

Network UPDATE



FOR THE COMMUNITY & VOLUNTARY SECTOR IN THE NORTH-WEST

"Promoting equal citizenship, justice and equality of opportunity"

SUMMER
2010

Marching On

There is no doubt that the city of Derry~Londonderry has recently experienced one of the most significant periods in its recent history, the impact feasibly impacting on a much wider geography.

Bloody Sunday it must be remembered was delivered upon a Civil Rights movement, marchers who rightfully demanded the kind of entitlements that it is strange to reflect were not in place only forty or so years ago. From this principled position, in a city long-renowned for freedom of thought and self-determination, emanated a wound that, though it can never be truly healed, left an indelible mark on our history and civic personality.

This city has undergone many experiences that have tested the resolve of its citizens but strength of character, clarity of purpose and honesty of message have won through and light has arrived around the shadow in the memories and hearts of many.

Universal consensus is rarely reached on anything but is there now an opportunity to push on from here? Bloody Sunday and Saville had most direct relevance for the families of the bereaved and wounded, yet the relief of innocence has been shared by the vast majority of citizens, enabled no doubt by the noble and dignified input from a range of clergymen.

That Bloody Sunday became a political feeding ground for those who should know better is unfortunate but the bigger story is how we take the truth and turn it into something lasting and positive for generations that have neither experience of or the need to revisit our troubled – and shared - history.

Some may find the coincidence or connection tenuous, or even irrelevant, but the submission

not long after the Saville findings of the City of Culture 2013 bid was an occasion of justifiable celebration. The themes of "joyous celebration" and "purposeful enquiry" have the potential to forge a wholly new future for generations – those coming forward now and in the years ahead. The City Of Culture award would be a welcome adornment on an already historic year to come for the city. In fact the current decade contains a plethora of anniversary dates the treatment of which will be significant in setting a tone for the rest of this century.

All this significance put in context, this City Region, like the rest of NI, faces some hard decision-making in the near future. Some of these decisions will be outwith our direct control or influence, such as Westminster finance allocations. There remains though the imperative to work through our MPs and MLAs to ensure that decisions that impact on public services carry due regard to proportionality and long-term effects on deprivation.

At present, a Regeneration Plan for the City Region is being prepared for public consultation at the end of July. While recognising that the recent Budget and forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Review are key milestones, this process (and product) needs to remain true to the mainstreaming of equality and tackling of inequalities in our most deprived communities.

This city and region has many new horizons to regard and construct. From the lifting of clouds to the celebration of culture, to targeted responses to inequality, there has to be some sense of alignment, of opportunity and that Derry~Londonderry~Legenderry has it within itself to build a more inclusive and proactive future. Why would we not grasp this?

First Coalition Budget – Bitter Pills Prescribed

In what has been described as the most austere budget in more than a generation, the Con-Lib Coalition have most certainly made an impact with their wide-ranging set of decisions. Below are some of the headline features which show that very few will not be affected to some degree, and that how badly affected some of the worst off in society will not be fully clear for some time.

One way of looking at the Budget overall is that by the time the desired impact of the largest decisions has kicked in, spending levels will be back where they were in 2003/04.

Spending Cuts vs. Tax Measures

The Coalition opted to follow precedent by seeking to make savings by reducing spending rather than generating additional income. Past recessions indicate that this is a more effective approach than raising tax. Approximately 73% of the savings earmarked are to come from less expenditure by the Exchequer.

VAT rise to 20% from January 2011

That this “consumption tax” was to rise was nearly inevitable and some would seek to defend it by saying that few really noticed the benefit of the recent short-term reduction (from 17.5% to 15%). How palatable this will be for especially lower-income households remains to be seen – it is estimated this will cost families up to £500 per year.

Income Tax personal allowance up by £1000

Across the UK this will remove around 880000 low-income earners from paying tax but there could be catches elsewhere in terms of access to benefits linked to after tax earnings.

Tax Credits

These will be withdrawn from households where income is over £40000 p/a.

Child Benefit is to be frozen for three years which represents a net annual reduction as inflation will continue to rise. The Health in Pregnancy grant, £190 payable after 25 weeks and only introduced in April 2009, will also be abolished. Single parents, clearly predominant in lower wage brackets, stand to suffer over the next few years.

