



Subject:	Community and voluntary sector and private sector representation in community planning
Date:	7 December 2018
Reporting Officer:	John Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy
Contact Officer:	Christine Robinson, Strategy Policy & Partnerships Manager, ext 6248 David Cuthbert, Community Planning Officer, ext 3320

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	This report is to update Members on proposals to strengthen representation of the community and voluntary, and business sectors in community planning.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	Members are asked to: a) Agree the proposed approach to strengthen community and voluntary sector representation via the development of a CVS Forum, including upcoming engagement with stakeholders; b) Agree the proposed next steps for strengthening business sector representation; c) Note the update on work to develop a Community Planning Partnership engagement strategy to ensure wider citizen involvement/civic voice in community planning.

3.0	Main report
	<p data-bbox="272 226 432 259"><u>Background</u></p> <p data-bbox="165 293 1458 456">3.1 The Community Planning Partnership has a duty to involve the community in community planning. The Statutory Guidance for Operation of Community Planning (DoE, 2015) highlights that this can take the form of representation of community and voluntary sectors, and also more broadly in terms of seeking views of citizens in relation to community planning objectives and actions.</p> <p data-bbox="165 495 1445 725">3.2 At the Community Planning Partnership meeting in February 2018, partners and Elected Members present highlighted the importance of ensuring the views of communities are heard via both forms of involvement referred to above, and it was agreed that the Partnership would progress work to consider how best to address these areas going forward. A background paper (Appendix 1) summarising a review of current practice and work undertaken to date was subsequently tabled at the Community Planning Partnership meeting on 9th October 2018 This highlighted the need for further work to develop:</p> <ul data-bbox="320 763 1434 898" style="list-style-type: none"> - Wider engagement strategy, harnessing innovative tools and methods to facilitate wider input from citizens across the Belfast Agenda; - Proposals for community and voluntary sector representation in community planning. <p data-bbox="272 931 1195 965"><u>Community and voluntary sector representation in community planning</u></p> <p data-bbox="165 999 1347 1066">3.3 To ensure an effective approach to CVS representation in community planning the following issues need to be considered:</p> <ul data-bbox="320 1099 1417 1368" style="list-style-type: none"> - Improving information sharing within the CVS, and between it and community planning. - Reflecting and taking account of the rich diversity of the CVS in the Belfast City Council area (communities of geography, interest & practice). - Ensure representation is reviewed and refreshed at appropriate intervals. - Provide transparency and accountability between the agreed reps and the wider sector. - Ensure sustainability. <p data-bbox="165 1402 1458 1469">3.4 Furthermore it is important that we consider how our approach reflects the diversity of CVS in Belfast:</p> <ul data-bbox="320 1503 1458 1637" style="list-style-type: none"> - There are over 1,600 organisations operating across communities of interest, communities of identity, and communities of geography; and - existing representation and participation mechanisms across other city partnerships that also feed in to the Belfast Agenda <p data-bbox="165 1671 1466 1805">3.5 Alongside these broad issues, a number of specific considerations are emerging from Belfast City Council's own perspective, particularly in relation to corporate changes towards neighbourhood working within City and Neighbourhood Services Department. These include:</p> <ul data-bbox="320 1839 1422 1973" style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring locality based representation - Council funding and support for community development/capacity development - Future role of BAPs and relationship with Department for Communities - Area governance/planning frameworks incl, role of Neighbourhood Management

Emerging proposal – Community and Voluntary Sector Forum

3.6 Notwithstanding the considerations above, building on previous engagement with the sector in Belfast during 2016, the emerging model (which is similar that which exists elsewhere in Northern Ireland) suggests a Community Forum or Panel. At this time it is proposed that the forum would be comprised of CVS organisations across communities of interest (thematic), communities of identity (s75 groups), and communities of geography (area based). The forum (or panel) would then provide a smaller number of representatives to sit on the Community Planning Partnership and other structures (e.g. Boards) as required.

3.7 As outlined above there are a some technical considerations that need to be fully worked through this includes:

- Options for populating a forum or panel could include an open call, nominations or election; views on these methods were sought from the sector in 2016 however no definitive preferred view was identified at that time.
- Effective communication mechanisms for ensuring effective representation of views across the sector, and for disseminating information from the CPP are vital to successful implementation. The panel would therefore need to deploy macro communication methods such as annual conferences and sectoral events.

3.8 Now that the Belfast Agenda has been published and community planning structures are beginning to establish, it is timely to further develop the model.

CVS Representation next steps

3.9 Next steps for development of the forum, including engagement with CVS stakeholders are outlined the following table. Note that it is proposed that the Forum will be established in the 2nd quarter of 2019.

Internal engagement to scope related BCC issues and interrelated dependencies	Dec 2018 – Jan 2019
Ongoing engagement with CP Partners and CVS to refine approach	Jan – Feb 2019
CVS Stakeholder engagement workshops (N, S, E & W) to test options and inform final proposals	March 2019
Proposal to CPP to agree model	Spring 2019

Wider civic voice/engagement strategy development

3.10 Alongside this timeline, development of a wider engagement strategy to include proposals for wider community involvement will be progressed. A further update on this work will be brought to committee and the CPP in early 2019.

Private sector (business) representation in community planning

3.11 It is also necessary to consider the arrangements for how the private/business sector is represented and involved in the process.

3.12 To date, representation from this sector to the Community Planning partnership has included the Belfast Chamber of Commerce and CBI (NI), and also various engagements with organisations such as the NI Chamber of Commerce Trade and Industry, Institute of Directors and others. However the current model does not provide a fully robust mechanism for representation of views/communication across this sector.

3.13	In 2018, an Economic Forum was established, involving a wider range of business stakeholders to input views on economy related issues in respect of the Belfast Agenda.
3.14	<p>To ensure a balanced and equitable approach to representation in the community planning process it is proposed to refresh the current private sector representation arrangements. Officers will work with the Economic Forum and through the CPP partnership in the coming months to further develop this model - at all times we will seek to ensure equality of representation between the CVS and the business sector in terms of CPP representation.</p> <p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p>
3.15	<p>The proposed engagement workshops referred to above will utilise independent facilitation /expert support to ensure delivery of required workshop outcomes. Costs for this support along with other event costs are anticipated to be in the region of £4,000, however this will be met within existing budgets.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p>
3.16	There are no equality or good relations implications as a result of this report, however the proposals contained within the report will support enhanced consideration of equality and good relations issues by ensuring more robust community involvement via strengthened representation in the community planning process.
4.0	Appendices
	Appendix 1 – Community engagement background paper (tabled at Community Planning Partnership on 9 October 2018)