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| TOGETHER: BUILDING A UNITED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FORUM |
| INAUGURAL MEETING – SUMMARY REPORT |
| March 2016 |
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**Summary Record**

**Together: Building a United Community**

**Engagement Forum**

**Inaugural meeting Thursday, 10th March 2016**

On 10 March 2016, the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister, and over 120 community practitioners, policymakers and academics gathered in the Duncairn Centre for Culture & Arts in north Belfast for the inaugural meeting of the Together: Building a United Community Engagement Forum.

**Opening Comments – Dr Mark Browne, Director of the Finance, Strategic**

**Planning and Social Change Directorate in OFMDFM**

M. Browne welcomed everyone to the first meeting. He advised delegates that Community Relations Council (CRC), as secretariat for the Together: Building a United Community Engagement Forum, would be collating and producing a summary record for dissemination to stakeholders.

In addition to this, CRC would be responsible for producing advice papers for onward dissemination to Ministers. The advice papers will identify actions and issues to be considered by the relevant and appropriate elements of the T:BUC delivery architecture such as the Good Relations Programme Board, the Ministerial Panel and the thematic sub-groups. The advice papers would also focus on suggestions and recommendations for the improved delivery and implementation of T:BUC aims and objectives.

M. Browne introduced Junior Ministers Emma Little Pengelly MLA & Jennifer McCann MLA.

**Junior Ministers Emma Little Pengelly MLA & Jennifer McCann MLA**

Junior Ministers Pengelly and McCann welcomed participants to the first Together: Building a United Community Engagement Forum and highlighted the important role the Forum had to play in strengthening the delivery and implementation of T:BUC.

Junior Ministers spoke about reconciliation and the creation of a shared society, and how the actions set out in T:BUC were supporting work with young people, inter-generational issues and the regeneration of communities.

Collaborative design was a big theme and Ministers spoke about the importance of developing strong processes and projects, which would ultimately deliver robust outcomes and real societal impact. Ministers also drew attention to the importance of measuring impact thereby ensuring positive change in communities.

They hoped the expertise of those attending the Forum would provide rich discussion on two big issues - young people’s attitudes and shared neighbourhoods, and emphasised the need to get behind the statistics and hear real experiences.

Both Junior Ministers relayed their hope that the passion and commitment from those in the room would help Government create a shared and reconciled future. They asserted that capturing grassroots knowledge and practice was critical for the success of T:BUC and delegates were reassured that Government and the Executive are committed to making positive changes on the lives of those in our communities.

In conclusion, the Junior Ministers expressed their support for this and future engagements and were confident that it would fulfil the key aim of having a positive impact on how Government does its business.

**T:BUC Strategic Overview: Dr Mark Browne, OFMDFM**

M. Browne gave an overview of the T:BUC strategy and the purpose of the Forum and outlined the four key priority areas and the corresponding shared aims:

* 1. Our Children & Young People - *to continue to improve attitudes amongst our young people and to build a community where they can play a full and active role in building good relations.*
  2. Our Shared Community *- to create a community where division does not restrict the life opportunities of individuals and where all areas are open and accessible to everyone.*
  3. Our Safe Community - *to create a community where everyone feels safe in moving around and where life choices are not inhibited by fears around safety.*
  4. Our Cultural Expression *- to create a community, which promotes mutual respect and understanding, is strengthened by its diversity and where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced.*

He explained to Forum members how each Forum meeting will focus on a different priority and went on to outline some of the current interventions which have been taken forward under T:BUC e.g. the opening of the first shared neighbourhood development, at Ballynafoy Close on the Ravenhill Road; the dismantling of the interface barrier at Crumlin Road/Ardoyne; a pilot Cross Community Youth Sports programme which used arts and sports as a means of promoting good relations; and the recent celebration event & musical extravaganza held by a United Youth Programme pilot, ‘Fusion’, which was an innovative cross-community programme empowering young people involved in marching bands to take part in workshops, masterclasses, residentials and volunteering.

M. Browne also provided an update on the Racial Equality Strategy including the establishment of the Racial Equality Subgroup and its purpose, as well as the establishment of a network of Racial Equality Champions within departments.

