



**North-West
Community
Network**

www.nwcn.org



***Annual
Report
2016-17***

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

This year I again undertake the welcome task of addressing a few words to Network members, friends and associates.

In terms of giving an overall perspective of the "state of the sector" and where it is now, one cannot help but feel significant despondency at the hopefully short-term collapse of the institutions that are mandated to administrate this part of the world. Whilst the renowned resilience of the sector continues to be accompanied by ongoing creativity and inspiration, the supposed leadership of the region has taken it upon itself to lay down under a blanket of inactivity and therefore irresponsibility.

The challenge from this for the Community & Voluntary sector is massive but as yet not fully understood – how can it be? Groups from small to large across NI that provide all kinds of support to those most in need are in a none too benevolent limbo. The sector has never sought to be in competition with the public service, nor allowed itself to become service providers only. Independence and advocacy have always been part of our role but these have to be fought for. Competing interests for resources at departmental level will likely mean a confirmation of the C&V sector as being on the bottom rung of the ladder. What risk to the complementary relationship and benefits that exist between public services and for example, locality-based services around early intervention, older people, minority ethnic support and general community cohesion? Our sector and its lead organisations must not and will not remain compliant or unvoiced on this key matter of survival.

There is no way of avoiding that the prospect of Brexit has played much more on the future visioning of many especially in a border region. This has been taken up by others who rightly focus on matters such as freedom of movement for goods and people but this is not the whole picture. For our sector we have had to factor in particular uncertainty around future EU funding and

the many brilliant cross-border and international opportunities this has provided. The future wellbeing of this activity has yet to come to any kind of prominence on the potential impacts of Brexit.

There is a risk in all of this of our sector becoming cowed, timid and less likely to shake the tree. Admittedly it is currently hard to pinpoint usefully where representation can best be made but making justifiable noise wherever possible is rarely a poor strategy and the Network is committed to that approach. It is reasonable to keep to the fore – including in the minds of our elected members – that the North West while having a strong and vibrant C&V sector continuously meeting some of the most acute needs, is an area of complex deprivation, historic neglect and geographic uniqueness. The "unknowns" that we do not yet know will be on the Network radar for the foreseeable future.

This must not become however the sum total of the work of either the sector or the Network. This year has seen a long overdue recognition of the work that the sector does and the "Keeping It Real" event will become a precursor to many following efforts – of all scales – to bring groups together to share common cause, ideas and practical information. The forthcoming Big Lottery initiative under the banner of "Celebrate" will be instrumental in fomenting connectivity, future networking and, very importantly, the sense of belonging to something greater than just individual organisations.

The benefits of creating this cohesion will ideally be picked up by council in 2017-18.

While not everyone has – and in many cases justifiably – been satisfied by the progress made around Community Planning, it cannot be argued that activity has ever halted or that efforts to engage with all parts of the community have been ongoing. The development of Locality Action Groups leading to eventual Locality Action Plans should, even with imperfections, be lauded as an achievement. The community dimension



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has thus far been strong in the process and the Network with other members of the Strategic Growth Partnership will ensure that this continues.

The Network itself enters the next financial year with familiar uncertainty. Even as static resources are allocated, it can seem like perennially doing more for less and attention must be drawn to the effect this can have on delivery.

The Network is little without its membership and wider circle of friends and associates. Keeping abreast of how to meet the informational needs of so many in this social media age can be a challenge in itself though one the Network feels it meets and always strives to improve upon.

As an egalitarian and democratic organisation, the Network's governing Executive Committee has a constant duty to remain informed, to identify and prioritise actions and lead in whatever ways possible. Even with some changeover in membership during this last year, the new intake of fresh talent, vigour

2016-17 AN OVERVIEW

Some year, some great activity and some great ideas generation – plenty of responsibility going forward then.

It may seem self-interested but I permit myself to say that this was a year that included much-needed getting back to basics in many ways.

One of the areas in which the Network examined itself most closely was around the breadth and depth of its engagement activity. How can any organisation purport to be carrying any kind of voice if it doesn't engage with the source and its abiding needs and sentiment?

Part of the response to this has included an application to Big Lottery

and creativity must not only be welcomed but seen as a sign of continuing value placed on the Network by those willing to show their altruism through inputting on a strategically very important level.

As ever the Network and by extension all of its members and associates owe gratitude to those who keep the wheels turning within the organisation – Colin Devine our Co-ordinator and Neola Nelis McCrossan the factotum Network Administrator.

The Network differs little from colleagues across the sector in terms of challenges faced and it will have to consider all options not only to hold the status quo as a minimum but to further develop responses to changing circumstances and continue leading the sector forward. To this the Network is fully committed and is confident that the unity through the diversity that characterises our sector will see growth in working together in ways that build confidence, broaden perspective and create common purpose



to encourage and celebrate groups from across the region whose work at grassroots level as often as not goes unrecognised. You will also see the continuation of a range of outreach clinics whereby the Network will engage directly with geographic and special interest groups across the region.

The Network has remained a key player in the evolution of Community Planning as led by Council. The approach has altered and progressed somewhat in that a Community Plan is now very much in development with a consultation structure being drafted alongside. While Council and other statutory partners have something akin to a duty – if not a hard responsibility – to deliver on Community Planning, one of the areas on which assessment has to be made is on the input of the Locality Groups (7 DEAs plus Strabane



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Town) and whether this engagement remains as genuine and engaging as it has begun.

A less rapid burner for the Network over the last year has been the development of a firm proposal to BLF's People & Communities programme. Whilst the Celebrate programme will generate further evidence around grassroots needs, it is already more than apparent that the landscape across the sector is as complex as ever and becoming more so.



- Anti-poverty & social exclusion
- Developing infrastructure & capacity
- Action research to ensure local/particular needs are communicated and met.

This by definition cannot be a solo venture and in truth needs other C&V sector leader groups and statutory colleagues to step up to the mark.



The beast that is Brexit has been undemocratically forced upon NI and the Border Region with potentially dire consequences for all kinds of freedoms and jurisdictional collaboration. Budgetary and leadership responsibility has been abandoned at Stormont. The composition of the new Council area throws up equality challenges where they may not previously have been that well perceived – this relates to general issues of Rural Inclusion around infrastructure, connectivity and, not to put too fine a point on it, bonding and cohesion across the whole Council area.

Network resources, even while thankfully renewed for the year ahead, have remained totally static for the past number of years. In this regard the organisation is not different to and indeed better off than many groups who have been doing amazing work over significant periods of time. There is a debate to be had here on the priority given to the value attached to our sector. Even if wealth creation is not the primary motivation wellbeing most certainly is and even a cursory look at NI's health and education situations, tells us that early intervention is key and a precursor of later resilience and strengths in later years.



Nonetheless – and a review of some of the Network's historical work has helped here – if nothing else structured responses must be developed around the following:

It is always pleasing to note that while there have been departures from the Network's Executive Committee over the last period, this has been somewhat offset by the arrival of an interesting and diverse set of new "recruits" whose early input speaks of high energy, creativity and positivity for the organisation's future. You are welcome indeed.

Colin Raine



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NWCN ACTIVITIES 2016-2017

2016-2017 saw Network involvement in the following range of activities:

Engagement events:

- 'Adopt a Spot' Litter Pick Up
- 1-to-1 Fundraising Clinics for members (x4)
- CCNI Information session for Foyle BME
- Detail Data
- Discussion event with Human Rights Commission
- Good Governance & Charity Reporting
- Keeping It Real, Celebration of the C&V Sector Event
- NI Assembly Elections – Hustings
NI Assembly Elections – Hustings – *The Young Persons Voice*
- NWCN Executive Committee Good Governance Session with NICVA
- **Outreach Clinics:**
ACE, The Plum Club & Destined
- Unscheduled Care

NWCN has productively engaged with:

- Breaking down Brexit & Various Brexit focus groups
- Building Change Trust
- Community Planning – DCSDC
- Derry Healthy Cities (Executive Committee)
- DiverseCity Community Partnership
- Derry City & Strabane District Council (TCPP)

- Destined
- Holywell Trust
- Foyle Women's Information Network
- Human Rights Commission
- Human Rights Consortium
- NICVA: Executive Committee
- North West Ageing Well Together Strategy Group
- North West Volunteer Centre
- Prince's Trust
- RISP
- European Youth Capital Strategy/Advisory Group
- Women's Centre Derry

Group Support:

Below are some examples of local groups that NWCN has supported, this includes:

