms and services meeting the needs of users? For example, can people easily access the info they need and easily complete tasks like booking appointments? Are your staff enabled and supported with technology that works, or are your IT systems a struggle?
4. Have you carried out a review of your social media and digital marketing and communications channels? Where are your audiences, what are their needs, what are your needs as an organisation, what are the risks and benefits?

## PESTLE TABLE/QUESTIONS - 2026

### LEGAL

**Main question:**

Have you been able to consider the regulatory changes that are coming into force for charities? Do you spend time assessing implications of law and regulation as a Board?

#### Other prompts

1. Do you have an understanding of the range of regulatory changes that have come into force for charities (covered at this morning's session). How will they impact on your organisation?
2. Updates to employment law are common, and the [Employment Rights Bill](#) proposes changes to remove 'exploitative' zero hours contracts, the introduction of day one rights for paternity leave and pay and parental leave and pay, improvement to access to statutory sick pay, removing the three-day waiting period and lower earnings limit, Fair Pay Agreement process to be put in place for adult social care sector, an end to the two-year unfair dismissal qualifying period, improved rights for women and family leave returns. Have you thought about how you will meet new employment law responsibilities in 2026? Do these need to be budgeted for? Are your current HR policies and procedures up to date?
3. A range of changes to the Disclosure regime were introduced in April 2025 which included more control for applicants over their information, an individualised approach to disclosure of childhood offending; and the PVG scheme becoming mandatory for those carrying out regulated roles with children and protected adults. How have these affected your organisation?

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### ENVIRONMENT

**Main question:**

What do you most need to focus on as an organisation:

- Reducing organisation's environmental impact?
- Helping communities prevent / adapt to climate change?

Other prompts:

1. Climate change is felt most starkly by the groups many voluntary organisations work with. Do you understand how climate change is likely to impact on the communities you work with?
2. Do you know what steps you could take to reduce your organisation's environmental impact?
3. Do you know what your current and potential funders/donors/staff/wider community expect from organisations they fund with regard to the environment?
4. Do you have an awareness of your (current and future) legal and other responsibilities in this area? Do you have plans in place to help you to meet these?