

PROGRAMME FOR COHESION,
SHARING AND INTEGRATION

Consultation Document

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FOREWORD

We have entered a new and hopeful period in our history. Our vision for this new era is that, working together, we will build a shared and better future for us all. We want to build a society where everyone shares in and enjoys the benefits of a more peaceful society.

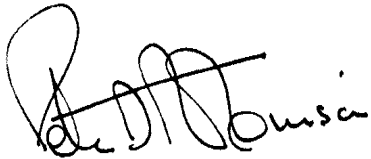
The last decade has delivered many positive changes and we are continuing to work hard at working together to build a better and brighter future for all. But some of our people still live in communities where we accept division and segregation as normal.

We are stepping up to the challenge of leadership on these difficult issues. We want the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration to bring about real changes for people and places across our society. **We aim to build a strong community where everyone, regardless of race, colour, religious or political opinion, age, gender, disability or sexual orientation can live, work and socialise in a context of fairness, equality, rights, responsibilities and respect.**

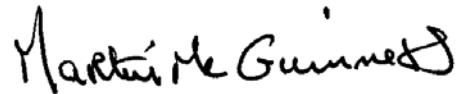
This Programme sets out goals that we believe are crucial to achieving a shared and better future for all. In particular, we are committed to addressing the issues for disaffected young people; welcoming and living in harmony with our neighbours from minority ethnic backgrounds; and tackling the conditions that perpetuate the need for urban interfaces and rural segregation. We will provide and expand shared spaces and services and we will not tolerate any form of hate crime or intimidation.

The whole of Government here has a role to play and this Programme has been endorsed by the Executive. Our Department will take responsibility for driving forward this work, despite the forthcoming challenges of the global economy. We will improve the co-ordination of all Government effort and we will be more inclusive of the whole community we serve.

We want to build a peaceful, secure and shared future for all. The challenge ahead will be difficult for us all but we believe that the future we want is possible to achieve – together.

Handwritten signature of Peter D. Robinson in black ink.

Rt Hon Peter D. Robinson MLA
First Minister

Handwritten signature of Martin McGuinness in black ink.

Martin McGuinness MP MLA
Deputy First Minister

1. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOOD RELATIONS AND OTHER KEY POLICY AREAS

GOOD RELATIONS AND EQUALITY

1.1 Our Programme for Government makes clear:

equality, fairness, inclusion and the promotion of good relations will be watchwords for all of our policies and programmes across Government. Much has already been achieved and we are committed to working towards a shared and better future for all.

1.2 Promoting equality of opportunity for all our citizens is an integral aspect of building a better future for everyone and as such underpins and influences all that we do in shaping a better society.

1.3 This includes the development of the Executive's budget and the Department of Finance and Personnel ensures that all departmental funding requests take account of equality of opportunity and good relations considerations.

Section 75 (1) and (2)

1.4 All government policy is developed within the context of the equality of opportunity provisions set out in section 75 (1) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. This is particularly relevant to the Good Relations duty, the legislative foundations of which are in section 75 (2). Obligations under section 75 (2) cannot prejudice the obligations under section 75 (1). It is recognised that good relations cannot be built on inequality. It is recognised that the promotion of equality of opportunity is an essential element of building good relations.

Scope of Policy

- 1.5 Section 75 (2) creates a statutory duty to “without prejudice to its obligations under subsection (1) a public authority shall in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group”.
- 1.6 The Programme for Government PSA 7 commits the Executive to ‘reduce poverty and address inequality and disadvantage’. Part of this includes Objective 5 to ‘promote equality and the enforcement of rights.’ One action arising from this is ‘to implement a programme of cohesion and integration’.
- 1.7 However, it is recognised that a cohesive society is one in which everyone can live, work and socialise together free from intimidation and prejudice in the context of the fairness, equality, rights, respect and responsibility.
- 1.8 CSI is one of a family of policies which seeks to tackle prejudice and hate. We will bring complementary policies to promote equality, fairness, rights, respect and responsibility for all of the Section 75 (1) groups (referred to within paragraph 1.4). These policies, and the framework supporting them, will be complementary with this Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration.
- 1.9 Therefore the focus of this policy will be to promote cohesion, sharing and integration for all sections of society. We agree to publish a sexual orientation strategy.

GOOD RELATIONS AND THE RACIAL EQUALITY STRATEGY

- 1.10 This Programme is not intended to supersede or replace the Racial Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland 2005-10, which was endorsed by the motion made by the Assembly on 3 July 2007. Rather, it provides

the framework for the delivery of aspects of that strategy relating to good race relations in a co-ordinated, joined up process. We consider that the six shared aims set out in the Racial Equality Strategy are robust and comprehensive and that the section in the Strategy concerning the “Scale of the Challenges” is more relevant now than ever before.

- 1.11 We will revisit the six shared aims following the launch of this Programme in the light of the results of the public consultation exercise. This will be done in close consultation with minority ethnic groups and the wider community. We are committed to the partnership process which originally developed the six shared aims and of course we remain open to proposals as to how we might strengthen these.
- 1.12 Immigration and asylum are matters for the United Kingdom Government under the Northern Ireland Act 1998. However, immigration matters have substantial implications for not only Government here – as service deliverers but also for people living here under immigration control. Consequently these issues are a legitimate concern of the Executive.
- 1.13 We want to ensure that we have an immigration policy that works for here and takes full account of our different skills, needs and concerns.
- 1.14 A key issue exists for those individuals who are here but have “no recourse to public funds”. Concerns about foreign nationals who “slip through the safety net” have been around for some time and these concerns are growing. Individuals working here legally may, through no fault of their own may find themselves destitute and in need of short-term or bridging support. Within the context of the UK legislation, we are determined to examine what support we can give to people who, through no fault of their own, fall into difficulty. In many of these cases, quick and early intervention could prevent the escalation of an incident or a family’s difficulties. We will also examine the links between cohesion, integration and migration.

2. POLITICAL LEADERSHIP/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
- 2.1 We believe that strong local political leadership is essential to the success of this Programme. To reinforce this, we will establish a new Ministerially-led Panel for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration, headed by OFMDFM Ministers, with the support of all Departments, local Government and key stakeholders. More detail on the proposed Panel is included in chapter 10.
- 2.2 The role of the Ministerial Panel will be to develop an inclusive structure to review and monitor:
- The implementation of this Programme through a series of cross-departmental and other actions to promote good relations; and
 - The Programme for Government's commitment that equality, fairness, inclusion and good relations will become "watchwords for all our policies and programmes across Government".
- 2.3 The Ministerial Panel will work directly with a reinvigorated Racial Equality Forum and other stakeholder groups, to address the key goals of this programme, which are:
- To urgently address the physical and community division created by interfaces with the support of communities;
 - To ensure and promote the safety of vulnerable groups;
 - To tackle the visible manifestations of racism, sectarianism intolerance and other forms of prejudice;
 - To adopt a zero tolerance approach to all incidences of, and reasons for, attacks motivated by sectarian, religious, racist or hate prejudice, including those on symbolic premises, cultural premises and monuments;

- To promote equality of opportunity and tackle disadvantage;
- To provide and expand safe and shared spaces;
- To build a society where cultural diversity is embraced and celebrated and to promote pride in who we are and confidence in our different cultural identities;
- To create a new and improved framework for the management and regulation of public assemblies including parades and protests;
- To achieve the full participation of all sectors in all aspects of society;
- To support the local community to resolve local issues through local solutions; and
- To take action which will address sectarian behaviour at spectator sports events.

2.4 In line with these goals, the Panel will identify a number of specific issues on which it wishes to see direct action and having established clear policy direction and targets, it will drive progress towards implementation.

2.5 Ministers will use the Good Relations Indicators to help the formulation of targets and to ensure monitoring and progress. The indicators for 2009, which are available on the OFMDFM website will be continued and reviewed in the context of this Programme.

2.6 The specific matters requiring attention from Ministers will vary over time. However, a number of themes for action are already clear. These include:

Short Term

- Developing 'Shared Space';
- Enhancing community capacity to play a full role in implementing the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration;
- 'Crisis Intervention' and the need for a mechanism to co-ordinate multi-agency rapid responses to tackle sectarianism and racial violence and all forms of hate crimes;
- Ensuring good relations considerations are embedded within all government policy making;
- Early and strategic intervention to tackle anti-social behaviour and tensions around interfaces; and
- Promoting Cohesion, Sharing and Integration through a process of community renewal.

Medium Term

- The relationship between young people and the community;
- Providing a new and improved framework for the resolution of public assembly disputes; and
- Ensuring the sharing of best practice projects aimed at improving cohesion, sharing and integration across all areas where appropriate and when required.