- An Cosan Virtual Community College
- Campaigning Communities
- CERES
- Clooney Soccer School
- DiverseCity Community Partnership
- Foyle Opera
- Glenaden Arena
- Huntingtons Disease Association
- Include Youth
- NW Lifelong Learning
- NW Migrants Forum
- NW Volunteer Centre
- Prehen Historical & Environmental Society
- The Big Lunch
- Volunteer Now
- Youthlife

Policy Submission:

- Programme For Government (as member of Holywell DiverseCity Community Partnership)

Summary of Primary Outputs 2016-17

- **Network-supported events - 15**
- **Participation in Network-supported events – c. 25**
- **E-bulletins – 48 disseminated, incorporating approximately 1059 items to the sector from C&V sector groups as well as public bodies**
- **3 members surveys**
- **Consultation bulletins – 12 disseminated, as well as signposting to best practice materials on consultation and user engagement**



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NWCN PUBLIC BENEFITS:

The public benefit requirement is defined in the Charities Act and states that purposes must be for the public benefit to be charitable.

Below are some examples of how NWCN met the Public Benefit in 2016-17

The advancement of citizenship or community development

- Community Planning DCSDC – Participation in meetings/consultation events
- TCCP DCSDC
- Brexit: “Breaking Down Brexit”, participation in various focus groups concerning issues of Women, Health & Rural impact
- Sharing of information such as providing policies, Articles of Association, Partnership Agreements etc. to member groups
- Advice such as Pensions, Governance, Online banking, Constitutions etc.
- Signposting
- Advice
- E-bulletins
- Consultations Bulletins
- NICVA Executive, DCCP Executive
- Keeping It Real Seminar celebrating the C&V sector locally
- Hustings events: One held for the general population and another youth focused event
- Member of European Youth Capital 2019 Advisory Board
- Detail Data Event

The advancement of health or the saving of lives

- Unscheduled care to include focus group with Destined as they feel

that their voices are not always heard

- PPI
- Providing Networking opportunities through our events
- DHC Ex Com
- NAWAT
- Promoting groups such as Alzheimer’s Society & Pink Ladies on a regular basis
- Attending events to strengthen our own knowledge and understanding such as Human Library, Testimony and storytelling events

The advancement of education

- Good Governance events for local BME Community and a Good Governance & Charity Reporting Seminar plus a workshop for our own committee
- Attending training ourselves such as Measuring Social Impact & Public Speaking training so that our knowledge, understanding and skills can be developed & shared where needed
- Adopt a Spot litter pick up – an annual event NWCN participate in to promote activism in our community

The prevention or relief of poverty

- Fundraising Clinics (x4). One to One clinics supporting local member groups
- Human Rights Consortium Discussion
- Outreach Clinics: These clinics have been designed by NWCN to try and help facilitate and raise issues these member groups highlight



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NWCN 2016-17 ... HAVE A LOOK



Stormont Hustings Apr 2016



Stormont Hustings – The Young Person’s Voice, Apr 2016



Detail Data Apr 2016



CCNI & Foyle BME Collective May 2016



Plum Club – Outreach Clinic July 2016



Active Citizens Engaged – Outreach Clinic July 2016



Programme for Government Consultation July 2016



Destined – Outreach Clinic Sep 2016



Department of Infrastructure Consultation Sep 2016



Social Innovation Decoded Dec 2016



NWCN Executive Committee meets John Kelpie, DCSDC Jan 2017



Member Fundraising Clinics Mar 2017



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NWCN INCOME & EXPENDITURE

(as at 31 March 2017)

	Unrestricted Income 2017	Restricted Income 2017	Total Funds 2017	Total Funds 2016
<u>Restricted Income</u>				
Dept for Communities	-	51,641	51,641	53,010
HSCB – Unscheduled Care	-	100	100	-
HSCB - Western Voices	-	-	-	3,000
	-	51,741	51,741	56,010
<u>Voluntary Income</u>				
Membership Fees	581	-	581	920
Totals	581	51,741	52,322	56,930

