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Clerk
Committee for OFMDFM
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09 October 2015

Dear Kathy

Committee Inquiry into Together: Building a United Community

Thank you for your correspondence date 3rd July 2015 enclosing a typescript copy of the Committee's report on its Inquiry into Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC).

Please find attached a response to the key conclusions and recommendations contained within the report.

T:BUC is a cross-departmental Executive strategy and the Report contains over 30 key conclusions and recommendations relevant, not just to OFMDFM, but other Executive Departments and Statutory Committees. On foot of your agreement, the report has therefore been shared with colleagues in other departments that have responsibility for delivering T:BUC and their responses to the conclusions and recommendations are included.

Yours sincerely
Colette Kerr

Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer

Responses to the key conclusions and recommendations relevant to OFMDFM contained within the Committee's report into Together: Building a United Community

General Comment

OFMDFM welcomes the input and recommendations from the Committee to support and enhance the Executive's Good Relations Policy - Together: Building a United Community. Permission was granted by the OFMDFM Committee Clerk on 18th August 2015 to share the report, with all the other Departments therefore this response incorporates comments from other Departments. We will discuss the recommendations at the T:BUC Programme Board with a view to developing an action plan for implementation, we will share this action plan with the committee once it is agreed.

Recommendations/conclusions	Response
<p>1. The Committee notes the publication of Together: Building a United Community as a devolved strategy aimed at improving community relations and building a united and shared society. The Committee</p>	<p>The Department welcomes the Committee's comment.</p>

<p>commends those individuals and organisations working towards building a united community, and the Government Departments and statutory agencies that support them in this work.</p>	
<p>2. The Committee acknowledges that many different activities across all Departments do make a contribution to building a shared and united society, whether or not they are specifically badged as good relations activity. What is important, however, is that there is a joined-up approach across the Executive to ensure the best outcomes possible.</p>	<p>The Together: Building a United Community Strategy is the Executive’s Framework for improving community relations within our society with the ultimate aim of building a united, reconciled and shared society. As such there is a commitment right across Government for all Departments to work together in order to successfully implement the strategy. In addition the development and application of the Outcomes Based Accountability methodology and Good Relations indicators will ensure that there are a common set of outcomes against which investment in Good Relations can be measured. This will allow Departments to determine if the meaningful change desired by our society is happening.</p> <p>DCAL in their response have stated that they have received positive feedback in respect of their engagement with key stakeholder on T:BUC. DCAL highlighted that the importance of joined up working and involving local communities in programme development are critical elements of programme development and delivery.</p>

	<p>DHSSPS highlight the Early Intervention Transformation Programme (EITP) a DSC signature programme as a positive example of joined up working.</p>
<p>3. The Committee recognises the important role of the Ministerial Panel, not least because working towards building a united community is not confined to the remit of just one Department, and it is vital that these issues are regularly considered at this level. The Committee stresses the need for regular meetings of the Ministerial Panel with transparent outcomes; and recommends that OFMDFM lay an annual report on T:BUC in the NI Assembly, with contributions from other</p>	<p>There is a commitment for the Ministerial Panel to meet three times each year, whilst this has not always been possible every effort is being made to facilitate this. It should be noted that Ministers are kept fully informed of progress in relation to the implementation of the strategy. Additionally the Good Relations Programme Board, which is made up of senior officials from all Departments including the Senior Responsible Owners (SROs) for the headline actions, meets regularly to review and monitor progress of the Strategy's implementation. There are also a number of thematic subgroups established under the auspices of the Ministerial Panel; the Community Tensions subgroup, Housing subgroup, and children & young people subgroup. These sub groups report back to both the Good Relations Programme Board and the Ministerial Panel on a regular basis. In terms of the laying of an annual report before the Assembly this will be considered further by the Department.</p>

<p>Departments, as the basis for an annual Take Note debate. This would allow an opportunity for progress to be identified and recognised, and for good news stories to be heard.</p>	
<p>4. The Committee recommends that all NI Assembly Statutory Committees make it core business to include good relations as part of their regular scrutiny of departmental activity, including the monitoring of T:BUC headline actions where Departments have responsibility for delivery.</p>	<p>OFMDFM regularly updates its NI Assembly Statutory Committee on its work in respect of good relations and the implementation of T:BUC and the actions and commitments within it. However the implementation of the T:BUC strategy involves all Departments and as such this recommendation is noted.</p> <p>DEL have reported that the Employment and Learning Committee is regularly updated by DEL officials on progress in relation to their headline action.</p>
<p>CONSULTATION AND CO-DESIGN</p>	

5. The Committee considers that, ideally, stakeholders should have the ability to shape policy at a formative stage before key decisions are made and policy documents are written. However, the Committee supports the process of co-design in principle as a positive way to engage with stakeholders in the design and implementation of programmes. Given the long term nature of many of the headline actions, the Committee considers it important that this engagement is meaningful and continues through the lifetime of the strategy. The Committee therefore recommends that OFMDFM consider the creation

OFMDFM ensures that stakeholders are fully involved at a formative stage to influence policy. In addition engagement with stakeholders will be an ongoing process throughout the lifetime of this strategy. The department uses a range of forums through which to engage constructively and fully with the sector. That said the department is continually looking at ways of improving communication with stakeholders. In collaboration with the Community Relations Council (CRC), the department is in the process of establishing a quarterly engagement forum for stakeholders to receive updates on T:BUC and where they will provide feedback to the Department on T:BUC including progress, issues, identification of best practice and areas for improvement.