The NI Executive will lose £123 million in central funds, with claim and counter claim that this will or won't be offset by an extra £116m over the next two years, creating a net gain over the period. This seems highly unlikely and less probable than a realignment of everything from Programme for Government to levels of frontline services, and of course threats to funding for services provided by Community & Voluntary sector groups.

The Comprehensive Spending Review due for 20 October 2010 will be worked on frantically over the coming months – at regional and national level. It will be interesting to see the variety of approaches and energy levels adopted by locally elected representatives in protecting the most disadvantaged in our communities from broadbrush spending cuts.

It is not however solely the job of elected representatives to consider and represent analysis of the impacts of this budget and possibly double-dip recession. Cuts are going to be made in many ways and if these can be swallowed up by removing waste and duplication, a leaner, fitter economy may eventually emerge.

How do we ensure though that what is essentially top-down and economic decision-making does not add layers of inequality and disadvantage to what is already there? By remaining vigilant, locally active and defensive of basic human rights is one way.

New older people's rights website – your input sought

Advice NI is creating a website focusing on older persons' rights. It will be an essential tool for advisers in the field as well as any groups or individuals that work with older people, such as social workers or carers. The website will also be a vital rights reference for older people themselves.

Any information that is already available online will be linked rather than the content reproduced.

The project is in its infancy and older person focused groups such as Access to Benefits, Age NI, Age Sector Platform, CARDI, Engage with Age and Belfast City Council are already guiding us. However Advice NI would like advice and feedback from the wider voluntary and community sector and individuals.

The project is conscious that many older members of the community are isolated from such groups and/or have no internet experience. Your ideas are very welcome on how they can be included in the study so that their voice is heard too.

We welcome contributors aged 50-59 as a basis for potential further study, although we are particularly interested in collecting information from those who are over 60 years of age as they are the main targets of this part of our research. If you are, or have contact with people in the target age group, please encourage them to complete the survey at www.surveymonkey.com/s/THMGQDQ.

Find out more at <http://www.communityni.org/news/older-peoples-rights-help-required> or contact Ciarán Arthurs with any feedback 028 9064 5919.

Vital Links – Making Policy Work

Vital Links is a policy, public affairs and participation project, supported by the PEACE III Programme managed by the Special EU Programmes Body, which aims to increase interaction and understanding between the key institutions and the voluntary and community sector, to foster and promote positive engagement.

Research has shown that few organisations in Northern Ireland have a very good understanding of the role of an MLA, therefore in order to use our MLAs and Government representatives to the ultimate we need to develop a better understanding of how government, the Assembly and the players within operate.

Making Policy Work:

Policy is defined as: a deliberate plan of action to guide decisions and achieve rational outcome(s).

Policy Making is the process by which vision is translated into programmes and actions to deliver 'outcomes

According to OFMdFM, policy making has 10 key features:

Forward Looking; Outward Looking; Innovative, Flexible and Creative; Evidence Based; Inclusive; Joined up; Learns Lessons; Communication; Evaluation and Review.

This is a critical time to get involved in Policy Making.

- Over 45% of the income of our sector comes from Government
- 40% of that is from DSD
- 21% is from DHSSPS
- 28% of organisations are funding dependant on Government (75% or more of their income)
- Big Society? – shaping it the way we need it!

The Policy Cycle

One of the key parts of the policy cycle is the inclusion of the citizen. People feel that they have the opportunity to contribute.

Northern Ireland Executive

The Northern Ireland Executive produces *The Programme for Government*.

The *Programme for Government* is Reviewed every year and is closely linked to the Budget, as well as including Public Service Agreements for each Department.

The main purpose is to improve decision making by ensuring that decisions are soundly based on evidence, that they take into account the views and experience of those affected by them, that innovative and creative options are considered and that new arrangements are workable.

Consultations - Influencing policy

Pre consultation

- Departments set up pre-consultations for

major policy initiatives

- The people involved are key figures from the policy initiative area
- Many of the recommendations will set the agenda for the full consultation.