He advised participants of the recently published code of practice for reducing bureaucracy in grant funding to the voluntary and community sector issued by the Department of Finance and the current status of the Strategic Investment Board’s Review of Good Relations Funding.

He drew attention to the use of an Outcomes Based Accountability approach which will be used to help evaluate what is being done, how well it is being done and what works best. He also highlighted the diversity of the sector which, he said, represented a collective and inclusive perspective that will support the achievement of the shared vision and aims of the T:BUC Strategy.

Finally, he concluded by telling Forum members that T:BUC cannot be delivered by OFMDFM in isolation, and that it requires a collective effort across the range of sectors and stakeholders to ensure it delivers and benefits those on the ground and aids us in stepping further towards a peaceful and prosperous society.

M. Browne’s presentation is available [here](http://www.community-relations.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/M-Browne-Presentation-T-BUC-Engagement-Forum-10-March-2016.pptx).

**T:BUC architecture for delivery: Gráinne Killen, Director: Good Relations and Financial Governance Division, OFMDFM**

G. Killen introduced herself to forum delegates and informed them of her role in taking forward and implementing the T:BUC strategy. She also advised them of her key responsibility for the delivery of the Summer Camps and Urban Villages headline action programmes.

Delegates heard about the various structures responsible for delivering T:BUC:

* the Ministerial Panel within which Ministers are required to report against the actions and the targets for his or her department;
* the Good Relations Programme Board within which senior officials from all the Government departments who are responsible for various aspects of the strategies delivery, meets on a quarterly basis or more often if necessary;
* the individual project boards within each department which report to the Good Relations Programme Board; and
* other supporting structures including various thematic subgroups on housing, community tensions, children and young people, interfaces and flags, which support and advise the Ministerial Panel. An update on the status/activity of the subgroups was also provided.

A copy of the architecture for delivery chart can be found [here](http://www.community-relations.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/TBUC-Architecture-revised-September-2015.docx).

G. Killen spoke about the Together: Building a United Community Engagement Forum and how it originated through listening to the sector who want to speak into Government and the recommendation from the OFMDFM Committee following its inquiry into T:BUC. She acknowledged the valuable contribution made by the sector and was confident that this collective knowledge and experience would enhance T:BUC, identify good practice and make practical and innovative recommendations for improved delivery.

Finally, she drew attention to some issues already raised in relation to T:BUC e.g. quicker response to issues, the establishment of multi-annual budgets and efforts to reduce bureaucracy.

G. Killen’s presentation is available [here](http://www.community-relations.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/G-Killen-Presentation-T-BUC-Engagement-Forum-10-March-2016.pptx).

**TAKEAWAYS – T:BUC – the story so far**

Following G. Killen’s presentation participants were asked to reflect on their experience of T:BUC and to discuss the following questions -

* What has worked well?
* What could be done better?

Feedback included the following comments and suggestions:

The Together: Building a United Community Engagement Forum was welcomed by the sector as a positive development vital to the future success of T:BUC and it looked forward to building upon relationships with OFMDFM officials. Ministerial involvement during Forum meetings and ensuring a wide and inclusive membership were also highlighted as important to the process.

Forum members were keen to be updated on T:BUC developments and kept informed about how issues raised at Forum meetings were taken forward. Showing how the practice supported and developed over many decades is used to influence both policy and practice and across T:BUC programme development was also identified an area of interest.

The joined up delivery of T:BUC, especially with the forthcoming re-structuring of Executive Departments and the ongoing rolling out of Local Government Reform, was discussed as both an area of concern and an opportunity for planned improvement.

Good quality pre/post engagement including the co-design approach with and between those involved in T:BUC delivery and ensuring current and past practice and evidence should be utilised to shape future T:BUC actions.

Frustrations were voiced regarding the funding process in relation to decisions, release of money and the impact on delivery due to late awards.

Support was expressed for strong political leadership across all political institutions in relation to the promotion and delivery of T:BUC.

A whole societal approach to peace building and reconciliation was promoted with an emphasis on the inclusion of marginalised groups such as black and minority ethnic; women; lesbian/gay/bisexual/ transgender*,* victims and survivors and rural communities.