Other fora being examined is a proposed Racial Equality subgroup which will be set up to help implement the Racial Equality Strategy.

A positive example of a co-design approach is the DEL United Youth Programme.

of a “T:BUC Forum” as an opportunity for the sector to engage constructively with the Department. The Committee suggests the “NEETS Forum” established by the Department for Employment and Learning as a useful model in this regard. Should such a forum be established, it is recommended that it is chaired by a representative from the sector.

BUILDING A UNITED COMMUNITY: THEORY AND PRACTICE

6. The Committee acknowledges, and commends, the positive working relationship between the Department and academic experts who have a particular

OFMDFM is currently funding a number of research projects funded through the research call that was advertised in 2011. Some of these are relevant to good relations. OFMDFM routinely publishes funded research on its website and has held lunchtime seminars in the past to disseminate findings, mainly for staff working in OFMDFM. OFMDFM Ministers are briefed about the findings but this briefing is not routinely

interest in researching issues related to sectarianism, division and the pursuit of good relations; and notes that good, helpful research is regularly produced. However the Committee is surprised that this work does not seem to be widely disseminated or receive local recognition. The Committee recommends that OFMDFM proactively seeks ways to share this expertise across Departments; and explores opportunities to promote and publish this academic work as extensively as possible.

disseminated to all MLAs.

Other possible avenues for disseminating funded research are:

- through the Assembly's Knowledge Exchange Seminar Series (KESS). These seminars are held throughout the year and provide an opportunity for academics to present findings from research on a wide range of topics. These seminars are open to anyone to attend and have attracted a broad spectrum of attendees including MLA's, private sector employees, academics, voluntary and community groups, and members of the public.
- Through DSD's policy seminars – these are open to policy makers from all departments and would provide an opportunity to share research findings.
- CRC is in the process of reviewing the publication of its research journal **Shared Space** as a means of disseminating relevant research on community relations themes. The journal was last published in November 2014 (issue 18). CRC are seeking ideas on the future dissemination role of this publication which is currently posted to a mailing list of over 300 interested academics, policy makers and community relations practitioners as well as being available for download from the CRC website. They are considering a number of options to disseminate new and recent research findings on community relations related work. One of the ideas is to produce a digest with summaries of new findings. This could be a useful means of promoting academic work as extensively as possible.

Academic institutions already publicise research and events relating to good relations.

	<p>For example, the Institute for the Study of Conflict Transformation and Social Justice in Queen’s University Belfast. The Institute aims to advance the comparative study of conflict transformation and social justice by providing a space for dialogue between researchers, practitioners, policy makers and political activists from local, regional, national and global spheres of influence and holds events and seminars to provide an opportunity for local and international academics to disseminate their findings. Details of recent events can be found in this flyer: http://www.qub.ac.uk/research-centres/iscts/j/filestore/Filetoupload,464660,en.pdf</p>
<p>7. The Committee recognises that programmes and initiatives that work in a particular geographical area may not automatically be appropriate for another location. However the Committee strongly urges those designing policy and initiatives to further a united and shared society to look to best practice available locally</p>	<p>Noted. The department identifies and applies best practice as well as utilising learning and expertise in the development of policy.</p> <p>For example OFMDFM has launched a new Shared Learning initiative for District Councils. This will bring Good Relations officers from each Council area together on a quarterly basis to share best practice and to discuss approaches to local good relations delivery. The first seminar took place on 22 September 2015.</p> <p>As part of the 2015 pilot summer camp programme OFMDFM will facilitate four shared learning forums to allow camp deliverers to share their experiences, network and build relationships with other stakeholders to improve future summer camp delivery. The first summer camp shared learning event took place on 1 October 2015.</p>

and build on the learning and expertise that already exists during the early stages of policy development.

In addition, the department is fully cognisant of the need to ensure that appropriate forums are established to enable the identification and development of best practice and the most effective delivery mechanisms. Community stakeholders and organisations are an important source of information. In this context and as mentioned above, the department, in collaboration with CRC, is currently in the process of establishing a quarterly engagement forum for stakeholders to receive updates on T:BUC and provide feedback to the department on delivering T:BUC objectives, including identification of best practice, and areas for improvement.

There are also representatives of local community organisations on the Community Tensions subgroup; this allows local stakeholders to be involved in policy development and delivery. NICVA are also represented on the Ministerial panel.

A positive example where T:BUC has successfully implemented this approach is through the DEL United Youth pilot programme which has a good geographical spread (urban & rural coverage) and has tested different models in different areas. The results of which will be used to shape the full United Youth programme before rolling out across Northern Ireland.

DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY

<p>8. The Committee notes the support from the written evidence received and through the stakeholder event for the introduction of definitions for ‘sectarianism’ and ‘good relations.’The Committee recognises that agreed definitions are useful for the purposes of the monitoring and evaluation of T:BUC programmes, and that the proper place for defining these terms is in the context of legislation. The Committee therefore supports the intention of Ministers, stated within Together: Building a United Community, to “seek to find an appropriate consensus around</p>	<p>Whilst there is a definition of sectarianism in the strategy a commitment is given to find an appropriate consensus around a definition to be included in the legislation for the Equality and Good Relations Commission.</p> <p>Good relations are currently defined in terms of the groups named in Section 75(2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.</p> <p>The department acknowledges that definitions can assist with clarifying objectives and performance measurement. However, the revised good relations indicators aligned to T:BUC objectives and priorities are being used to monitor progress at a population level and provide the strategic performance measurement framework underpinning the measurement of impacts for the strategy’s headline actions, associated programmes and funding streams, including the District Council Good Relations Action Plans</p> <p>The revised indicators have now been agreed by Ministers, following extensive consultation with a wide range of stakeholders.</p>
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<p>a definition of sectarianism, based on this Strategy.”</p>	
<p>RESOURCING T:BUC</p>	
<p>9. The Committee recognises the constrained financial situation within which all Departments are seeking to deliver on programmes and priorities and encourages the Executive not to lose sight of priorities to support building a united and shared community amongst other budgetary pressures. In addition the Committee supports the development of a budget profile for each headline action across the lifetime of the strategy, with associated</p>	<p>It is acknowledged that the public sector financial environment is a challenging one and faces considerable demands to meet the needs of our society. However the Executive has demonstrated its commitment to building a shared, reconciled and united community through ring fencing funds for T:BUC in 2015/16.</p> <p>Firstly as part of the negotiations between the Executive and the British Government £100 million of additional borrowing was secured to help support specific shared housing and education projects. In addition, and as part of these negotiations, €50 million was secured from the UK Territorial Co-Operation budget to the PEACE IV programme. The Executive is proposing to use this €50 million to deliver the United Youth Programme, one of the T:BUC headline actions.</p> <p>In addition, within the Stormont House Agreement the British Government has given a commitment to contribute up to £500 million, over 10 years, of new capital funding to support shared and integrated education.</p>

milestones to add transparency to the T:BUC expenditure .

Under the Delivering Social Change framework £25 million has been secured from Atlantic Philanthropies and the Executive to progress a shared education programme over 4 years.

Through negotiations, Ministers have secured a total of €270 million of funding from the European Commission in respect of the PEACE IV programme. It should be noted that the themes of the PEACE IV programme reflect strongly the strategic direction provided by Together: Building a United Community.

All of the above are key financial commitments essential to making change happen within our society. Combined these represent in excess of £800 million of funding earmarked to progress programmes and projects associated with building a shared, united and reconciled society.

OFMDFM is refining budget profiles and need for the next budget period in advance of the budget negotiations with the intention of securing a central fund for the implementation of T:BUC as well as related actions and commitments aligned with building a united, shared and reconciled society.

OFMDFM is working with all other departments to finalise costs for the headline actions, although it should be noted that business cases are still being developed and therefore

	<p>costs are not fully known right across the board at this stage which will impact on finalising milestones.</p> <p>DEL has secured £3 million from the NI Executive’s Change Fund to deliver the United Youth pilots in 2015/2016.</p>
<p>10. The Committee notes that T:BUC recognises that work is required to ensure the allocation of good relations funding in line with strategic objectives, and on any future funding delivery model. However the Committee is also aware that delays in terms of receipt of funding, alongside short term funding cycles, can create uncertainty. The Committee recommends that the Funders’ Advisory Group, which will be established to sit</p>	<p>OFMDFM has aligned all of its good relations funding streams, including the Community Relations Council and District Council programmes with the four key priorities and shared aims of T:BUC and the revised good relations indicators have greatly assisted with this work</p> <p>OFMDFM acknowledges the pressures expressed by the community and voluntary sector which result from short term funding cycles. This was a common concern expressed by stakeholders during the review of funding consultation events. Work on the establishment of the Funders Co-ordination Group is well advanced and proposals are currently under active consideration within the Department. It is envisaged that this group’s remit will include the identification of potential improvements to funding mechanisms to address the problems associated with short-term funding, taking in account the Executive’s budgetary framework and governance requirements.</p> <p>In the meantime work is ongoing within the Department to ensure that internal</p>

alongside the Ministerial Panel, is brought forward as soon as possible to progress work on the review of good relations funding and the development of a good relations funding model. In developing this model the Committee recommends that OFMDFM takes account of the burden faced by individuals and organisations through short - term funding cycles and considers ways to alleviate these pressures. The Committee also recommends that the Department works to promote transparency in allocation of funding at departmental level, and also through local councils and arm's-length bodies.

processes are completed as quickly as possible to allow all funding to be made available to stakeholders as soon as budgets become available.

In terms of funding allocation transparency and accountability, all OFMDFM funding applications are assessed in accordance with OFMDFM Equality and Strategy Directorate Grants Manual which includes the requirement to establish an Application Review Panel to assess the applications to each scheme. This panel is chaired by the Grade 5 or the policy head of branch and includes at least two other members (one of whom may be a non-departmental member with knowledge of the sector) with appropriate skills. The panel assesses applications in terms of the organisations ability to deliver scheme projects. In addition all grant schemes are subject to regular audit to ensure compliance with the procedures in the Grants Manual.

<p>11. The Committee recognises the wisdom, both in terms of public expenditure and strategic planning, of piloting initiatives under the headline actions of T:BUC. However the Committee considers that it is important, not least in terms of the potential for increased confidence in the T:BUC strategy, that programmes and initiatives are moved from the pilot phase to solid state as soon as is practically possible, with those projects that are successful up-scaled appropriately.</p>	<p>Noted. Pilot projects are used for the time required to determine the robustness and appropriateness of that approach in order to identify and correct any issues ahead of the full roll out of a programme. OFMDFM will discuss this recommendation further with other departments.</p> <p>DEL reported that the United Youth pilots will run from August 2015 to March 2016. The purpose of these pilots is to test approaches, allowing us to develop a service design framework for the full United Youth Programme.</p>
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DISTRICT COUNCIL GOOD RELATIONS PROGRAMME	
12. The Committee acknowledges the valuable contribution that local government has made, and continues to make, to building a united and shared community across Northern Ireland. Members also welcome the inclusion of the District Council Good Relations Programme within the Together: Building a United Community strategy, and recognise the flexibility the programme affords to local councils to work out what building good relations means	The department notes and welcomes the support shown by the committee for the District Council Good Relations Programme. As the strategy points out, the programme is an important link between the strategy's high level priorities and the delivery of good relations in local areas.

