

**MINUTES OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND COMMITTEE BUSINESS MEETING HELD ON  
FRIDAY 21<sup>st</sup> OCTOBER 2011, 9:30am  
AT BIG LOTTERY FUND'S OFFICE, CROMAC QUAY, BELFAST**

PRESENT:

Frank Hewitt *Chair*  
Paul Cavanagh *Committee member*  
Peter Osborne *Committee member*  
Claire Keatinge *Committee member*  
Geraldine Campbell *Committee member*

IN ATTENDANCE:

Joanne McDowell *Director*  
Alison Fraser *Deputy Director Head of Programmes*  
Amanda Doherty *Deputy Director Head of Communications & External Relations*  
Deirdre Barker *Head of Planning & Support Services*  
Norrie Breslin *Head of Policy & Development*  
Jacqui Maxwell *Committee Manager (Minutes)*

COMMUNITY PLANNING PRESENTATION: (agenda item 6)

Colm Bradley, *Community Places*  
Louise O'Neill, *Community Places*  
Brendan Murtagh, *Queen's University*

SPACE & PLACE INDUCTION PRESENTATION: (agenda item 7)

Mark Creaney, *Programme Manager*  
Michael Liggett, *Senior Policy & Development Officer*

1. OPENING REMARKS

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting.
- 1.2 The Chair and members congratulated Claire Keatinge on her recent appointment as Commissioner for Older People in Northern Ireland.
- 1.3 The Chair reported that the UK Chair's planned visit to Belfast had to be cancelled. Joanne McDowell stated that he was due to come to Northern Ireland in January 2012 with the UK Board, but she would keep members informed if it was possible for him to visit before that.

***ACTION: Director***

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 2.1 These had been received from Julie Harrison Northern Ireland Committee member and Peter Ainsworth UK Chair.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 3.1 There were none.

4. APPROVAL FOR ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND COMMITTEE BUSINESS MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY 19 AUGUST 2011

4.1 The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and were subsequently signed by the Chair.

4.2 Committee noted the actions list in connection to the meeting.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM 19 AUGUST MEETING

5.1 **Chair and NI Director Meetings with Ministers (1.2)**

Joanne McDowell updated members on meetings arranged for October and November. The Chair stated that they were due to meet with David Thomson at DETI on 8 November and it would be interesting to hear about the Department's draft economic strategy and the role of the community and voluntary sector in overall economic terms. Committee will be kept updated on matters arising from these meetings.

***ACTION: Director/Chair***

5.2 **Advice Service Alliance (6.4)**

Paul Cavanagh reported that he had spoken with Siobhan Sweeney, Manager HAZ, Health Promotion Agency and confirmed that she would be making contact with the Alliance. Paul will keep in touch with her regarding progress.

5.3 **NIC Business & Decision Meeting Dates (7.2)**

Jacqui Maxwell confirmed that these dates had been agreed by committee at the 19 August meeting and relevant staff had been informed. She also confirmed that the meetings table had been resent to members as a reminder of the dates.

5.4 **Progress Reports Format (8.4)**

Alison Fraser confirmed that the format had now been revised and that members would also start to receive new reports on programmes' effectiveness.

5.5 **Building Change Trust (8.5)**

Joanne McDowell reported that she and Melloney Poole (Deputy Director, Head of Legal Services) would be meeting with the Protector, Michael Wilson, to discuss his annual report on 15 November. Learning would be fed into the other BIG Trusts through the Protectors and it was planned that they should meet in January 2012. She also confirmed that the Protector's tenure was coming to an end and that he could be reappointed for a further term.

5.6 **Decision Delegation (12.7)**

Joanne McDowell reported that there was a paper being presented by Jackie Killeen (Director, Scotland) to Board on 25<sup>th</sup> October to consider decision-making and delegations. Discussions would be fed back to members.

***ACTION: Director***

The Chair stated that he had spoken to Jackie Killeen about the subject and expressed members' views on delegation and frequency of Board meetings.

As part of a discussion, it was acknowledged that the large number of applications in England (e.g. Reaching Communities) made it difficult to engage with customers. It was also noted that staff in Northern Ireland do have an advantage as they are able to have more face to face contact with customers and have the practical and collective knowledge of the NI Committee membership.

### 5.7 **Chief Executive's Belfast Visit (15.2)**

Joanne McDowell reported that the Peter Wanless visit had gone well and that he had visited two projects and had positive meetings with staff. He was particularly interested in the Impact of Alcohol programme and will be kept updated on progress.

## 6. COMMUNITY PLACES PRESENTATION ON THE COMMUNITY PLANNING TOOLKIT

6.1 The Chair welcomed Colm Bradley, Louise O'Neill and Brendan Murtagh to the meeting.

6.2 A PowerPoint presentation was delivered covering the following points:

- Support & Learning contract
- Methodology
- Toolkit
- 5 Learning themes
- Completion steps
- Emerging issues

Colm Bradley confirmed that they were in the process of working with a contractor to design a dedicated website to cover the 5 learning themes; Community Engagement, Outcomes Approach, Working Together, Aligning Processes and Skills & Knowledge.