The importance of having a strong community relations content across all T:BUC priorities and headline actions was stressed as it cannot be assumed to happen, it must be planned and constantly monitored and evaluated.

**Outcomes Based Accountability overview: Pauline Donnan, Principal Statistician, OFMDFM**

Following the workshop discussions M. Browne introduced Pauline Donnan.

P. Donnan gave a presentation on her work regarding the development of an outcomes based accountability and indicator framework to measure the progress of T:BUC. She discussed the outcomes based accountability methodology and explained how it is used by organisations to improve the performance of programmes by focussing on outcomes i.e. the impact it is having.

She also introduced ideas relating to:

* Population i.e. measuring outcomes for a specific population such as the population in NI or a subpopulation, such as people living in interface areas or children and young people.
* Performance accountability i.e. understanding what difference various interventions are actually making. This requires the development of performance indicators which tell us: how much we did, how well we did it and most importantly is anyone better off.

P. Donnan then went on to talk about the good relations indicators, and paid particular attention to children and young people and mixed neighbourhoods. She provided data on young people’s attitudes towards the other community e.g. young people tend to have more negative feelings, just under 50% felt optimistic that these relationships would improve (2014). The results were also broken down by District Council (adults), and there was an exploration of young people’s sense of belonging (86%) but only 67% feeling they have a belonging to NI

The next set of indicators examined people’s willingness to live in mixed neighbourhoods. From 2010 there has been a drop (13%) and government are concerned about this decrease. The results also showed that adults have a more positive preference about living in a mixed neighbourhood (71%) compared to young people (61%). Attitudes were also compared across District Council areas.

P. Donnan concluded by asking people to consider the data presented, how it intersected with the work taking place on the ground, and if the statistical records echoed reality.

P. Donnan’s presentations are available here:

* [Outcomes Based Accountability](http://www.community-relations.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Engagement-Forum-OBA-and-Indicators-10-March-2016-Pauline-Donnan-NoSN.pptx)
* [Good Relations Indicators](http://www.community-relations.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/GR-indicators-TBUC-Engagement-Forum-10-March-2016-no-SN.pptx)

**WORKSHOP TAKEAWAYS – INDICATORS**

Forum members were asked to consider the following questions:

* What is influencing the behaviours/attitudes measured by the indicators?
* What could be done to improve things and who needs to be involved?

Feedback included the following comments and suggestions:

The move towards an outcomes based accountability (OBA) approach was thought to be very helpful in terms of the process going forward and measuring societal change. The wealth and breadth of existing research available at local level would bring additional weight to this.

It was felt that OBA’s were currently funding led and that groups needed support get a better understanding of it and what is expected in terms of reporting.

Requests were made for more dissemination and reporting of the positive work/improvements/developments in community relations.

Participants spoke about the importance of political leadership across all political institutions, the inter-generational impact of the conflict and subsequent attitudes, whilst others indicated that many young people were tired of talking about legacy issues with a preference for working together on wider societal issues other than green and orange in a safe a welcoming environment. They too wanted a whole societal approach to peace building to reflect our diverse society.

There was support for the need to move beyond temporary measures and interventions, with an emphasis on prolonged engagement.

Discussions explored ‘influencers’ e.g. social mobility, the external environment such as flags protests, paramilitary activity/influence and community control; segregation – housing and education; opportunities for engaging i.e. employment, and further and higher education; and finally a sense of disempowerment which could equate to feeling disenfranchised. The conditions must be created to enable people to live and actively engage in shared housing areas. This means being prepared to tackle hard issues such as safety and security, the fear of change and issue of class.

Strong support for integrated education and shared housing – a holistic approach was needed to build the peace.

It was pointed out that the Protestant population has reduced in size and often feel their identity, culture and Britishness is under threat. Real or perceived, this matter needs to be addressed by everyone that can help move it to a better place.

Discussions explored how planning contributed to division and how it should now be used to create diverse neighbourhoods that are not just about green and orange but reflective of our diverse society. This included addressing the issue of dual provision relating to schools, health centres, leisure centres etc which was deemed unsustainable financially and ethically. This is applicable to housing which can no longer be the preserve of one or other community but must become open to all.