<p>in the context of their own areas.</p>	
<p>13. The Committee recommends that OFMDFM continues to support the District Council Good Relations Programme, and specifically through the ongoing implementation of the NISRA Evaluation Report recommendations; ensuring that letters of offer with regard to the DCGRP are issued at the start of a new financial year; and continuing to provide high quality support from OFMDFM officials.</p>	<p>Letters of offer were issued in April 2015 to the six councils whose action plans for 2015/16 met the required standard. Following work to revise their action plans, letters of offer issued to the remaining five Councils in July 2015.</p> <p>Departmental officials will continue to work closely with good relations officers in the eleven councils to develop a programme work that makes a significant contribution to local good relations.</p>
<p>14. The Committee also recognises the potential of the District Council Good Relations Programme to make small scale</p>	<p>In terms of ensuring that funded initiatives and programmes are maximised to deliver agreed outcomes, OFMDFM is using the revised good relations indicators as the strategic performance measurement framework underpinning the measurement of impacts for the strategy's headline actions, associated programmes and funding</p>

<p>interventions in local communities, which can have a major impact. The Committee recommends that OFMDFM reviews the District Council small grants scheme to ensure consistency of provision across local government, and to ensure that these funds are maximised to deliver positive good relations outcomes.</p>	<p>streams, including the District Council Good Relations Action Plans The relevant departments have applied the Outcomes Based Accountability methodology to identify specific good relations outcomes for their headline actions and to monitor progress towards achieving these outcomes. In addition, the relevant departments are responsible for conducting evaluations of each headline action.</p> <p>As noted in recommendations 12 and 15, each council has specific good relations issues and priorities and should be able to prioritise its own approach to delivering good relations and setting appropriate impact measures. This approach will also apply to small grants.</p> <p>We will however conduct a review across the 11 councils of how each council approaches the delivery of small grants and we will ensure the lessons learned from this exercise are shared with each council.</p>
<p>15. Whist recognising that one size does not fit all, the Committee recommends that</p>	<p>The department is continually looking at ways of improving the sharing of learning, experience and knowledge. Following the establishment of the new 11 Council model in April 2015, OFMDFM has launched a new Shared Learning initiative. This will bring Good Relations officers from each Council area together on a quarterly basis to share best practice and to discuss approaches to local good</p>

opportunities to share best practice between local government areas should be enhanced, through opportunities for increased face to face interactions between Good Relations Officers and harnessing new technologies, for example through an online resource bank. The Committee also recommends that the annual reports prepared by each District Council as part of their monitoring and evaluation obligations with OFMDFM are circulated widely amongst those involved in the DCGRP to further the development of that programme.

relations delivery. The first seminar took place on 22 September 2015.

The annual Good Relations Officers' Conference took place in Cookstown on 8 October 2015. Following feedback received from last year's event, this was a full day event. We are open to all suggestions of how to share best practice and we will give consideration to the committee's suggestion of an online resource bank.

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND THE INVOLVEMENT OF COMMUNITIES IN DECISION MAKING	
16. The Committee notes the perception that the role women have played in building peace has not always been acknowledged by policy makers, and the view that this is also true of the Together: Building a United Community strategy document. Discussion on building shared and safe communities should acknowledge and promote the participation of women in politics and wider peacebuilding.	Noted. OFMDFM recognises fully the contribution of women in both politics and wider peace building within our society.
17. With regard to wider policy	Some further clarification would be helpful to understand fully what the committee is

<p>development and decision making the Committee recognises that, for some groups, access to elected representatives, government departments and statutory agencies can be difficult. The Committee recommends therefore that OFMDFM brings forward policy development guidance for Departments that ensures policy and decision makers develop and maintain a clear focus on identifying hard to reach groups; and that they assess and meet their capacity needs recognising that this may, at times, require external facilitation.</p>	<p>seeking through the recommendation. At this stage it will be possible to consider this recommendation more fully.</p>
<p>18. The Committee acknowledges</p>	<p>Noted. The Department will consider this recommendation and its implications further</p>

that local communities have an important part to play in decision making relating to their own areas and notes that community planning has the potential to allow communities to influence decision making in their areas. The Committee recognises that responsibility for community planning rests with local councils and the Department of the Environment and recommends that the First Minister and deputy First Minister work with the Minister of the Environment to ensure that community planning as a departmental priority is focused on the aims and objectives of T:BUC, which could include the inclusion of a specific

in association with the Department of the Environment.

OFMDFM officials are collaborating with officials in the DOE to ensure that good relations and T:BUC strategic objectives are an integral part of the statutory guidance for the operation of community planning (as per Local Government Act (Northern Ireland 2014). It is hoped that that the guidance will issue in the near future.

In addition OFMDFM have asked CRC and ECNI to design and deliver good relations training to local representatives that will provide a legislative and strategic overview of District Councils' roles and responsibilities in terms of promoting good relations and tackling racism and how development and delivery of good relations and anti-racism objectives are assimilated within the community audit and planning processes. There will be a particular emphasis on the promotion of good race relations. It is intended that this training will be delivered in the autumn.

commitment in the next Programme for Government. The Committee also strongly encourages the Committee for the Environment to monitor the implementation and development of community planning as a vehicle for communities to be involved in decision making, with good relations at its core.

