

FAO ARD committee

Re Tackling Rural Poverty & Social Inclusion Review

I write on behalf of the delivery organisations of the Rural Community Development Support Service (RCDSS), a tendered contract from DARD 2012 – 2015, three of whom met members of the ARD committee on Tuesday 13th January. We appreciated the opportunity to give you a flavour of our work and wish to highlight our main points as advised.

Our strength lies in this local infrastructure of nine organisations which covers all of rural Northern Ireland and I highlight the following points:

- Well-established organisations dating back from early 1990's
- Standardised approach – ISO / Quality
- Grass Roots and Bottom-up with Rural Experts on the ground
- Truly Independent and local membership based organisations managed by local people
- Infrastructure – Ready-made (if DARD had to start from scratch this would be a major issue for rural communities and the Department)
- Key Knowledge / Experience
- Partnerships / Relationships
- Trusted deeply by community
- The recent consultation responses
- Aligned to new Council boundaries and DARD programmes
- We are not a regional body but operate as one infrastructure covering the region

Our main message to the ARD committee: We ask that DARD retain control of this infrastructure for the next four years.

Mary T Conway

On behalf of RCDSS

22nd January 2015

Delivery organisations of the Rural Community Development Support Service (RCDSS)