During the consultation process a number of stakeholders are involved:

- Assembly Committee(s)
- Northern Ireland Office
- Human Rights Commission
- North–South Ministerial Council
- Public.

What to respond to and how:

- What is relevant?
- What capacity do you have? Staff? Time?
- Internal decision making?
- Can you contribute to another response?
- Can you endorse another response?
- Using other sources eg manifestos, research.

Consultation co-working - Assembly Committees

During the consultation, committees will look for evidence:

- Ask to present to the committee
- Contact MLAs on the committee
- Talk to Committee Clerks!

Presenting to the Committee

If you get to present to the Committee:

- Know your subject
- Take someone with you
- Don't use assumptions, use facts
- Present your case succinctly
- If they can't answer, tell them you will come back to them
- Don't worry, the committee is not out to get you!

Bad policy

- No concrete proposals
- Launched during a holiday (no questions)
- Consultation over the summer
- Ignored much of the consultation
- No real change from what we already have
- Endless evidence
- No political vision
- No budget
- Secrecy
- Flawed process of reaching targets – upside down.

9 things you need to know to do policy analysis

- Know your subject
- Know what you have said before
- Know the status quo
- Know what good policy looks like
- Know the process
- Know what others are saying
- Know the stats
- Know the bigger picture
- Know how you would do it better

Impacts Of The Recession – What Are The Facts?

Although summer is upon us, so also are the unfolding effects of two layers of astringency in terms of support for community activism. With an economy already living with £5bn+ of efficiency savings, the recent budget has compounded the situation further and for even longer.

The questions below are framed to encourage organisations of all types and size to consider what the future is likely to hold if current projections and predictions are allowed to progress.

You are asked to introduce these prompts and considerations to your own Management Committees – the evidence-gathering must be widened when and where possible, and awareness must be grown that the Community & Voluntary sector is willing and able to resist unintelligent attempts to downsize sectoral activity without regard to wider and far-reaching societal impacts.

This continues a structured approach to engaging with the Community & Voluntary sector in the North-West – please do not refrain from encouraging all organisations that you work with to provide feedback on their own ongoing experiences and concerns over service delivery.

For your consideration:

Has there been any impact on the services of your organisation as a result of the current economic circumstances?...

Has there been any impact on human resources?...

Have there been any impacts on existing inequalities within communities? Do you perceive a risk of new inequalities being created?...

Is there evidence, or likelihood, of the community & voluntary sector being:

- a) treated differently to other sectors in terms of how funding is now being handled, or
- b) expected to absorb the same level of cut as larger bodies without regard to proportionality...

How long in your opinion will Northern Ireland, and the North-West, be feeling the effects of the economic downturn?...

Are collaborations & mergers a viable response or solution? For all types of organisation?...

Do you believe your organisation, and others you work with, are being provided with all the information necessary to adapt to the challenges of recession? What more could for example government departments do to engage with the community & voluntary sector is seeking to manage the situation effectively?...

Any other comment e.g. suggested actions for the Network (and others) to support the C&V sector on this matter...

You are encouraged to feedback your realtime account of existing or forecast experiences of forthcoming cuts and general recessionary impacts.

Email in confidence to: colin@nwc.org

Funding Opportunities

Awards for Bridging Cultures

In 2008, iCoCo launched the Awards for Bridging Cultures (ABCs). Funded by the Baring Foundation, the ABCs reward grassroots projects, run by voluntary and community organisations, which help to build bridges between communities and cultures. It also rewards public and private sector organisations that support this work by funding or initiating projects.

Now in their third year, the ABCs have become established as a key platform to promote grassroots activity to build trust and respect between people from different cultures.

In 2009, the independent panel of judges were impressed with the range and quality of submissions and the creative ways in which people across the UK were working together to promote intercultural dialogue.

The ABCs highlight these schemes, reward the people and organisations that are leading and investing and share good practice.

Among the commended and winning projects in 2009 were theatre projects, work to address community tensions on a residential estate and a scheme to encourage men to move away from bigotry and politically motivated violence.

iCoCo is encouraging more groups from Northern Ireland to apply.

