

JOINT FORUM ISSUES TABLE v3.15.02.18

No	Start Date	End date	Issue	Action required/taken	RO
1.	27.10.17		Department for Infrastructure consultation on requirement to hold 10b minibus license.	GB Consultation on minibus issue published on 8 Feb 2018 and diverged significantly from DfI guidance here in NI. Previously thought that NI would be following GB guidance but that has not happened. Unlike NI proposals, GB proposals will not be touching driver licensing and will have no direct impact on volunteer drivers- rather they are targeting not-for-profit service providers who compete for the same services as commercial service providers. Will keep a watching brief.	VCD/NIC VA
2.	27.10.17		Update on progress of the Fresh Start Agreement including expenditure.	VCD to broker meeting between DoJ and small delegation of VCS organisations. Siobhan to organise meeting with VCS delegation and provide an update by next Joint Forum.	VCD
3.	27.10.17		Charity Commission registration - requirement and challenge for very small voluntary & community sector organisations. Regulation & The Sector - Charity Commission / SORP	Ministerial approval required to initiate change to legislation to implement a threshold for small VCS organisations. Charities registered in England and Wales must register with the Charity Commission when their income is over £5k per year. Based on the Scottish Charity Regulator website and the Irish Charities Regulator website there does not appear to be a registration threshold in Scotland or the Republic of Ireland. Arthur provided an update on addressing bureaucracy. It was highlighted that there may be a need to reinvigorate this within some departments.	VCD

4.	27.10.17		General Data Protection Regulations - streamlining information held. Deadline – May 2018.	NICVA holding information sessions to advise organisations how to prepare for these regulations. Sessions advertised on NICVA's website. http://www.nicva.org/gdpr Organisations are free to contact NICVA or ICO for further info.	VCS
5.	27.10.17		Universal Credit roll out.	<p>Ten offices are delivering the new service with Omagh and Enniskillen JBO being latest to go live. Final preparations are being made to introduce UC to Dungannon and Portadown on 7 March 2018.</p> <p>To date over 2500 claims have been received. Approx 80% of claimants have made their application online without any assistance with approximately 20% choosing to make their claim in the local office with support from staff. Over 850 claims have now reached the end of their first assessment period and payments have been issued on all cases.</p> <p>Claire McKee (DfC) has suggested someone from her Universal Credit team to provide an update at next Joint Forum.</p>	VCD
6.	27.10.17		<p>Drugs Misuse</p> <p>The growing issue of drugs misuse pervading all sections of society and the co-ordination by government and V&C sector to ensure awareness of and access to suitable resourced services to help those affected.</p>	<p>Suggestion - implementation a joined-up approach for people seeking help from all relevant agencies providing drugs or alcohol-related services. NIADA (Northern Ireland Alcohol and Drugs Alliance) have included in their policy manifesto around those affected by drug and alcohol and have included the 'No Wrong Doors' policy. Cross-Departmental/Sectoral discussion required.</p> <p>Glenda advised that the issue of drugs misuse was increasing in communities across Northern Ireland. Glenda suggested setting up a task and finish group in a partnership between government officials and VCS officials to test out the effectiveness of how Joint Forum works. Glenda suggested that Department of Health (DoH) could take ownership of this issue.</p> <p>Gary Maxwell (DoH) has advised there is a Bamford drug misuse group (chaired by the PHA/HSCB) that pulls together all the</p>	VCS

				individuals and professionals referenced in the proposed action and looks at service delivery/pathways.	
7.			<p>Government Funding</p> <p>The latest situation regarding the future government funding for VCG sector organisations beyond the current approvals to March 2018 in order to facilitate future planning of services. This now needs looked in the context of the Budgetary Outlook briefing.</p>	<p>Information event for VCS members held by NICVA on 18.1.18 with a DOF official present. NICVA and others submitting a response to the briefing.</p> <p>It was agreed that a mature conversation between government and VCS needed to take place in relation to non-protected government funding post 2019 funding and a working group to be setup to take this forward.</p>	PSG
8.	27.10.17	15.2.18	<p>Brexit – Trade and Border issue</p> <p>The issue of how Brexit may affect voluntary and community organisations who operate in NI and ROI and what their governance requirements and option might be.</p>	<p>NICVA are active on Brexit issues – for update refer to NICVA website on link attached.</p> <p>http://www.nicva.org/brexit</p>	NICVA
9.	JF3/17		<p>Two-Child limit and Non-Consensual Clause</p>	<p>Discussed by Equality Coalition in November 2017. Complaint submitted by CAJ with the Equality Commission in NI after exhausting all avenues with DfC. Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) granted permission for judicial review on the 2 child limit. Full hearing 6/7 Feb 2018.</p> <p>A meeting has been arranged between Women’s Policy Group and Anne McCleary. Some assurances have been given in relation to anonymity and how claims are processed.</p>	<p>VCS</p> <p>VCD</p>
10.	VCG1/18		<p>Departmental Strategies</p> <p>Is there a full list of current live departmental strategies? if so could</p>	<p>Jonny Currie advised that the VCS request for a list of departmental strategies was discussed at the public sector group meeting. Discussions took place around providing departmental list of upcoming strategies. It was suggested inviting a senior responsible</p>	VCS

			we have it? if not could one be collated?	owner (SRO) regarding a particular PFG outcome to the Joint Forum.	
11.	VCG1/18		VCS Funding/sustainability Matrix across governments departments that shows funding available to VCSE sector and budget impact with a monetary value.	Discussions took place around the usage of the government funding database (GFD). Arthur Scott advised that all funders were required to populate the database and that each department gives an assurance that it is properly used. The agreement was that the GFD could be improved but that it was available to eradicate duplicate funding and that training is available in GFD usage as required by staff in Voluntary Community Division.	PSG/VCS
12.	VCG1/18		The difference between Consultation & Information Sharing with Comment	Conversation around consultation – tabled as agenda item at Joint Forum.	PSG/VCS
13.	VCG1/18		DOJ - ombudsman cuts / victim support cuts/ rural court services and issues in relation to the 'delays in justice' given the cost pressures	Similar to other funding cuts and to be noted.	VCS
14.	VCG1/18		Arts Sector proposed cuts of 4%	It was noted that there was no sense of urgency in relation to the Arts Strategy. Noted that this may be stalled because of lack of ministerial input. It was also noted that the VCS are not part of conversation with officials at an early enough stage.	VCS
15.	VCG1/18		The plastic bag levy seen as a means to sustain the environmental NGO sector Dormant Accounts Monies	To note	VCS
16.	VCG1/18		Implications for the roll out of the Peace IV plan that raises expectation and again will give sector false sense of security	To note.	VCS
17.	VCG1/18		Where does the anti-poverty strategy sit in relation to the social	It was advised that the draft Social Strategy includes Anti-poverty measures but further work to be done on this. By next Joint Forum there should be a more up to date position.	

			strategy & the new outworking of neighbourhood renewal		
18.	VCG1/18		Women's Centre Childcare Fund - effects 14 women's centres regionally / 65 jobs - no additional monies be made available 18/19 to pay national minimum wage increase and AE (auto enrolment) pension increase.	Arthur Scott said the cuts had been set but that the Advice Services remained protected.	VCD