6.3 In discussion the main points raised included:

- i) That there was a certain level of political interest in the toolkit, but there had been challenges in relation to the Review of Public Administration regarding local authorities' powers and responsibilities and sharing the same purpose to improve communities.
- ii) That the voluntary and community sector can be a low cost partner for Government, but can also be expensive.
- iii) Community planning has lacked focus and needs to concentrate efforts on doing a limited number of things well.
- iv) The Belfast pilot is liaising with the new Belfast Strategic Partnership to concentrate on two aspects, health and wellbeing and life and equalities, shifting the focus to preventative action.
- v) To have a focussed set of priorities to make decisions is a useful strategy. Community engagement models need to take a pragmatic approach to prioritise over time and conduct an impact assessment to analyse the process and review any adverse effect on groups.
- vi) The Scotland toolkit model has been well used by approximately 800 groups and is well regarded by Government as it produces reports on delivery and involvement, giving structured outputs.
- vii) The IT based tool VOICE requires those using it to consider difficult questions and methodically links outcomes and stakeholders.
- viii) The focus on community engagement should buy in knowledge and experience of elected members and needs to be facilitated by a statutory body. Partnership working is a genuine commitment from the political sector and pilots are trying to facilitate this change. Belfast City Council's community planning department pilot is useful for the Policy & Strategy Committee which has a sub-committee on community planning. The pilot has linked up and met with them to share the Belfast model and discussed key points with Councillors to try and influence.
- ix) There is a need to recognise what the priorities are and get a dynamic, collaborative effort moving.

6.4 The Chair thanked Colm, Louise and Brendan for a very interesting and comprehensive presentation.

## 7. SPACE AND PLACE PROGRAMME INDUCTION

- 7.1 The Chair welcomed, Mark Creaney Programme Manager and Michael Liggett Senior Policy & Development Officer to the meeting.
- 7.2 A PowerPoint presentation was delivered covering the following points:
- Policy context
  - Programme outcome
  - Programme vision
  - Application process
  - Applicants
  - Differences
  - Due diligence
  - Presentations
  - Successful applicant
- 7.3 In discussion the main points raised included:
- i) Stage 1 due diligence will be carried out in-house and detailed in the assessment reports. The 6 judgement points in relation to criteria 1 and 2 will be emailed out to members. **ACTION: Committee Manager**
  - ii) There was now an extra judgement point for equalities, which was being used in BIG UK-wide. This is a new way of looking at beneficiary monitoring and would be applicable to the Space & Place and Impact of Alcohol programmes in Northern Ireland.
  - iii) Officers confirmed that BIG would not be involved in decision making in relation to the Award Partner grant scheme, but staff would work with the Award Partner on an ongoing basis to review progress.
  - iv) Members commented that Belfast had different areas of social need and community background, with less space available in certain areas compared to others. There is a need to achieve equality and equity and not solely base on geography.
  - v) It was confirmed that there will be Grant Officer commentary for each judgement point and the assessment reports will be longer and more detailed than previous.
  - vi) Officers confirmed that there was no upper level percentage figure for management costs, but that a figure will be shown in the assessment reports. Value for money will be considered as part of the assessment process.
  - vii) Officers confirmed that at stage 1 of the assessment process, Grants Officers will check that the basic due diligence requirements are in place. Stage 2 will assess due diligence requirements in more detail to give the necessary assurances to BIG.
- 7.4 A detailed discussion took place in relation to the format of the presentations and decision making on 9 December. It was agreed that further work was required to take account of the queries and suggestions voiced by members and to take forward the following:
- Confirm the presentation process, taking into account committee comments.
  - Confirm if members will be given the opportunity to view the primary information from the applicant, e.g. the application form.
  - Confirm if the presentation process will be formally minuted and if Grant Officers will be present at the decision meeting.
- 7.5 The Chair stated that he was conscious of the points that members were making and that he would meet with Joanne McDowell and Alison Fraser as soon as possible to work through possible options and report back to committee members.
- ACTION: Chair/Director/Deputy Director Head of Programmes**

## 7.6 **Pre-meet**

It was agreed that dates would be explored for committee and relevant staff to attend a pre-meet to discuss and agree the presentation/meeting format before the actual decision meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> December. **ACTION: Officers/Committee Manager**

## 7.7 **Declaration of Interests**

Jacqui Maxwell confirmed that she had received declaration of interests from some members and that these would be reviewed in November. An additional declaration was noted from Paul Cavanagh for the Public Health Agency, which was one of the application partners for Community Foundation NI. **ACTION: Committee Manager/Director/Chair**

## 7.8 **Apologies**

Claire Keatinge's apologies were noted for the decision meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> December.