EXPLORING SHARED ISSUES: CONTESTED SPACES/INTERFACES PROGRAMME

19. The Committee recognises the merit in bringing groups

Noted. The evaluation of the Contested Spaces/Interfaces Programme will be considered in full within the Department. The learning from the evaluation will be

together around issues of common concern like parenting, supporting children through education, or a shared anxiety around drug and alcohol misuse; and commends the Contested Spaces/Interfaces Programme as an innovative approach to building good relations between communities. The Committee recommends that the Department gives full consideration to the evaluation of the Contested Spaces/Interfaces Programme and applies the learning to the development of future programme's and initiatives, including prioritising areas for funding.

shared with all other departments to ensure the learning is applied into future community relations programmes and projects

DEL have commented that the United Youth pilots will seek to bring young people from different communities together in shared spaces to engage in a range of different activities.

SINGLE IDENTITY APPROACH	
20. The Committee acknowledges that there are different views about the role of single identity work in building a united and shared community. The Committee recognises the importance of respecting the pace at which people are willing to travel in relation to building a united community, and that this will differ depending on local circumstances. The Committee therefore recommends that single identity groups are provided with the tools to build confidence and capacity; and, at the same time, are helped to	OFMDFM has now aligned all of its good relations funding streams, including Community Relations Council and District Council programmes with the four key priorities and shared aims of T:BUC. While the focus of our funded work is cross community in nature, where a particular need is identified we work with single identity groups to help them in their journey towards a cross community approach recognising the local needs and circumstances of the groups.

understand the value of moving beyond a single identity approach, and provided with opportunities for this to happen.

SHARED SPACE

21. The Committee acknowledges the creative and innovative ways in which some organisations and community groups are creating shared space. The Committee believes that shared space has meaning where it offers something purposeful and is not created artificially around a contrived concept. The Committee recognises the role which the

Noted. This recommendation will be discussed further with other departments.

Department of the Environment can play in shaping the built environment, most recently through the Living Spaces Design Guide, and welcomes the proposal that further clarification will be brought forward within the new Strategic Planning Policy Statement. The Committee therefore recommends that the development of meaningful shared space is incorporated as an essential component in delivering a united and shared community.

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING AND TRUST

22. The Committee notes that time is needed to build relationships, respect and trust between all those involved in building a united community, and that this process is often more untidy than neatly defined funding cycles. The Committee also expresses its concern regarding the high level of burnout affecting those working within the sector, including a heavy reliance on specific individuals, albeit individuals with enthusiasm and passion for the task in hand. The Committee therefore recommends that Departments, arm's-length bodies, and statutory agencies have an

The department notes the comments made by the committee however further clarification would be helpful to understand fully what the Committee is seeking through the recommendation. At this stage it will be possible to consider this recommendation more fully.

<p>appropriate support mechanism in place for the organisations that they are funding; and that they strongly encourage their funded organisations to consider suitable succession planning.</p>	
<p>23. The Committee recommends that the Department gives consideration to adopting the term ‘good relationships’ as a broader framework in which to consider delivering policies and programmes to promote a united and shared society.</p>	<p>This recommendation will be given further consideration.</p>
<p>URBAN INTERFACES</p>	
<p>24. The Committee recognises that</p>	<p>The department concurs with the committee’s comments about the complexities</p>

the issues that need to be addressed in order for interface barriers to be removed are complex, and like other areas of good relations work, there is no uniform approach. The Committee notes the concerns of those living directly in the shadow of interface areas who feel that the physical barriers provide a certain amount of security and safety; recognises that malevolent forces continue to have influence in some communities, which in turn contributes to the desire to maintain physical manifestations of division in urban areas; and acknowledges the challenge in communicating a vision for a united and shared

associated with the removal of interface barriers and that there is no uniform approach to removing these barriers. It is accepted that the progress in respect of this headline action will require the co-operation and support of the local community.

The Department of Justice have reported that they are working with the Ulster University to examine the challenges in removing peace walls, many of which have been identified in evidence to the Committee. This work will assist in developing the future programme which will also aim to address policy issues such as defining 'consent' and 'support of the community'. Such definitions are required to facilitate progress, particularly in areas where the risk of restructuring and/or removal appears minimal but community consent is not forthcoming due to the various complexities outlined in the relevant section of the Report.

society to communities at interfaces. The Committee commends the consultation and preparatory work that is ongoing with regard to the commitment within Together: Building a United Community to reduce the number of interface barriers, in conjunction with local communities. The Committee respects the views of those who do not yet feel secure enough to progress on the removal of interface barriers, and supports the view that no peace wall should be removed without the consent and support of the communities that are living immediately beside it.

