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

**3 May 2013**

**Minutes**

**Present:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Tracey Teague | DSD (Joint Chair) | Marie Cavanagh | Gingerbread NI (Joint Chair) |
| Jack O’Connor | DSD | Seamus McAleavey | NICVA |
| Susan Hunter  Michael Donnelly | DSD  DSD | Patricia Stewart  Chris Quinn | NICVA  NI Youth Forum |
| Paul Holbrook | DSD | Colin Devine | North West Community Network |
| Keith Gordon | DSD | Fergus Cooper | Save the Children NI |
| Alison McCullagh | NILGA | Geoff Nuttall | WWF NI |
| Damian Brady | DCAL | Glenda Davies | Sandy Row Community Forum |
| Paul Skillen | DHSSPS | Helen Ferguson | Carers NI |
| Jackie Murray | DOJ | Jonny Currie | East Belfast Community Development Association |
| David Savage | DENI | Kevin Doherty | Disability Action NI |
| Olive Matthews | DEL | Kevin Murphy | Voluntary Arts Ireland |
| Gabrielle Kerr | DRD | Lynn Carvill | Womens Resource & Development Agency |
| Mark McCullough | DARD | Carolyn Barr | DFP |
| Carolyn Barr | DFP | Susan Reid | Victim Support NI |
| Sharon Smyth | DETI |  |  |
| Chris Dorrian | OFMDFM |  |  |
| Jodi Smith  Linda Barlow  Catherine McKinney | DOE  DOE  DOE |  |  |

