

## **Communities In Transition**

### **Participatory Design Process – Reporting Template**

Please complete this report following each participatory design session (i.e. one per session) to record the key of the discussion. Please use the sections below to structure the report. If any area was not covered during the discussion, please note that in the relevant section.

Please return the completed report to [cit@cooperationireland.org](mailto:cit@cooperationireland.org) within one week of each participatory design session.

*Area:* Brandywell and Creggan

*Theme:* Addressing the Needs of Young People

*Date:* 31/01/19

*Number of attendees:* 18

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

Participants pointed to three possible interventions that they believed would help to address the issues identified during Phase 1:

- A training for trainers programme focused on building the skills and capacity of key of employed youth workers (but potentially also extended to community workers, parents, teachers, police officers, sports and cultural leaders) to work with 3 key groups of young people: (1) YP involved with PMs; (2) YP at risk of being involved with PMs; and (3) YP who have been exposed or born witness to PM activities. Training would focus on developing skills to engage with such challenging constituencies and might include skills such as trauma / mental health and isolation. Some in the room had participated in a recent programme 'Reclaiming Youth at Risk' (funded through Education Authority), and which is regarded as an international model of good practice. Funding for delivery of such a programme would significantly build the capacity of established youth workers.
- Support for preventative work that picks up on the early indicators of problems, helps to put young people on alternative pathways (education, training and employment) and provides support to their families. This could include resourcing for programmes and training for YP rather than staffing of community-based organisations, which is considered to be sufficient.
- A non-prescriptive funding model (based on the Streets Alive arts festival) that enables youth providers and other community groups to react and respond effectively to emerging / urgent situations or tensions, for example the need to be able to respond quickly to bonfire

or interface issues and enables a diversionary / response programme to be put in place quickly;

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

As in Phase 1, participants noted that there is a high concentration of youth provision in the area(s), particularly in terms of the number of youth workers. The two main challenges identified were: that of being able to deliver on programmes and activities for young people once they have been engaged and 'brought in'; and the long-term challenge of ensuring that there are built-in pathways and a tangible means of progression for those who are accessing youth services. Regarding the latter, participants cited positive examples of young people who had come through to complete education or training programmes and take up leadership positions in their community. It was argued that this type of long-term nurturing and investment is necessary to keep young people on board and ensure that they have a sense of purpose and direction when they reach adulthood.

Referring to the work of Professor Siobhan O'Neill, participants reiterated the need for support around trauma and mental health for vulnerable young people and families. It was suggested that in addition to the resourcing of mental health services, the full range of community interests would benefit from training to identify and help take early action to address those issues.

## **3. Outcomes that participants suggested these interventions would achieve?**

- Will move young people towards pathways that give them a sense of purpose, creating new community leaders in the process;
- Will build the capacity of community and youth providers in being able to engage more effectively with at risk young people and deliver programmes that keep young people engaged and away from involvement in anti-social behaviour, criminality or paramilitary activity;
- Will help to build the capacity of the community to provide trauma and mental health support to vulnerable young people and families;
- Will help to build the capacity of the community to address the trauma-related legacy of the conflict and impact of residual paramilitary activities, with a view to breaking the cycle of violence and its normalisation;
- Will help to mainstream models of best practice in youth work within a wider community setting.

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

- A reduction in the incidence of anti-social behaviour and criminality;
- A reduction in the number of young people and families falling under the influence of paramilitarism;

- An increase in the number of people in the community who are trained in the areas of trauma and mental health support;
- An increase in the number of people in the community who are trained in models of best practice in youth work;
- Improved outcomes for young people and families in the areas of trauma and mental health that are associated with the influence of paramilitarism;
- An increase in the number of young people involved in employment, education or training and in community activities.

**5. Target beneficiaries/participants of the suggested interventions?**

- Young people and families who are directly impacted by criminality and/or paramilitarism;
- Young people and families who are liable to be impacted by criminality and/or paramilitarism (identified using a range of established indicators);
- Young people and families who are impacted as a result of bearing witness to violence;
- Community and youth workers, teachers, police officers, sports and cultural leaders, parents, etc.

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

As noted above, the proposed interventions would seek to provide swift and effective interventions to keep young people engaged; create pathways that lead young people to become meaningful adults and community leaders; mainstream international models of best practice in youth work, and build the capacity of the key youth workers and community members to better engage with key constituencies of young people.

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

**a. Paramilitarism has no place.**

The proposed interventions would seek to encourage sustained engagement with youth and community services on the part of those who (are liable to be) impacted by paramilitarism. At the same time, it will seek to build the capacity of the community to address the related issues of trauma and mental health, helping to challenge the normalisation of violence.

**b. Citizens and communities feel safe and confident.**

Citizens and communities will feel safer and more confident when there are fewer incidences of anti-social behaviour and criminality, an increase in the number of young people and families engaged in youth/community services, and there are long-term pathways available to young people who may otherwise become engaged in anti-social

behaviour, criminality and/or fall under the influence of paramilitarism. They will also feel safer and more confident when they are better equipped to identify and address some of those issues within a wider community setting.

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

N/A

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

The proposed intervention would include a targeted element for those young people and families who have fallen under the influence of paramilitarism.

**8. Any dependencies identified by participants?**

N/A

**9. Any risks identified by participants?**

N/A

**10. Any other comments made by participants?**

Again, participants raised their concerns with the entire process and expressed scepticism that the interventions coming out the other end would in fact be bespoke, reflecting the community's understanding of what is needed on the ground and the contributions they have made in good faith since November 2017. There is a fear that the tender process will stand to benefit regional/national providers. In this respect, participants suggested that regional/national providers should be limited to a small proportion of the tender; that the emphasis should be laid on the ability of any bidder to demonstrate local knowledge, experience and *real* partnerships; and/or that the tender process employs a weighted/grading system to assess bids on this basis.

Questions were asked of the statutory agencies, where they sit in the process and whether they would be held to the same standards and levels of accountability as those potentially responsible for the delivery of B4 interventions. It was suggested that additional provision should not be conflated with duplication, particularly as youth workers are 'keeping a lid on things – morning, noon and night'. There was a sense that the community/youth sector was having to constantly re-invent the wheel for the purposes of short-term programmes, when the evidence shows what the needs are and points to how they might be addressed in the long term. Participants stated that they are becoming increasingly frustrated with the lack of long-term funding and partnership working with the statutory agencies, and that this frustration is filtering down to young people.

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

There may be a follow-up workshop for young people themselves to have an input, we are currently waiting for youth providers to respond to offers to engage directly with young people.