Neighbourhood Renewal, Urban Villages and other such regeneration programmes need to become better focussed, joined up and always straddle both communities.

**Afterword: Dr Mark Browne, OFMDFM**

M. Browne noted the need for a range of different sources of information telling us what is actually happening on the ground in order to get a clear sense of what it is we are trying to deal with and also the effectiveness of our policies.

He thanked delegates for their valuable and insightful inputs and encouraged feedback on the event to ensure future Forum meetings were meaningful and to ensure a difference is made in terms of delivering T:BUC.

**Date of Next Meeting**

**The next meeting of the Together: Building a United Community Engagement Forum will be scheduled for 2nd June 2016**

**Further information email Dympna McGlade** [**dmcglade@nicrc.org.uk**](mailto:dmcglade@nicrc.org.uk) **or Gemma Attwood** [**gattwood@nicrc.org.uk**](mailto:gattwood@nicrc.org.uk) **or by telephone 02890227500**

**Appendix 1: AGENDA**

**Together: Building a United Community Engagement Forum**

**Thursday, 10th March 2016**

**Agenda**

**10am Welcome**

* 1. **T:BUC Strategic Overview**

Mark Browne, Head of Finance, Strategic Planning and Social Change Directorate, OFMDFM and Chair Together: Building a United Community Engagement Forum.

**10.25 T:BUC architecture for delivery**

Grainne Killen, Director: Good Relations and Financial Governance Division, OFMDFM

**10.40 Table conversations and feedback on:**

Your experience of T:BUC to date in relation to:

* What has worked well?
* What could be done better?

**11.20** **Feedback**

**11.30 Comfort/Coffee break**

**11.50 Outcomes Based Accountability overview**

Pauline Donnan, Principal Statistician, OFMDFM

**12.05 Good Relations Indicators – Pauline Donnan with a focus on:**

* Young people’s attitudes towards the other community
* People’s willingness to live in mixed neighbourhoods

**12.20 Table conversations on good relations indicators**

* What is influencing the behaviour/attitude measured by the indicators?
* What could be done to improve things and who needs to be involved?