[Award categories](#)

[Prizes](#)

[Guidance for applicants](#)

[Apply online](#)

The deadline for applications is 13 September 2010.

Anchor Foundation

Supporting Christian charities concerned with social inclusion, particularly through ministries of healing and the arts. Grants range from £500 to £12,000.

The Anchor Foundation is interested in:
"Supporting Christian charities concerned with social inclusion, particularly through ministries of healing and the arts."

There are no further specific guidelines. Grants range from £500 to £10,000. It is not normal practice of the Foundation to give a grant for longer than 3 years.

How to Apply

They look forward to receiving your application. In order to help them process applications, please note the following:

- Applications are considered at twice yearly trustees meetings in April and October and **need to be received by 31st January or 31st July each year.**
- Please note that incorrectly or partially completed applications will not be considered.

- Please enclose a copy of your constitution and a copy of your most recent accounts.
- Other supporting information, documentation and project budget may be attached to the form.
- They regret that applications cannot be acknowledged. Successful applicants will be notified as soon as possible after trustees' meetings.
- Please do not send applications to the registered company address in Nottingham.

Important Dates

July 2010 deadline - **30 July 2010**

Contact details

Catherine Middleton, Secretary, Anchor Foundation,
P.O. Box 21107, Alloa, Scotland FK12 5WA
e: secretary@theanchorfoundation.org.uk
w: www.theanchorfoundation.org.uk

Victims Survivors Strategic Support Fund

The introduction of the Strategic Support Fund provides the opportunity for groups who work with and deliver services to victims and survivors of the Northern Ireland Troubles to make a more strategic application for their core running costs and their service delivery costs

Deadline for receipt of applications will be:
10th September 2010 for a 12 month programme from Apr 2011 – March 2012

[Criteria and Guidance Notes](#)

[Application Form](#)

[Financial guidelines - Please Read](#)

[Victims and Survivors Strategic Support Fund](#)

Arts & Disability Awards Ireland Bursary Scheme

The Arts & Disability Awards Ireland bursary scheme is now open for individual disabled artists to produce new work. Grants of up to £5,000 or the Euro equivalent are now available for artists living in Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland. The ADAI scheme is managed by the Arts & Disability Forum on behalf of the two Arts Councils on the island.

Deadline: 9th August 2010, 4pm

See www.adf.ie/awards for application forms and guidelines.

Advance Notice of Arts Council NI Major Individual Awards

These awards are intended to create the circumstances in which established artists with national/international recognition may develop extended or ambitious work. **The Programme opens on 26th July and the deadline for applications is 4pm on 26th August 2010.**

Check www.artscouncil-ni.org for forthcoming details

Funding Opportunities

Comic Relief Older People's Programme - Now Open to Expression of Interest

Comic Relief's Older People's Programme aims to support older people in the UK to bring positive change to their communities, enabling them to contribute their time, energy and skills to those individuals who need it most.

Expressions of Interest are invited from community groups and organisations that are targeting their work at older people aged 65 and over.

Comic Relief is looking to fund projects where older people are:

- acting as mentors to vulnerable young people;
- giving support to their peers who may be isolated (note: Individual lunch clubs/drop-in/day care & community centres providing only social or recreational activities don't fit this programme);
- acting as advocates around the needs and rights of those with caring duties; and running social enterprises.

Comic Relief particularly welcomes applications which address the needs of those in the community who experience the greatest levels of isolation and exclusion.

Grants of between £15,000 and £40,000 are available for up to three years and applicants must be able to demonstrate the active engagement of older people in the development and delivery of the work.

Deadline: 3 September 2010

Contact: UK Grants Team, Comic Relief - Tel: (020) 7820 5555 / E-mail: ukgrants@comicrelief.com / <http://www.comicrelief.com>

Changes to Awards for All

From 1 April 2010 Awards for All in Northern Ireland has become more flexible.

The programme will continue to provide grants of between £500 and £10,000, but organisations will now be able to apply for up to £20,000 in any 12 month period.

The revised guidance notes are available at www.awardsforall.org.uk and provide further information on the new rules around funding available over any 12 month period.

