



Draft Programme for Government (PfG) 2016-21 Outline Paper for Executive Office Committee On 23 November 2016

1. Welcome and Introduction to New Forum Members

- The Commission welcomes the opportunity to give evidence to the Committee on the draft PfG and to introduce two new members of the Victims and Survivors Forum, Sarah Malone and Paul Crawford.

2. Consultation Process to date and Key Comments

- The Commission coordinated a sectoral response to the first consultation process which closed on 22nd July. The response was informed by: Forum, Individuals (incl. Panel) and Victims Groups. The Commission's formal response welcomed the outcome-based approach; agreed with broad aspirations; supportive of partnership approach; welcomed commitment to "work to resolve the outstanding issues relating to the legacy of the past"; and concluded that one specific reference to victims and survivors was insufficient.
- Commission coordinating second consultation process which closes on 23rd December 2016. The response will be informed by the Forum (met on 11th November), Individuals (incl. Panel) and Victims Groups. (*Forum members to articulate the views from the meeting*).

3. Views on Outcome-Based Approach

- The Commission sees the new outcome-focused approach as a positive development. The Commission also welcomes the Executive's commitment to collaborative working both within and beyond Government.
- The Commission welcomes the 14 Outcomes set out in the draft PfG and many of the indicators attached to them. Accepting that there will not be a specific outcome for legacy issues, the Commission sees a huge opportunity for the sector to articulate the broad impact it can make on the draft PfG.
- Whilst a challenge lies ahead in developing indicators and measures, work led by the VSS has already commenced on this in recent years.
- The Commission welcomes much less focus on process and bureaucracy and the more collaborative approach being taken across government. This aligns with our recent policy advice paper for future service delivery.

4. Setting Strategic Outcomes for Victims and Survivors

- The Commission, VSS and TEO are currently working collaboratively to draft strategic outcomes for all services and funding provided under the current strategy for victims and survivors.

- These outcomes have been framed around the 7 areas of need identified in the Comprehensive Needs Assessment. These thematic areas have been consolidated down to 4 strategic outcomes (draft only at this stage):
 - We improve the health and wellbeing of Victims and Survivors and their families;
 - We improve access to opportunities for learning and development for Victims and Survivors;
 - We care for Victims and Survivors and help those most in need; and
 - We support Victims and Survivors and their families to engage in legacy issues.
- Against these 4 strategic outcomes, no more than 20 indicators have been identified and aligned with a selection of proposed measures to ensure that standardised methodologies are adopted to monitor the extent of achievement for each of the outcomes. (*VSS to provide further operational detail*).

5. Alignment to Programme for Government Outcomes

- The 4 strategic outcomes have also been aligned to the draft Programme for Government outcomes (including indicators and measures):
 - Outcome 4 - We enjoy long, healthy, active lives;
 - **Outcome 7 - We have a safe community where to respect the law and each other;**
 - Outcome 8 - We care for others and we help those in need; and
 - Outcome 14 - We give our children and young people the best start in life.

Under Outcome 7 there is currently limited detail on the Respect Index and Increased Reconciliation. These broader societal issues are of interest to the Commission as part its strategic focus on Building for the Future, however we would see the implementation of the Stormont House Agreement measures being fundamental to delivering meaningful improvement on these indicators.

6. Conclusions and Next Steps

- The Commission's ideal scenario was an explicit outcome and indicators to address legacy issues. However within the current draft PfG document we welcome outcome based accountability and the opportunity it presents to demonstrate the considerable contribution victims and survivors can make. This approach will build on already strong partnerships established between TEO, CVS, VSS and other Departments including DoH, DoJ and DfC.
- The strategic outcomes approach and robust monitoring and evaluation will evidence this contribution against the significant levels of funding from both TEO and Peace IV over 2017-20.
- Finally, the Commission will articulate the final views of the sector by 23rd December and work towards establishing more formal contacts across Departmental Senior Responsible Owners.