**Apologies:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Cate Taggart | Belfast City Council |  |  |
| Anne O’Reilly | Age NI |  |  |
| Michael Hughes | Rural Community Network NI |  |  |
| Laura McAleese | DOE |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Agenda Item** | **Purpose of discussion** | **Key points of discussion** | **Conclusion** | **Action** |
| **1. Welcome & Introductions** |  | Tracey Teague (Joint Chair) welcomed all the meeting and all apologies were noted. |  |  |
| **2. Minutes of last meeting JF01/13 and action points** |  | The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as an accurate and true record.  **Action points from last meeting;**  AP1: Include procurement as point of agenda for next Joint Forum meeting.  AP2: CAT Team to develop scoping exercise on pilot for compliance tool.  AP3: All Forum members to forward any useful guidance on policy making to CAT.  AP4: CAT secretariat to liaise with Paul Holbrook on developing training course issue with Centre for Applied Learning (CAL). | This agenda item will be discussed as any other business.  A new Project Initiation Document (PID) has been drafted and a new team to be selected at Joint Forum to take forward pilot exercise.  A sub meeting has taken place on 13 February and a draft guidance note has been developed.  Tracey Teague had a meeting with DSD training commissioner and CAL representative to discuss the potential routes for developing training courses. Further work is required on this issue. |  |
| **4. Matters arising.** |  | No matters arising. |  |  |
| **5. CAT Team updates** |  | **Bureaucracy**  Michael Donnelly gave an update to advise that a report on Addressing Bureaucracy had been formally signed off by the Project Board and a report was due to be published shortly. Michael advised that a further update would be provided at the next Joint Forum.  Seamus McAleavey welcomed the report on Addressing Bureaucracy and said he was confident that it had been a successful piece of work. Seamus suggested a more detailed look at the Addressing Bureaucracy report at the next Joint Forum  Michael Donnelly advised that the next focus would be how to implement the recommendations from the report and that some pilot exercises would be required.    **Outcome focused approach to funding**  Marie Cavanagh advised that this CAT was collaborating with Building Change Trust (BCT) to develop an impact assessment tool based on the UK Inspiring Impact initiative which is aimed at changing the way the Sector thinks about the impact of their activities. A detailed action plan is due to be delivered in June 2013. Marie suggested that the work of this CAT team is postponed until Autumn 2013 at which stage the outcome of the work of BCT will be known.  The postponement of the work of this CAT team was agreed by Joint Forum.  **Influence and Examine impact of Government Policy.**  Jack O’Connor explained that this CAT was tasked with 4 key areas.   * Production of a guidance note on policy development with relevant signposting. * Developing of joint training course from CAL/VCS. * Develop links with the Policy Champions Network. * Development of an evaluation toolkit (similar to compliance toolkit)   **Structural Reform.**  Jack O’Connor was pleased to report that the four elements of the work of this CAT had been completed.  He explained that the next stage for the Compliance toolkit would be to appoint members to a new Commitment Action Team (CAT) to pilot the toolkit.  Discussions focused on suitable programmes or policies for testing the toolkit. The Childcare Strategy was suggested but Jack cautioned against using a complex area of policy at this stage. He explained that the purpose was to test the efficacy of the toolkit in order to identify and rectify any potential weaknesses.  Concerns were expressed about a single test area however members were assured that the evaluation of the pilot would include recommendations for further action if this was considered necessary.  Jack made a call for volunteers for the new CAT; reminding those present that membership would require a commitment on their part. It was agreed that CAT membership was not restricted to those present and that anyone with relevant expertise and the drive to achieve results would be considered. Glenda Davies (Sandy Row Community Forum) and Lynn Carvill (WRDA) nominated themselves as part of the new CAT team.  It was agreed that the draft PID developed would be circulated and nominations for members would be sought following this. | Jack advised that a draft guidance note had been drafted but further work was required. The paper to be presented at the next Joint Forum.  Jack said that joint training was high on the agenda and that further discussions were required on this with Centre for Applied Learning.  Jack advised that the Joint Chairs of Joint Forum both participate on the Policy Champions process being taken forward by the DSD Permanent Secretary, Will Haire.  Jack advised this was on track and will be explored in tandem with the Compliance toolkit pilot. | Michael Donnelly to provide further detailed presentation of Addressing Bureaucracy at next Joint Forum.  PID for Compliance toolkit to be shared with Joint Forum. |
| **6. Interaction with other Forums.** |  | Patricia Stewart put forward a proposal from the Voluntary and Community Group regarding the possibility of an exchange of representatives as observers between the Faith Forum and Joint Forum.  Tracey Teague advised members that the Faith Forum is funded and Joint Chaired by DSD. She explained that it addresses similar social issues and that there were close links and overlaps the Joint Forum. Jack O’Connor also advised that the work of the Volunteering Steering group interfaces with Joint Forum work and suggested that it may be beneficial to liaise with these, and similar forum.  There was debate regarding the actual attendance at other Forums in an observer capacity and it was agreed that it would be by invite to update once a year on the actions of the Forums. |  | Issue Faith Forum Terms of Reference to Joint Forum and request Chair of Faith Forum to attend next Joint Forum. Issue Joint Forum Terms of Reference to Faith Forum. |
| **7. Presentation on Local Government Reform – Jodi Smith, Linda Barlow, Catherine McKinney** |  | Representatives from DOE delivered a presentation on implications of Local Government Reform due to apply from 2015. They set out the background and potential impacts for the community and their plans for engagement with the Voluntary and Community sector.  Seamus McAleavey welcomed the progress on Local Government Reform and advised that NICVA was looking forward to engagement with DOE on this matter.  A question and answer session followed and the DOE representatives advised to follow progress on their website. | Please see presentation for further details.  Please see presentation for further details. |  |
| **8. Concordat Annual Report** |  | Susan Hunter advised that the draft Concordat Annual Report had been emailed to members and provided an update on the timescale for presenting the report to the Assembly. Key milestones included printing the final agreed draft, clearing with Minister and presentation to Assembly members. Members were required to agree their preferred method of presentation. i.e. an oral or written statement at this meeting. In view of the significant progress made against a number of complex commitments Susan stated that members may wish to consider an oral statement. Members agreed to this delivery method.  Members were asked to provide any amendments they may wish to make to the report no later than 17May due to the tight timescales for printing and presentation.  Jack O’Connor advised that this agreement would be finalised in a submission to the Minister seeking agreement on this as the preferred option. |  |  |
| **9. AOB** |  | Marie Cavanagh advised that there were no current procurement issues but that the Voluntary and Community panel had suggested some discussion around the issue of social partners within the procurement debate.  Glenda Davies expressed concerns around match funding between Departments and lack of communication. Glenda also asked for greater clarity on the impacts of Welfare Reform, Social Housing Issues, and changes in relationships following the announcement of the breakup of the Housing Executive and potential increases in rent.  Jonny Currie asked for a further update at next Joint Forum on Welfare Reform engagement. |  | Procurement issue to be discussed at next Joint Forum meeting.  Secretariat to follow up on issues listed by Glenda Davies.  Welfare Reform engagement to be included at next Joint Forum meeting. |