[Find out how to apply](#)

[Read the Q&A](#)

Foyle Foundation

The Foyle Foundation is an independent grantmaking trust that distributes grants to UK charities. The Foundation operates a Main Grants Scheme supporting charities whose core work covers Arts and Learning and a Small Grants Scheme covering small charities in all fields. There are no deadlines for either scheme and more details can be found at www.foylefoundation.org.uk or by calling: 020 7430 9119.

Main Grants Scheme:

The Foundation seeks applications that make a strong artistic case for support in either the performing or visual arts. Typical areas of support include: helping to make the arts more accessible by developing new audiences, supporting tours, festivals and arts educational projects; encouraging new work and supporting young and emerging artists; and building and infrastructure projects to construct new arts facilities or improve or re-equip existing arts venues.

The majority of grants will be in the range of £10,000 to £50,000. The maximum amount of a large grant will not normally exceed £500,000 and may be payable over several years. Please note that community arts activity will not generally be supported.

Small grants scheme:

The Small Grants Scheme is designed to support smaller charities in the UK, especially those working at grass roots and local community level, in any field, across a wide range of activities. Applications are

welcomed from charities that have an annual turnover of less than £100,000 per annum. They plan to make one year grants of between £1,000 and £10,000 to charities which can demonstrate that such a grant will make a significant difference to their work.

Deadline: ongoing

Lifelong Learning: Grundtvig Programme (Adult Education)

Grundtvig encompasses all modes of learning: formal or non-formal education for adults, as well as more informal ways such as autonomous learning, community learning or experiential learning.

Apply to ECOTEC in the UK - <http://www.grundtvig.org.uk/> and Leargas in Rol - www.leargas.ie for the following:

Preparatory visits: Submit your funding application at least 8 weeks before the activity start date, final deadline for 2010 applications is 10 December 2010.

Visits & Exchanges: Submit your funding application at least 8 weeks before the activity start date, final deadline for 2010 applications is 17 December 2010

Apply to the EACEA in Brussels for the following: Multilateral Projects, Networks, Accompanying Measures: Further 2010 deadlines not yet announced

Department of Culture Media and Sport Lottery Shares Consultation

NICVA is seeking the views of the voluntary and community sector in Northern Ireland on the plans to change the share of good causes allocations from the National Lottery.

The DCMS is now consulting on plans to change how the lottery good causes money is divided between arts, heritage, sports and the Big Lottery Fund. The purpose for this is given as "the Government wishes to restore the National Lottery to its original purpose." NICVA is keen to hear responses on how the allocation changes will affect your organisation and the sector generally.

The DCMS consultation paper can be downloaded from: www.culture.gov.uk

Background

Presently the Big Lottery Fund receives half of the total money obtained from the National Lottery good causes allocation. The good causes allocation of the Lotto ticket price is 28%. Therefore currently, the Big Lottery Fund receives 14p out of every £1 spent on a lotto ticket*

The arts, sports and heritage sectors distribute funding via the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, Sport Northern Ireland, and Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). At the moment they each receive approximately 16.7% of the Lottery good causes allocation or around 4.7 pence in the pound.

*currently all the distributors are also making allocations to the London 2012 Olympics and Olympic themed and online games provide the full 28% good causes allocation to the Olympic Distribution Fund.

Consultation on changing the share of good causes funding allocated to arts, sport, heritage and Big Lottery Fund was last conducted in 2006 under the Labour Government. The consultation did not result in any changes.

What is Planned?

Under plans from the coalition government the apportionment to good causes will change to 20% to each cause of arts, sport and heritage with the remaining 40% allocated to the Big Lottery Fund.

In return for the cut of 50% to 40% for Big Lottery Fund the government is planning for 100% of Big Lottery Fund funding to be committed to the voluntary and community sector only – however, this is not outlined in the Draft Order under consultation but contained as a commitment in a letter from the Minister, Jeremy Hunt.

The changes in apportionment will be introduced in two phases: from 1 April 2011 proportions to Arts Council, Sport NI, HLF will change to 18% and then on 1 April 2012 proportions will change to 20%.