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2017	Total 2016
Wages & Salaries	-	45,595	45,595	46,054
Travel	-	282	282	1,070
Rent	-	3,000	3,000	3,000
Insurance	-	323	323	520
Pension Costs	-	248	248	-
Printing, Posting & Stationery	238	346	584	213
Maintenance	186	-	186	-
Telephone, fax & Internet	150	390	540	719
Conferences & Seminars	13	22	35	1,253
Redundancy Payments	-	-	-	3,500
Consultancy	-	100	100	1,122
Accountancy	120	700	820	720
Training and Course Fees	25	987	1,012	958
Legal & Professional Fees	-	-	-	840
Bank Charges	168	-	168	253
Subscriptions	276	-	276	150
Sundry	80	-	80	223
Depreciation	-	492	492	534
	1,256	52,485	53,741	61,129

<u>Current Liabilities</u>	<u>2017</u>		<u>2016</u>
Debtors	8,236		8,236
Accruals	1,540		990
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	6,840		990

NWCN BALANCE SHEET

(as at 31 March 2017)

	<u>2017</u>		<u>2016</u>	
	£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets				
Tangible Assets		1,779		2,272
Current Assets				
Debtors	8,781		8,236	
Cash at bank and in hand	24,453		20,074	
	<u>33,234</u>		<u>28,310</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(6,840)		(990)	
Net current assets		<u>26,394</u>		<u>27,320</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		28,173		29,592
Net assets		<u>28,173</u>		<u>29,592</u>
Reserves				
Restricted		26,484		27,228
Unrestricted		<u>1,689</u>		<u>2,364</u>
		<u>28,173</u>		<u>29,592</u>

NWCN Executive Committee 2016-17

Chair: Eamon O'Kane – Claudy Rural Development Group
Secretary: (Acting) Colin Devine – NWCN Coordinator
Treasurer: Patricia Bray – NW Forum of People with Disabilities

Committee Members 2016-17: Austin Kelly – North West Ageing Well Together; Barney McGuigan – REACH Across; Darren Kirby – Greater Shantallow Area Partnership; Emma Johnston – Youth Action; Kate Clifford – Rural Community Network; Liam Milligan – NW Methodist Mission; Lilian Seeno-Barr – NW Migrants Forum



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North-West Community Network Membership 2016-2017

1 ALLY Foyle	25	Headliners (NI)
2 AMH New Horizons Foyle	26	Hillcrest Trust
3 Ardstraw & District Com Dev Association	27	Holywell Trust
4 Bluebell Arts Project	28	HURT
5 Blue Coat School Visitor Centre	29	La Dolce Vita
6 Bogside & Brandywell Health Forum	30	Learmount Community Development Group
7 Bogside & Brandwell Initiative	31	Little Orchids Children Centre
8 Bridge Accessible Transport	32	Maydown Community Association
9 CAUSE	33	Men's Advisory Project
10 C.O.S.Y Club	34	North West Methodist Mission
11 Dennett Interchange	35	North West Volunteer Centre
12 Derg Valley Care	36	Oakgrove Integrated College
13 Derry Healthy Cities	37	Off The Street Com Youth Initiative
14 Derry Youth & Community Workshop	38	Prehen Historical & Environmental Society
15 Echo Echo Dance Theatre Company	39	Rainbow Child & Family Centre
16 First Housing Aid & Support Services	40	Shelter NI
17 Focus on Family	41	Shine
18 Foyle Down Syndrome Trust	42	St Columb's Park House
19 Foyle Child Contact Centre	43	Strabane Community Unemployed Group
20 Foyle Hospice	44	Trocaire
21 Foyle Women's Aid	45	Waterside Women's Centre
22 Friends of NI Children's Hospice NW	46	Youth Action
23 Guildhall Press	47	Youthlife Ltd
24 Harpurs Hill Children & Family Centre Ltd		



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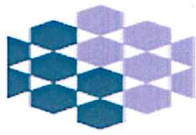


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During this period

NWCN received core & project funding from:



Department for
Communities

Community Investment Fund

North-West Community Network
Holywell – DiverseCity Community Partnership
10-14 Bishop Street
Derry~Londonderry BT48 6PW
Tel: (028) 7127 9090 Email: info@nwcn.org
Web: www.nwcn.org

Co-ordinator

Colin Devine
colin@nwcn.org

Administrator

Neola Nelis McCrossan
info@nwcn.org



Accountants:

*McGroarty McCafferty &
Company Limited
2 Carlisle Terrace
Derry BT48 6JX*

Banking:

*First Trust Bank
Strand Road
Derry*

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NIC: 100015