

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: West Belfast

Theme: Health and Well-being

Date: 05/02/19

Number of attendees: 4

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

The discussion converged around the idea of statutory and community stakeholders working in a way that treats a marginalised individual within the family unit and a wholistic community setting. It was suggested that there could be some form of creative intervention that seeks to encourage positive life choices through:

- A form of drip-release talks/training in schools, youth clubs, community organisations etc.
- Better communication and cooperation between community interests to ensure that at risk individuals/families are supported in all aspects of their lives, and that appropriate pathways/opportunities are identified in order that positive life choices can be exercised.

In addition, the cessation of funding for a community-based drug addiction support programme operating out of Falls Community Council was raised as something that should be looked at within the theme of health and well-being.

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

Participants argued that short funding cycles and the dearth of long-term programmes make it difficult for community organisations to work towards long-term outcomes and an overarching strategic vision. Many organisations are working hard to meet their running costs in the short term, which detracts from the kind of collaboration, strategic planning and ‘trial and error approach’ that is necessary to address the issues raised in Phase 1. It was also suggested that community organisations suffer from not being able to avail of the considerable expertise that exists in the statutory sector.

On the other hand, it was noted that there is an appetite for a new departure in terms of how issues of health and well-being are addressed at a statutory and community level. One positive development in the Lower Falls, for example, is that there seems to be a willingness on the part of the schools to engage with novel approaches to health and well-being within a wider community setting. It was said that this access and openness could be harnessed towards positive ends in conjunction with other community actors.

3. Outcomes that participants suggested these interventions would achieve?

- Will help to enhance pathways, opportunities and the for those individuals/families who suffer long-term health problems or are showing early signs of difficulty;
- Will help to re-build the sense of community and civic pride that has partly given way to dislocation, alienation and suspicion among the resident population.

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

Participants discussed at length the outcomes that the proposed interventions would seek to support, most of which have been raised in other workshops. They suggested that some work remains to be done in relation to measuring meaningful progress towards these outcomes and how best to ensure that the proposed interventions leave a positive, long-term legacy.

5. Target beneficiaries/participants of the suggested interventions?

- Families which are impacted by educational under-attainment, inter-generational unemployment, benefit dependency, mental health and addiction problems, family breakdown etc.;
- Children and young people who are identified as having difficulties on one or a number of related issues;
- Families who are alienated for one or a number of complex factors.

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

- Will strengthen existing community-based services;
- Will help to improve collaboration and signposting between community actors;
- Will help to re-integrate marginalised families into the community;
- Will help to rebuild a sense of community and civic pride in the area(s), strengthening the community's capacity to address the issues raised in Phase 1.

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 intervention would seek to ensure that there are early, preventative measures, alternative pathways and enhanced community support mechanisms in place for individuals/families who are (liable to be) impacted by anti-social behaviour, criminality or fall under the influence of paramilitarism. It will look to identify and encourage the target individuals/groups to make positive life choices that will move them away from the influence of paramilitarism.

b. Citizens and communities feel safe and confident.

Citizens will feel safer and more confident when there are appropriate mechanisms in place to support the health and well-being of the target groups within a wider community setting. The interventions also seek to rebuild a sense of community and civic pride in the area(s), strengthening the community's capacity to address the issues identified in Phase 1.

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.

N/A

8. Any dependencies identified by participants?

Participants raised the core issues of statutory buy-in and financial sustainability beyond the initial programme, while noting that the success of the proposed initiatives would also depend on community stakeholders (schools, youth providers, service providers, sports clubs, cultural organisations) taking responsibility for ensuring that those at risk are supported in a holistic fashion and given opportunities to flourish.

9. Any risks identified by participants?

N/A

10. Any other comments made by participants?

N/A

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

A follow up workshop has been requested in order to bring to the table those who have not yet participated and to develop the ideas that were discussed.