<p>25. The Committee recommends that work continues to liaise with those living at interfaces to understand why they do not feel safe; and to encourage them to develop a vision for building a united and shared community. The Committee also encourages the Committee for Justice to undertake scrutiny of the work of the Department of Justice in this regard to ensure that the Assembly is fully appraised, and can input into this work as appropriate.</p>	<p>Engaging with those living at interfaces is an essential and integral element of the process to achieve the removal of all interface barriers. Understanding their concerns and fears to enable their removal is essential to the success of this work. OFMDFM will liaise with Department for Justice colleagues on this recommendation.</p> <p>DOJ have reported that local surveys will continue to be carried out to determine the views of residents. The Department of Justice commissioned a further 'Attitudes to Peace Walls' survey in 2015 as a follow-up to the OFMDFM commissioned survey in 2012. The results of the recent survey are currently being analysed and are not yet available. The results will provide further information on the views of those living at interfaces and will assist in developing the future programme. The programme will consider how the communities, politicians, voluntary and community groups and statutory agencies can help with the development of a vision. The Department of Justice currently provides the Justice Committee with annual updates, in addition to relevant information as required, on the delivery of commitments in removing interfaces. Politicians are also briefed on progress and the new programme will consider how further political engagement can be included.</p>
<p>26. The Committee further notes concerns from stakeholders that too much emphasis is</p>	<p>The department concurs with the committee's views on the need for a holistic collaborative approach to creating the conditions on the ground to enable the removal of interface barriers and is dependent on many of the other actions and commitments</p>

being placed on the removal of physical interface barriers, with little thought being given to the social and economic needs of those living closest to the peace walls. In taking this area of work forward the Committee recommends a holistic approach to the reduction of interface barriers, which might include localised regeneration initiatives, support for education and access to employment for everyone, and in particular young people.

outlined with the T:BUC strategy. Additionally other strategies such as Delivering Social Change are also key enablers to changing the socio and economic needs of people right across our society and feed into this process of change.

The department will discuss this recommendation further with colleagues in other departments.

The presence of peace walls is a symptom of factors noted in evidence submitted to the Committee and the target date for removal is interconnected with wider political, economic and social issues. It is recognised that a cross departmental approach is required in order to address the issues identified which in turn will provide the environment and confidence in which to remove the structures. As recognised in the Report, this approach should be tailored to local areas. An Interface Action Group is currently chaired by the Department of Justice to ensure a holistic approach, where possible, and the work and membership of this group is being considered as part of developing a future programme. Ongoing work by the Ulster University will also create an analysis of the socio-economic and socio-geographical characteristics of the small areas around the peace walls which will help to establish a baseline for further research and evaluation. It is expected that this work will be complete in late 2016. In the meantime, work on removing interfaces is being aligned with work on community planning and considered as part of the urban village programme where relevant.

CONTESTED SPACE IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

27. Members commend the work of those organisations, large and small, dedicated to working within rural communities to build a united and shared society. The Committee notes the view that there is a lack of recognition amongst policy and decision makers that sectarianism exists in rural communities; and the view that initiatives designed to deal with issues of contested space in rural areas receive disproportionately less funding that communities at interfaces in urban areas. The Committee also acknowledges that there is a subtlety in addressing

The Department acknowledges the valuable work of organisations involved in working within rural communities to build a united and shared society.

T:BUC initiatives should address the community tension issues that exist right across our society and be proportionate to the actual need. The department will consult with rural community organisations, other departments and district councils to explore how the perception that contested spaces initiatives are disproportionately focused on urban areas could be addressed.

DEL have commented that the United Youth pilots will target both rural and urban areas to learn how good relations can be effectively promoted and sectarianism tackled in different geographical areas.

<p>sectarianism in rural areas which may not have the same manifestations as seen in urban areas; and the perception that, historically, there has been a lack of creative thought and commitment previously as to how programmes designed to build a united community can be better catered for in a rural context.</p>	
<p>28. The Committee recommends that the seven headline actions of T:BUC are rural-proofed by OFMDFM as soon as possible, and that any remedial action identified is carried out quickly. Further the Committee recommends that Executive Departments, statutory</p>	<p>A reminder has been issued to all SRO's reminding them of their responsibilities to ensure that the headline actions are rural proofed.</p>

agencies and arm's-length bodies tasked with the development of programmes aimed at building a united community proactively mitigate against a perceived urban bias.

MIXED COMMUNITIES

29. The Committee recommends that a greater emphasis is placed on the lessons learned by those who have something to contribute to the wider discussions about developing shared neighbourhoods; and in particular that representatives from these mixed communities should participate in the relevant thematic groups to be

The department acknowledges the important role that representatives from mixed communities have in progressing and implementing shared neighbourhood objectives.

As mentioned above, the department, in collaboration with CRC, is currently in the process of establishing a quarterly engagement forum for stakeholders to receive updates on T:BUC and provide feedback to the department on delivering T:BUC objectives, including identification of best practice, and areas for improvement. It is hoped that representatives from mixed communities will make a valuable and important contribution to this forum.

This recommendation will be considered further in association with other government

established under the auspices of the Ministerial Panel. Further the Committee recommends that, in establishing a T:BUC forum consideration is given to specifically inviting representatives from mixed communities to participate.

departments.

DSD Housing Group has lead responsibility for delivering two of the T:BUC strategy commitments under the priority; *Our Shared Community*, namely:

- An overarching review of housing to bring forward recommendations on how to enhance shared neighbourhoods; and
- To create 10 new shared neighbourhoods.