## 8. FORWARD WORK PLAN

8.1 Committee noted the contents of the updated work plan for committee business up to January 2013.

## 9. PAPERS BY CORRESPONDENCE

9.1 NI Committee had received various papers by correspondence, which had been appended to the agenda. These included:

- Programme Progress reports for Reaching Out Connecting Older People, Reaching Out Empowering Young People, Reaching Communities and Space & Place
- Reaching Communities Measuring Programme Effectiveness Annual Review
- CENI Contract Management report for Live & Learn and Safe & Well programmes

9.2 Committee noted the reports.

## 10. VERBAL UPDATES

### 10.1 **Third Party Funding**

Joanne McDowell reported that there was nothing new to report from DFP on dormant accounts and that further information should be available for the December business meeting. **ACTION: Director**

### 10.2 **External Relations**

Amanda Doherty updated members on the Pride Northern Ireland Youth Achievement Awards taking place at Stormont on 3 December, a Village SOS Live stakeholder event at the City Hotel Derry on 3 November and the Millennium Now programme launch on 1 November.

## 11. MID YEAR REVIEW OF GRANTS BUDGETS

11.1 Committee noted the updated figures tabled by Alison Fraser for Northern Ireland programmes, which included movements in terms of commitment and spend following the mid year review. Indicative programme budgets up to 2014/15 were also provided.

11.2 Joanne McDowell reported that early indications had shown that increased Lottery ticket sales would generate additional funding and that Finance colleagues would work with country committees to look at options for profiling this additional funding over future financial years.

## 12. SOCIAL INVESTMENT

12.1 Joanne McDowell reported that a paper was being presented to Board on 25 October regarding the principles of future social investment. The Big Society Investment Fund, supported by an Investment Committee hosted at BIG, will make up to £5m investments via intermediaries, in advance of the formal launch of Big Society Capital in spring 2012, (formally Big Society Bank).

## 13. SUPPORTING FAMILIES (paper 22)

13.1 The Committee noted the amendments to the programme aim and outcomes and consultation proposal.

13.2 In discussion the main points raised included:

- i) Norrie Breslin confirmed that the definition shown in paragraph 2.15 was not set in stone, but was an informed description used in international and British research. The definition can be reviewed before and after the consultation.
- ii) Members stated that it was important to have a distinctive voice in this field. The consultation workshops will better inform this and it would be useful to have a definition agreed upon by BIG and stakeholders.
- iii) The on-line survey will be a quantitative approach and a more qualitative approach can be drilled down at the workshops.
- iv) It was important to monitor how many interventions vulnerable families are involved in and there needs to be proper agreement and joint working outside the usual referral routes.
- v) For vulnerable people there needs to be a balance outside the listed challenges which can have a self defining focus, for example a vulnerable person can be an individual who is not getting access to the home/family. Also need to focus on how children are reacting within the family unit through challenging behaviours and explore how the cycle of poverty can be interrupted.
- vi) Look at how parental behaviour can have a negative impact on the family and take into account adults with caring responsibilities.
- vii) The wording around definition in paragraph 2.15 could be amended to read - *are more likely to be vulnerable as the result of.....*

13.3 Regarding the length of grant, members thought that there could be an argument for longer term funding as well as shorter interventions to break a cycle and then look for statutory support.

13.4 ***Officers noted members' comments and it was agreed that Norrie Breslin would revise and keep committee updated on progress.***

***ACTION: Head of Policy & Development***

## 14. NI PROGRAMMES UPDATE (verbal)

Alison Fraser, Deputy Director Head of Programmes gave verbal updates as follows:

### 14.1 **Reaching Out Empowering Younger People**

- Decision-making meeting took place yesterday – 8 awards made.
- The young people committee members are very involved in decisions drawing on their life experiences.
- Next decision meeting 19 January 12.

14.2 **Reaching Out Connecting Older People**

- Demand was steady, but there are still concerns about committing the programme budget in 12/13, which will be discussed further at the NIC December meeting.
- Next decision making meeting 25 January 12.

14.3 **Energy Efficient Venues**

- Decision meeting took place earlier this morning – 5 awards made
- 10 large awards have been approved to date, taking into account the geographical spread and type of organisation.

14.4 **Impact of Alcohol**

- 5 portfolio applications have been received.
- The Belfast Trust application has been returned and an extension provided as key information missing due to staff leaving.

14.5 **Space & Place**

- Two award partner applications being assessed.
- Presentations and decisions to be held over one day on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> December.

14.6 **Awards for All**

- Demand for funding remains high, averaging around 70 applications a month.
- Success rate is between 50 and 60%.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

15.1 **UK Board Visit**

Committee noted the forthcoming meetings and the UK Board visit on 23 & 24 January 2012. Jacqui Maxwell to send an email to members confirming the arrangements to date.

***ACTION: Committee Manager***

There being no further business the meeting closed at 1:30pm.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Northern Ireland Chair

Date: \_\_\_\_\_