



Department for
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Mr Mike Nesbitt MLA
Chair
Committee for the Office
Of the First Minister and
Deputy First Minister
Room 285
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
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Our Ref: COR/394/14

| October 2014

Dear Mr Nesbitt,

Thank you for your letter of 7 July seeking evidence for the Committee's inquiry into the Good Relations Strategy "*Together: Building a United Community.*"

As you know this Department is leading on behalf of the Northern Ireland Executive regarding the development and delivery of the United Youth Programme which is one of the flagship interventions within the Strategy. Our experience of the co-design process which we inherited from OFMDFM but developed further may be of interest to the Inquiry, particularly with regard to examining the role of communities in policy and decision making in relation to community integration.

There is no standard co-design approach but in essence it means involving end users and programme deliverers in every stage of the policy/programme design process. Not only does this help to identify what works but it secures buy-in from key stakeholders from the outset.

There has been huge interest in the United Youth Programme and much enthusiasm for the development approach we have adopted which offers freedom for potential providers, including voluntary and community groups to present their ideas on what works and why it works. This is essentially an open approach in which all interested parties are engaged in all parts of the process from beginning to end. In other TBUC areas which are highly sensitive, e.g. removal of interface barriers and the development of shared spaces and services, an open approach probably offers the best chance of securing community buy-in to any proposals for change.



I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Fiona Stanley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

FIONA STANLEY
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer