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 within one week of each participatory design session.

Area: New Lodge / Ardoyne

Theme: Culture and Environment

Date: 12.02.19

Number of attendee's: 5

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

- There was a lengthy conversation about the significant redevelopment of North Belfast now underway, and in particular the implications of the development of the University and the proposed motorway interchange project. It was agreed that this set an important context for intervention and that B4 investment in environment should contribute to ensuring that the quality of the environment was safe and welcoming and 'people focussed' as a contribution to supporting positive community development.

- The most specific proposal was to focus on the development of a brown-field site in New Lodge which has been identified as a potential community green space. Specifically, B4 would invest on a community process that would identify 'how best to utilise the space' and then 'how best to manage the space once it has been developed'. This would have echoes with the process that, on a much larger scale, supported the development of Connswater Community Greenway. Essentially B4 would support the consultation and engagement process pre-development phase leading to co-design of the space, as a contribution to a culture of participation and lawfulness. The key output of the process would be a 'community space management plan' to ensure that the space is designed and then managed to ensure that it is open to all-age users, kept clean and safe and used by all those for whom it is designed.

- Create an intergenerational programme of work that brings together various cross-sections of the community to explore the sense of community identity and history.

- Build on the existing 'Safer Streets' programme and develop a series of community based cultural programmes around the theme of 'culture night'. Look at opportunities for extending the traditional boundaries of the 'night' to the New Lodge and develop a series of 'art' exhibits as part of the overall event.

- Create a small fund that could be accessed by the community to address spontaneous safety issues and build on the success of intervention works around the bonfire in 2018.

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

- There are strong, experienced and cohesive community networks in both the New Lodge and Ardoyne. There was a sense that programmes should support and enhance existing networks to engage with local stakeholders. There was a sense that a specific intervention under this theme could be developed quickly and build momentum in the overall programme.

3. Outcomes that participants suggested these interventions would achieve?

- Shared sense of benefit from B4 and a physical representation of the value of community development approaches to social problems.
- Increased sense of pride in the local community and wider sense of ownership and leadership;
- Obvious aesthetical and physical transformations and a longer-term management approach to community space which addresses issues of safety and anti-social behaviour;
- Changed external attitudes and perceptions of the local community.

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

- Production of a long term plan to manage open space
- Building a connection between improvements in the quality of life and increased community participation
- A renewed sense of pride, aspiration and identity in the area

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

- All-age users of public facilities including older people, families and young people 'at risk' of being perpetrators of armed gangs or victims of these groups;
- Community development organisations who benefit from a physical project and the development of co-designed facilities;
- Families.

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

It was evident from the discussions that there was significant commitment across the New Lodge to engage on issues around culture and identity. However, the challenge was creating a B4-related programme that introduced these concepts indirectly alongside practical activities that all sections of the community could engage with. One of the challenges community activists in the area identified is encouraging younger people to 'have pride' in their community and promote the virtues of coming from the New Lodge. Existing negative stigmatisation of the community along with a sense of 'internal hopelessness' means armed groups have a fertile environment in which they can recruit from. This programme is an opportunity to counter the negative narratives; create a forum, which brings multiple generations from the community together; potentially regenerate a desolate space, and promote positive role models within the community. This programme would provide residents with new skills and learning around leadership, the environment and planning and developing community consultations. It would also support the rule of law, and engage vulnerable young people around issues pertaining to their self-confidence, and identify future 'risk factors' around participation in anti-community behaviour.

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:
Underpinning the programme is an acknowledgement that armed violence (in any shape and form) has no place in the local community (or society). The programme will explore the impact that armed violence in its current form has on the local community.

b. Communities feel safe and confident
The programme has two core purposes – the first is to engage cross sections of the community to participate in a sustained process around a physical project – the second is to reshape the built environment. Together these aims will improve the sense of safety in the community and facilitate a more coherent level of partnership

between various local groups which should increase a sense of togetherness and improve community cohesion.

c. People have confidence in the justice system

As part of the programme the participants will be introduced to a series of work streams that will explore the idea of a culture of lawfulness and broader issues around the relationships between the local community and the wider criminal justice system.

d. Those who want to move away from paramilitarism and supported to do so

Everyone has the opportunity to participate and the work stream aligned with the programme will provide participants with new skill sets and a growing awareness of opportunities around education and employment.

8. Any dependencies identified by participants?

This aspect of the programme requires a commitment from government departments and service providers to work collaboratively with the community. In terms of the action plan, attention should be placed on:

A4 - In terms of the work in schools and youth work in communities.

A6 – DPCSP – rule of law and lawfulness.

It would be appropriate for collaboration across these streams to ensure sustainability.

9. Any Risks identified by participants?

Risk: That this project is not seen as directly connected to the purposes of the programme. It is important that the benefits of enabling a community to transform the quality of its physical infrastructure and the design process of building a shared green space are understood as a contribution to democratic and peaceful political culture and an investment in a re-imaged area.

Risk: This project is not co-ordinated with other interventions in the Tackling Paramilitarism programme and/or other projects that have been developed by funders in the immediate area.

Risk: That the participants are not spread across the local community, but rely on the 'usual suspects'. This is an intergenerational programme and must have strong numbers of participants from different age backgrounds.

10. Any other comments made by participants?

N/A

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

N/A