**Joint Government/Community Sector Forum**

**Joint Secretariat**

**Joint Forum Meeting**

**NICVA HQ**

**25 October 2013**

1. The October Joint Government/Community Sector Forum was held in The Playhouse Theatre, in Derry and was attended by representatives from voluntary and community organisations, government departments and councils.
2. Anne O’Reilly, representing the Northern Ireland Rural Women’s Network (NIRWN) was lead Chair at this Joint Forum, and welcomed Michael Donnelly to his first meeting as the public sector group Chair.

**KEY POINTS**

**COMMITMENT ACTION TEAMS – UPDATES**

Bureaucracy

1. The Bureaucracy Project has made significant inroads to addressing the recommendations from the Bureaucracy Report. A Code of Practice, which will incorporate most of the recommendations, is under draft and teams have been set up to pilot a further five recommendations. A full presentation on the progress made by the Bureaucracy Project Team will be delivered at the next Joint Forum in January 2014.

Outcome-Focused Approach to Funding

1. This team has linked with Building Change Trust (BCT) to develop a NI version of the Inspiring Impact Programme, a UK-wide initiative aimed at making impact measurement the norm across government and the VCS. Findings from the BCT’s Programme will be reported when available.

Influence and Examine Impact and of Government Policy

1. The team has reviewed its approach to achieving stated objectives and redrafted its Project Initiation Document (PID).

New Commitment Action Teams (CATs)

1. Two new teams have been set up. One will pilot a Concordat Compliance Tool, which had been identified as a necessary action by an earlier CAT, and the second will develop a communications and marketing strategy to promote the Joint Forum and its work.

**INTERACTION WITH OTHER FORUMS**

1. Eddie McDowell attended his first Joint Forum in his capacity as representative from the Faith Forum.

**MAXIMISING INCOMES & OUTCOMES AND WELFARE REFORM UPDATE**

1. Sharron Carlin, the Social Security Agency’s Head of Improving Benefit Uptake, and Geraldine Brereton, Director of Organisational Change delivered presentations on maximising benefit uptake and the work being done to implement changes being introduced as part of the Welfare Reforms.

**PROCUREMENT**

1. Anne O’Reilly outlined growing concerns within the Sector relating to the trend towards government contracting services through public procurement rather than through grants or grant-in-aid.
2. It was agreed that Procurement would be a standing item on the agenda.