Big Lottery allocation will change from 50% to 46% on 1 April 2011 and then to 40% on 1 April 2012

Implications of the change

The current spending plans of the Big Lottery Fund will be affected by the reduction in income over the period to 2012 and beyond. This will have a direct and negative effect on the funding to the voluntary and community sector.

There are no commitments in the allocations to arts, sports and heritage on the proportion of funding that

Questions

NICVA is keen to hear responses from its members on the plans to change the lottery good causes allocations.

- Do you agree with the changes in allocations and the timing of the allocation changes?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages in the proposed changes?
- Do you have any concerns about the increase in allocations to the Arts Council, Sport NI or Heritage Lottery Fund?
- Do you have concerns about the decrease in funding allocated to the Big Lottery Fund?
- What assurances would you like to receive on the level of funding received by the voluntary and community sector from the National Lottery in relation to funding allocation to the Big Lottery Fund and the other lottery distributors?

NICVA would appreciate responses by 1 August 2010

to provide time for consideration, possible follow up conversations and drafting the NICVA response before the **consultation formally closes on 21 August 2010**.

Responses to NICVA should be directed to neil.irwin@nicva.org.

RDC Integrating Communities programme

By John Kelly - RDC

'Integrating Communities' is a programme of support managed by the RDC and funded by the International Fund for Ireland. It is designed to facilitate community organisations that wish to co-operate on a cross community basis to work in partnership on issues of common interest.

The new programme will be open to urban and rural groups operating within Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland wishing to work on a cross community partnership basis. Successful applicants will participate in the support phase which involves a focused programme of support, training and mentoring. Small grants of up to a maximum of £5,000 will be available to partnered organisations to implement a small project which will benefit both their communities.

Upon completion of the support phase, partnerships will be eligible to make an application to the project phase which provides project grant and implementation support for partnerships up to a value of approximately £100,000.

Whilst dates have yet to be confirmed RDC hopes to reopen the programme in the summer and would encourage communities interested in making an application to contact programme staff.

For further information, contact: Yvonne Breen or John Kelly, Northern Ireland Rural Development Council, 17 Loy Street, Cookstown, Co. Tyrone, N. Ireland BT80 8PZ, Tel: +44 (0)28 8676 6980, Email: info@rdc.org.uk Website: www.rdc.org.uk/Integrating

North-West Community Network – Strategic Development

The Network aims to be in a position in the very near future to confirm significant funding for two new projects aimed at developing the capacity of local communities to influence the decisions that impact on their lives.

Although RPA and Community Planning have slipped as pending developments, it is clear that there remains a will and momentum to reform how NI is administered and indeed governed – the current economic situation arguably makes the case for scrutinising the quality of decision around the use of public funds even more pressing.

Although the Community Development approach still awaits meaningful recognition within our corridors of power, such as they are, the economic merit of delivering the best possible outcomes based on needs that have been identified through genuine engagement is more persuasive than ever.

The two projects that NWCN hopes to be showcasing very soon will be taking up this mantle, seeking out and engaging the very hardest to reach in our communities so that they can bring their rightful influence to bear.

Consistent with this, NWCN has recently redrafted its Development Plan for the period 2010-13 and seeks your endorsement of the Strategic Aims and Priorities the organisation sees as best meeting the needs of the Community & Voluntary sector in the North-West. Visit www.nwcn.org to view the draft document and use the feedback form to tell us what you think.

NWCN Membership Form 2010-11

To become a member of North-West Community Network for the year 2010/11, please complete the form below and return to the Network with your £10/€14 membership fee.

****Membership is only open to community/voluntary organisations****

Your Organisation:

Name Of Organisation:	_____
Named Contact(s) & Designation:	_____
Address:	_____
	Postcode: _____
Telephone:	Fax: _____
Email(s):	_____
Website:	_____
Brief Description Of Organisation's Role & Activities:	_____

Please make your cheque payable to North-West Community Network, or contact the Network if you wish to make payment in another way.

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Network Update is sent electronically to those groups for whom the Network has a reliable email address.

This supports the Network's sustainability efforts, both fiscal and environmental.

Please feel free to circulate the document and/or to encourage groups not currently in receipt of Network Update to contact us and therefore ensure future inclusion.

**Network Update
Summer 2010**