**1.10 Feedback and closing remarks**

**1.30 Lunch**

**Appendix 2: DELEGATES**

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| **First Name** | **Surname** | **Organisation** |
| Claire | Adams | Irish Football Association |
| Elaine | Allen | OFMDFM |
| Shazz | Anderson | Community Worker Rathcoole |
| Michele | Baird | Women’s Information Northern Ireland |
| Janice | Beggs | LOCA |
| Donna | Blaney | OFMDFM |
| Lorraine | Boyd | Neet Strategy Forum, Bryson |
| Paul | Boyle | Workforce Training Services |
| Fintan | Brady | Partisan Productions |
| Bernie | Brown | OFMDFM |
| Mark | Browne | OFMDFM |
| Jill | Caskey | NICE |
| Angila | Chada | Springboard |
| John | Chittick | DOJ |
| David | Chiu | Wah Hep Chinese Community Association |
| Mel | Corey | Trademark |
| Laura | Couser | Tides Training |
| Anne | Currie | DSD Regional Development |
| Glenda | Davies | Sandy Row Community Forum |
| Gerard | Deane | Holywell Trust |
| Pauline | Donnan | OFMDFM |
| Andrew | Dunlop | SPCA |
| John | Ewing | Combat Stress |
| Matt | Faris | Primecut Productions |
| Annette | Feldmann | Corrymeela |
| Gail | Ferguson | Girls Brigade NI |
| Colin | Finn | City of Sanctuary, Belfast/ NICRAS/ Cara-Friend |
| Conor | Flanagan | Supporting Communities |
| Gillian | Forrest | Supporting Communities |
| Chris | Foxall | Corrymeela |
| Eileen | Gallagher | Irish School of Ecumenics. |
| Julie | Gibson | Glebe House |
| Nikki | Gregg | The Fostering Network |
| Michelle | Hand | Belfast City Council |
| Katie | Hanlon | BCDA |
| Maria | Hannon | OFMDFM |
| Gareth | Harper | Peace Players International |
| Helen | Henderson | St Columbs Park House |
| Gordon | Hewitt | Community Arts Partnership |
| Dearbhla | Holohan | Include Youth |
| Lawrence | Hyland | OFMDFM |
| Shauna | Irons | BCRC |
| Neil | Jarman | QUB |
| Mandy | Jones | OFMDFM |
| Stuart | Jones | PSNI: Blackmountain |
| Vasundhara | Kamble | Councillor Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council |
| Eimear | Keenan | Devenish Partnership Forum |
| Margaret | Kelly | Workforce Training Services |
| Geoff | Kerr | 174 Trust |
| Libby | Keyes | CRC Board member |
| Grainne | Killen | OFMDFM |
| Willie | Lamrock | Lderry YMCA |
| Alan | Leckey | RFCA (NI) |
| Robert | Lee | Groundwork |
| Sarah | Lorimer | LOCA |
| Seán | MacNia | CCEA |
| Manus | Maguire | Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum |
| Susan | Mc Crory | Falls Women's Centre |
| Derek | McCallan | NILGA |
| Rab | McCallum | NBIN |
| Godfrey | McCartney | Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon Council |
| Cherith | McClay | Include Youth |
| Brian | McConnel | Irish Football Association |
| John | McCorry | North Belfast Partnership |
| Dean | McCullough | Lower Shankill Community Association |
| Sean | McElhatton | Mid Ulster District Council |
| Jenny | McEneaney | NICVA |
| Jon | McFarland | FOCUS:The Identity Trust |
| Matthew | McFarland | OFMDFM |
| Karen | McFarlane | Partisan Productions |
| Keelan | McGaghran | Apex Housing Association |
| Paul | McGovern | PSNI: Blackwater |
| Paul | Meneely | Summer Madness |
| Patrick | Monteague | FOCUS: The Identity Trust |
| John | Mooney | Training for Women Network |
| Gabriel | Moran | PSNI |
| Lisa | Morgan-Montgomery | OFMDFM |
| Malachy | Mulgrew | Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum |
| Jerome | Mullen | Honorary Consul of the Republic of Poland |
| Krisztina | Nagy | Northern Ireland Foundation |
| Joe | O Donnell | Belfast Interface Project |
| Gearóid | Ó hEára | Cultúrlann Uí Chanáin, Doire |
| Lauren | O'Connell | Boys & Girls Clubs |
| Jack | O'Connor | Dept for Social Development, Voluntary and Community Unit |
| Chris | O'Halloran | Forthspring Inter Community Group |
| Jim | O'Neill | Community Dialogue |
| Teena | Patrick | Ainsworth Resident's Group |
| Sean | Pettis | Corrymeela |
| Paula | Quigley | Groundwork NI |
| Peter | Robinson | OFMDFM |
| Kelly | Rusk | OFMDFM |
| Geraldine | Smyth | Irish School of Ecumenics. |
| Amanda | Stephens | Youthnet |
| Brian | Sykes | RFCA (NI) |
| Nisha | Tandon | ArtsEkta |
| Natasha | Taylor | Inter Ethnic Forum ( Mid & East Antrim) |
| Anita | Waite | DSD Regional Development Office |
| Gordie | Walker | Inter Comm Belfast |
| Caroline | Walsh | Women's Support Network |
| Neal | White | RFCA (NI) |
| Patrick | White | Youth Link:NI |
| Robin | Wilson | Indpendent |
| Mikhaila | Woods | The Fostering Network |
| Paul | Yam | Wah Hep Chinese Community Association |
| Gemma | Attwood | CRC |
| Judith | Hamilton | CRC |
| Jacqueline | Irwin | CRC |
| Deirdre | Mac Bride | CRC |
| Dympna | McGlade | CRC |
| Damien | McNally | CRC |
| Charlotte | McNaught | CRC |
| Patricia | O'Neill | CRC |

**Appendix 3: PRESENTATIONS**

* M. Browne: [**T:BUC Strategic Overview**](http://www.community-relations.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/M-Browne-Presentation-T-BUC-Engagement-Forum-10-March-2016.pptx)
* G. Killen: [**T:BUC architecture for delivery**](http://www.community-relations.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/G-Killen-Presentation-T-BUC-Engagement-Forum-10-March-2016.pptx)
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