To aid the delivery of these commitments, the Department established a Ministerial Panel Housing Thematic Sub-group, which draws its membership from Government Departments, Statutory Bodies and the Voluntary and Community sector. Members of the Sub-group have expertise in the fields of housing, segregation and peace-building and their role is:

- To offer advice and guidance to the DSD Housing TBUC Programme /Project Board; sharing their experience of building positive good relations outcomes and shared housing; and
- To act as a critical friend to the DSD Housing TBUC Project Team; examining proposed actions and providing a challenge function to ensure that robust,

	<p>workable policy and processes are implemented.</p> <p>To further inform the overarching review, DSD Housing Group’s TBUC Team sought and was recently granted access to the library at Queen’s University Belfast. The Team is currently reviewing research studies by an expert in the field of segregation in Northern Ireland; Dr. Brendan Murtagh. The review will consider what progress has been made and it will draw on lessons learned.</p> <p>The draft review will then be forwarded, for quality review, to the Ministerial Panel Housing Thematic Sub-group who will consider and draft recommendations arising from it.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">APPROACHES TO ADDRESSING SECTARIANISM AND DIVISION</p>	
<p>30. The Committee acknowledges the breadth and depth of approaches to addressing sectarianism and division and the rich contribution that this</p>	<p>Agreed, the department will continue to deploy flexibility when developing policy and devising programmes addressing sectarianism and division.</p> <p>DEL reported that the United Youth pilots are tackling sectarianism and division in a diverse range of ways, including through sport and music, allowing a range of</p>

<p>work makes to building a united community. The Committee recognises that there is no uniform approach to addressing sectarianism and division; and recommends that the Department continues to deploy flexibility when developing policy and devising programmes relating to these matters.</p>	<p>approaches to be tested. The learning captured during the pilots will inform the design of the full United Youth Programme.</p>
<p>31. In considering approaches to addressing sectarianism and division the Committee notes the need for careful monitoring of the balance between the Ministerial Panel co-ordinating the processes around pursuing a united and shared community, and the community</p>	<p>The Ministerial Panel oversees the implementation of the T:BUC strategy. The work to turn that strategy into plans and actions to make the transformations across our society are taken forward by departments in association with their delivery partners including the voluntary and community sector.</p> <p>OFMDFM has developed strong working relationships with the community and voluntary sector. The department seeks to enhance these relationships at all times with the purpose of advancing the aims and objectives of the T:BUC Strategy.</p>

<p>and voluntary sector which is often charged with the delivery of the outcomes of this agenda. The Committee strongly urges the Department to develop, and continue to build on, good relationships with the community and voluntary sector in this regard.</p>	<p>Through the DEL United Youth programme strong relationships are developing with organisations in the community and voluntary sector through a intensive co-design approach during the development and delivery of the United Youth pilots. A total of 12 lead organisations and 17 partner organisations are delivering the pilots, and we are also looking at ways to continue the conversation with organisations we previously engaged with (over 150 concept proposals were initially received), as well as other interested organisations, in preparation for the opportunities that will open up with the roll out of the full United Youth Programme.</p>
<p>MENTAL HEALTH/INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA</p>	
<p>32. The Committee acknowledges that many individuals across society in Northern Ireland cope with conflict-related mental health and trauma related issues; and that efforts to build a united and shared society required a holistic approach.</p>	<p>“The Stormont House Agreement recommended the implementation of a comprehensive Mental Trauma Service ‘based within the NHS but working closely with the Victims and Survivors Service (VSS) and other organisations and groups who are working directly with victims and survivors’.</p> <p>In light of this, discussions are currently ongoing between OFMDFM, DHSSPS and the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) to identify and agree a suitable long term solution to meet the needs of those who have suffered trauma as a result of the conflict/troubles and how these services might be best delivered from the statutory sector. Discussions have been ongoing to</p>

<p>The Committee recommends that the Executive undertakes closer cross-departmental consideration of issues relating to mental health and intergenerational trauma in a way that links to the trauma initiative of the Stormont House Agreement.</p>	<p>develop a model of care which will bridge the gap in service provision and complement the range of other services currently funded through the VSS such as complementary therapies and befriending services.</p> <p>Discussions and proposals so far have looked at the prospect of establishing a Regional Mental Trauma Service, based on a stepped care model, to bring trauma care services together which would not only enable the coherent delivery of services throughout Northern Ireland but would also provide a robust and accountable mechanism for setting and maintaining standards of practice across all service provider organisations. The overall aim is to comprehensively address the legacy of the conflict/troubles through the provision of evidence based therapies.</p> <p>There has also been a focus on development of a multi-layered delivery mechanism to respond to the complex needs of victims and survivors and transfer the client seamlessly through to competent expertise within public health services. “</p>
<p>GOOD RELATIONS INDICATORS</p>	
<p>33. The Committee recommends that OFMDFM conducts an interim evaluation of Together: Building a United Community to</p>	<p>Noted. This recommendation will be given further consideration. However it should be noted that work being delivered under T:BUC umbrella is being evaluated to ensure that it is achieving stated aim and objectives. This also applies to pilot programmes associated with the headline actions.</p>

<p>assess the progress of the seven headline actions to identify good news stories, and to ensure that any alterations required are identified early with time to make any adjustments that may be necessary.</p>	
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<p>Comments in respect of main report</p>	
<p>Table page 25</p>	<p>Project is spelt incorrectly.</p>
<p>Para 28</p>	<p>The strategy recognises that building a united, shared and reconciled community is much more than the two main communities. Indeed the links between T:BUC strategy and the Racial Equality Strategy are clearly articulated.</p>
<p>Para 29</p>	<p>The headline actions are not, and were never intended to be, an end in themselves. In addition to the headline</p>

