**Joint Government/Voluntary and Community Sector Forum**

**25 October 2013**

**Minutes**

**Present:**

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| Michael Donnelly | DSD (Joint Chair) | Anne O’Reilly | NIWRN (Joint Chair) |
| Jack O’Connor | DSD | Marie Cavanagh | Gingerbread NI |
| Susan Hunter  Paul Holbrook | DSD  DSD | Jonny Currie  Fergus Cooper | East Belfast Community Development Association Save the Children NI |
| Harry Armstrong | DSD | Colin Devine | North West Community Network |
| Keith Gordon | DSD | Helen Ferguson | Carers NI |
| Sharron Carlin | DSD | Kevin Doherty | Disability Action |
| Geraldine Brereton | DSD | Lynn Carvill | Women’s Resource & Development Agency |
| Niall Heaney | DARD | Seamus McAleavey | NICVA |
| Jeff Johnston | DOE | Kate Clifford | Rural Community Network NI |
| David Savage | DENI | Kevin Doherty | Disability Action NI |
| Gabrielle Kerr  Alasdair MacInnes | DRD  DHSSPS | Eddie McDowell | Churches’ Community Work Alliance representing Faith Forum |
| Chris Dorrian | OFMDFM |  |  |
| Olive Matthews  Paul Gamble | DEL  DCAL |  |  |

Ailson McCullagh NILGA/Omagh Council

**Apologies:**

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| Rozzi Langford | DETI | Chris Quinn | NI Youth Forum |
| Anne McConkey | DOJ | Lisa McElherron | NICVA |
| Carolyn Barr | DFP | Patricia Stewart | NICVA |
| Cate Taggart | SOLACE/BCC | Kevin Murphy | Voluntary Arts Ireland |
|  |  | Glenda Davies | Sandy Row Community Forum |

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| **Agenda Item** | **Purpose of discussion** | **Key points of discussion** | **Conclusion** | **Action** |
| **1. Welcome & Introductions** |  | Anne O’Reilly (Joint Chair) welcomed all the meeting and all apologies were noted.  Colin Devine also welcomed everyone to Derry and said he hoped the Joint Forum members looked forward to a few of the local visits after the meeting. |  |  |
| **2. Minutes of last meeting JF02/13 and action points** |  | The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as an accurate and true record.  **Action points from last meeting;**  Anne O’Reilly advised that all action points had been cleared and welcomed Eddie McDowell from Churches Community Work Alliance to the Joint Forum, representing the Faith Sector. Anne also advised that the Joint Forum Terms of Reference had been issued to the Faith Forum for reference. |  |  |
| **3. Matters arising.** |  | Helen Ferguson asked that it be noted in the minutes that the Joint Forum had requested that the Minister had been asked to launch the 2013 Annual Report by way of an Oral Statement rather than the Written Statement which was given.  Anne advised that the issue of Procurement is kept on the agenda for Joint Forum business. |  |  |
| **4. Commitment Action Team (CAT) Team updates** |  | **Excessive Bureaucracy**  Michael Donnelly advised that the first phase of the Excessive Bureaucracy project ended in June with 19 recommendations to do.  Michael advised that Phase 2 of the project was around 5 pilots being tested and a first draft Code of Practice completed and aim to be presented to the Project Board by early November.  Seamus McAleavey suggested a full presentation on Bureaucracy at the next Joint Forum meeting.    **Outcome focused approach to funding**  Marie Cavanagh advised that the work of this CAT team has been postponed until the outcome of the work being taken forward by Building Change Trust (BCT) who were taking forward work which may replicate the work of the CAT team. This was agreed by JF.  **Influence and Examine impact of Government Policy.**  Susan Hunter reported that a revised Project Initiation Document (PID) had been issued to the CAT team to agree the scope of the work to be taken forward. Anne O’Reilly reminded everyone that it was important not to duplicate work and the work of the Policy Champions Network could be important to this CAT team. Susan advised that Policy Champions Network is developing guidance which once available will be shared.  Susan Hunter advised that a Compliance Toolkit PID had been drafted and a team selected to pilot test and scrutinise the outputs and objectives of the Regional Infrastructure Support Programme (RISP).  Jack O’Connor asked the Joint Forum to examine the PID and any comments to Susan Hunter.  Anne O’Reilly and Helen Ferguson suggested a few amendments to be made to the PID which was agreed.  Anne O’Reilly asked if anything could be done to enhance the work of the CAT teams.  Helen Ferguson suggested arranging a block of meetings in advance for the members.  Marie Cavanagh said that a new Chairperson would have to be selected as a replacement for Michael Hughes.  Kate Clifford suggested that plain English used on the Traffic light templates for ease of understanding. |  | Michael Donnelly to share Bureaucracy report with Joint Forum members & present a detailed update at next JF.  Marie Cavanagh to report on outcome of BCT work at next Joint Forum. |
| **5. Procurement.** |  | Anne O’Reilly advised that the issue of Procurement was a key issue emerging on the agenda of Voluntary and Community Group (VCG) and there had been a drive towards tendering and commissioning especially on Health and Social Care. Anne advised that there were competency and capacity issues around this issue linked to Bureaucracy.  There were further discussions on Procurement and concerns raised around moving away from Grant and Grant in Aid towards tendering and it was agreed that this issue should remain on the agenda of Joint Forum Business. |  | Procurement to be kept on Joint Forum business. |
| **6. Communications.** |  | Susan Hunter suggested that the profile of the Joint Forum should be raised and suggested a team to increase communications networks with both Government and Voluntary and Community Sector. A discussion followed and this was welcomed by Joint Forum and nominations for the team came from David Savage, Kevin Doherty, Colin Devine, Susan Hunter and a representative from NICVA.  Susan advised that a Communications PID would be circulated to Joint Forum regarding the scope of the work to be taken forward. |  | Communications CAT to be established. |
| **7. Presentation – Benefit Uptake and Welfare Reform Update.** |  | 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.  A question and answer session followed and it was agreed that Joint Forum was content on responses to questions on Welfare Reform. |  |  |
| **8. AOB** |  | It was agreed that Money Advice, Procurement and Reform of Local Government remain on each agenda at future Joint Forums. |  |  |