

Communities In Transition

Area: East Belfast

Theme: Addressing the needs of young people

Date: 12/02/2019

Number of attendee's: 8

1. Proposed interventions discussed to address the issues identified in Phase 1 fieldwork?

Some participants felt that resiliency training for young people, particularly young men, growing up in the area was important. It was suggested that most young people in the area know the difference between 'right' and 'wrong', but often do not have the self-confidence or resilience to positively deal with the range of complex issues they encounter in the local community.

Participants believed that the opportunity for young parents to participate in further training and education courses was significantly undermined by the cost and general lack of childcare services in the area. There was a general sense that future courses directed at this cohort must appreciate this challenge and be developed with this in mind (i.e. have an onsite crèche or offer related financial support).

The need for early intervention was supported by all those in attendance. It was noted that related programmes should not just focus on children, but on their parents – for instance, some participants suggested the need for parent and child courses, which focused on basic skills (such as literacy and numeracy).

2. Comments on current community capacity to address issues identified?

Participants were keen to stress the good practice that youth workers active throughout the community are already undertaking. They noted the important role of the 'Practitioners Forum' – in allowing local workers to discuss elements of good practice, consider points of collaboration and address issues emerging in the area.

3. Outcomes that participants suggested these interventions would achieve?

Those in attendance felt that while a greater diversity of programmes focusing on developing the skills of young people was likely necessary, there was already a large range of positive initiatives on offer – what was often missing was the opportunity for young people to fully avail of them (i.e. due to childcare needs).

It was felt that resiliency training would help support young people consider important personal issues – i.e. such as their masculinity/femininity, what it means to be a young adult in an area struggling with aspects of deprivation and other aspects of their

identity. It was suggested that the best results to date have been achieved by a combination of one-to-one mentoring and group work.

4. How did participants suggest we will know if these projects/interventions have succeeded? (indicators/measures)

Participants were unsure how best to review the work emerging from the projects and interventions, this was likely as a consequence of the fact that the majority of positive outcomes would be achieved in the long-term (rather than creating immediate benefits within the community).

5. Target beneficiaries/participants of the suggested interventions?

Children and their parents who have been identified as lacking basic skills, such as literacy and numeracy.

Young people struggling to find their place in their community and under pressure to be involved in criminality/paramilitarism.

6. How did participants suggest these projects/interventions will build the capacity/capability in the community?

Participants felt that the investment in young people was essential to ensuring preventive measures are in place to give the targeted cohort better outcomes generally, but also, more specifically, to reduce the opportunity paramilitary groups have to recruit young people with self-esteem issues and a perceived lack of opportunity.

7. How did participants suggest these projects/interventions will support the overall objectives of the Tackling Paramilitarism Executive Action Plan...?

e. Paramilitarism has no place.

See response to question 6.

f. Citizens and communities feel safe and confident.

See response to question 6.

g. The public support and have increased confidence in the justice system.

See response to question 6.

h. Support is available for those who wish to move away from paramilitary activity and structures.

See response to question 6.

8. Any dependencies identified by participants?

None.

9. Any risks identified by participants?

None.

10. Any other comments made by participants?

None.

11. Is a further follow-up workshop required? Please provide details.

No.