	<p>actions a number of other initiatives and funding schemes including the District Councils' Good Relations Programme play a significant role in progressing the strategy's aims and objectives.</p>
Para 36	<p>"June 2015" should read "February 2015".</p> <p>Second last sentence – Options for CRC's representation on the Ministerial Panel are currently under consideration within the department. Although CRC is not currently represented on the Ministerial Panel the CRC are currently represented on the Community Tensions and Housing thematic subgroups..</p>
Para 44	<p>Last sentence – The Department undertook a process of co-design in order to develop the Summer Camps Pilot Programme 2015. This approach involved engaging with a wide range of stakeholders and specifically engaging with young people to seek their views on the development of the Programme. Co-design teams were then established and tasked with coming up with final proposals for consideration by Ministers.</p> <p>An email invitation issued to a wide range of stakeholders. The email also asked organisations to circulate details of the workshop to any others they were aware of that may have an interest in the summer camps pilot. The email was also issued to DCAL and DE to be circulated to their stakeholders.</p> <p>Four Co-Design workshops subsequently took place during December 2014 and January 2015 in Belfast, Derry/Londonderry, Armagh and Antrim. A final workshop, organised by the Rural Community Network, was also held in Cookstown. Running in parallel to the workshops were 4 youth engagement sessions, held by Belfast City Council Youth Forum, Derry City Council Youth Forum, NI Youth Forum and Bryson's NEET Youth Forum. The feedback from all workshops and engagement sessions provided us with very helpful information which has informed the design of the Summer Camps Pilot Programme.</p>

	<p>The co-design process has been invaluable, and OFMDFM remain committed to engaging with all those who have an interest in the Summer Camps programme. Obviously, if an organisation has not been involved this process but yet could make a positive contribution, officials would be grateful for receipt of their contact details so that they could be included in the list of stakeholders for the future.</p>								
Para 59	<p>Through ongoing engagement with communities this clarification is provided. Indeed the ability to show/demonstrate successful examples of sharing also helps to communicate effectively what “sharing” looks like and confirms that it does not involve forcing people together against their will.</p>								
Paras 61-68	<p>MEDF funding does not appear to be included in any of the funding tables contained within the Resourcing T:BUC section of the report.</p>								
Para 66	<p>Removal of Interface Barriers the figure should be “£0.7m”.</p> <p>The capital funding allocated through June 2015 monitoring round was:</p> <table> <tr> <td>Urban Villages</td> <td>£2.1m</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Shared Education Campuses</td> <td>£1.0m</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Removal of Interface Barriers</td> <td>£0.1m</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£3.2m</td> </tr> </table>	Urban Villages	£2.1m	Shared Education Campuses	£1.0m	Removal of Interface Barriers	£0.1m	Total	£3.2m
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	<p>All OFMDFM funding applications are assessed in accordance with OFMDFM Equality and Strategy Directorate Grants Manual which includes the requirement to establish an Application Review Panel to assess</p>								

	<p>the applications to each scheme. This panel is Chaired by the Grade 5 or the Policy Head of Branch and includes at least two other members (one of whom may be a non-departmental member with knowledge of the sector) with appropriate skills. The panel assesses applications in terms of the organisations ability to deliver scheme projects. In addition all grant schemes are subject to regular audit to ensure compliance with the procedures in the Grants Manual..</p>
<p>Para 87</p>	<p>All OFMDFM funding, streams including the DCGRP, have been aligned with the four key priorities of Together: Building a United Community. Each year Councils submit a draft good relations action plan to OFMDFM for approval and funding for projects and activities that will deliver against the four key T:BUC priorities and also make a significant response to the local good relations issues identified through the local government audits. Guidance has been provided to councils to help them in the completion of their action plans and a Development Officer based in the Community Relations Councils has been tasked with supporting Good Relations Officers to ensure that they are robust and targeted at priority issues. Each action plan is assessed by a Panel, which includes a non departmental member, to identify how well it meets the commitments of the strategy and the local good relations issues. Funding is allocated based on strength of the application and the level of funding available. Progress is monitored throughout the year through quarterly reports. At a population level the effectiveness of the DCGRP will be reflected in the revised good relations indicators.</p>
	<p>All OFMDFM funding applications, including the DCGRP applications, are assessed in accordance with OFMDFM Equality and Strategy Directorate Grants Manual which includes the requirement to establish an Application Review Panel to assess the applications to each scheme. This panel is Chaired by the Grade 5 or the Policy Head of Branch and includes at least two other members (one of whom may be a non-departmental</p>

	<p>member with knowledge of the sector) with appropriate skills. The panel assesses applications in terms of the organisations ability to deliver scheme projects. In addition all grant schemes are subject to regular audit to ensure compliance with the procedures in the Grants Manual.</p>
Para 94	<p>OFMDFM notes the pressures expressed by Local Government which result from delays in issue of letters of offer. The department is making every effort to ensure that internal processes are completed as quickly as possible to allow all funding to be made available to stakeholders as soon as budgets become available.</p>
Para 174	<p>This research is part funded by OFMDFM and it is not yet finished.</p>
Para 182	<p>The revised good relations indicators will measure progress towards achieving the expected outcomes of T:BUC an link directly to the four key priorities in the strategy.. The revised indicators and associated outcome measures were consulted on widely and at least two thirds of respondents agreed with the indicators. In many cases more than 90% of respondents agreed that specific indicators were suitable.</p> <p>The revised good relations indicators and associated outcomes provide the strategic performance measurement framework underpinning the measurement of impacts for the strategy's headline actions, associated programmes and funding streams, including the District Council Good Relations Action Plans.</p> <p>OFMDFM will be working with the District Councils Good Relations Officers through CRC to develop an outcomes based approach to monitoring and evaluation. This will link the good relations work of the councils to the T:BUC strategic performance measurement framework and will enable each council to develop local indicators to develop and measure the outcomes relevant to the work in their area that contribute to</p>

progressing and delivering T:BUC priorities.