Long Term

- Interfaces;
- Encouraging shared neighbourhoods;

- Reducing and eventually eliminating segregated services;
- Tackling the multiple social issues effecting and entrenching community separation, exclusion and hate;
- Tackling the multiple social issues effecting and entrenching community separation, exclusion and hate; and
- Cultural Identity, including issues around flags and emblems, murals, bonfires, cultural expression, language and popular protest.

2.7 The Executive, Assembly and Departmental Committee will also continue to play a key role in the robust scrutiny of policy delivery and outcomes.

3. PEOPLE AND PLACES

- 3.1 While acknowledging the progress that we have made, the Programme for Government emphasises the importance of tackling the continuing problems of sectarianism, racism and intolerance in our society.
- 3.2 Sectarianism, racism and intolerance destroy lives, mar our reputation at home and overseas, blight our economic prospects and have a corrosive effect on our society. We will build on the vital work of all our community and statutory partners which has had a significant impact within and between the long-standing sections of our community as well as the new arrivals which have joined us in recent years.
- 3.3 The arrival of people from across the globe offers the potential to change the context within which the divisions of the past have remained. It provides the opportunity for us to develop a better future for our “traditional” sections of the community and to integrate new arrivals¹ into a more cohesive society.
- 3.4 This Programme aims to make a difference to both people and places across our society.

CHANGES FOR PEOPLE:

- 3.5 This Programme will:
- Promote fairness, equality, rights, responsibilities and respect;
 - Emphasise inclusion, interdependence, acceptance and understanding;

¹ New arrivals include migrants from both EU and non-EU, asylum seekers and refugees or other immigration status.

- Embrace and promote better relations between all sections of the community participating in our society;
- Encourage dialogue between and within all sections of the community, both north/south and east/west to the benefit of all;
- Build on shared values of human rights and equality to build a society which honours rights and accepts our civic responsibilities to one another; and
- Promote a partnership ethos within our community which celebrates difference.

CHANGES IN PLACES:

3.6 Through the Programme we will support:

- Shared and safe spaces for working, shopping, socialising and playing;
- Shared accessible and welcoming facilities which provide high quality public services;
- Safety for individuals and groups who wish to express and celebrate their identity or culture peacefully;
- A Cohesive, integrated community;
- Sharing in education; and
- Integrated Workplaces.

Springfarm & District Community Association (SDCA)

Location – Antrim Town



During the 1980's and 1990's the Springfarm Estate was one of the primary destinations for people who had to be relocated from areas across Northern Ireland for a variety of reasons associated with the conflict. The Springfarm estate began to experience increasing law and order issues alongside the development of more serious sectarian divisions. With a background of a rising drug trade, the estate began to be plagued by increasing visible signs of sectarian division, antisocial behaviour, intimidation, burnt out housing, and the departure of people to neighbouring estates. In addition, the arrival of migrant workers to the estate also saw a rise in the number of racist abuse incidents and attacks on properties and individuals.

To combat these problems SDCA undertook anti-sectarianism/anti-racism research and developed a comprehensive strategy with the support of CRC, OFMDFM, and the NIHE Community Cohesion Unit. This strategy resulted in the implementation of various cultural diversity and conflict resolution approaches and projects, and extensive work directly with minority ethnic and migrant communities. Since the introduction of the strategy, the SDCA has reported a noticeable reduction in racist attacks and incidents, and a growing, vibrant community which values diversity. In 2008, in recognition of the success of this work, Springfarm became part of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive Shared Neighbourhood programme which is funded by the International Fund for Ireland and the Department for Social Development.

PEOPLE

3.7 This Programme for a new era must recognise and support the aspirations of the very many people who wish to see change permeating through all aspects of everyday life. NI Life and Times surveys have consistently shown:

- **Shared Workplaces** - support for mixed religion workplaces remains high with 92% of people indicating they would prefer to work in a mixed religion environment.
- **Education** - in 2009, 62% of people indicated that they would prefer to send their children to mixed religion schools.

SHARED WORKPLACES

3.8 The workplace is an integral aspect of everyday life for many in our society and it is vital that people feel safe and comfortable within that environment.

3.9 As the previous chapter outlines, we already have in place robust anti-discrimination and equality legislation, which has been instrumental in bringing about positive good relations outcomes in the workplace. In addition to this, the Equality Commission has a key role in promoting shared and diverse workplaces through its ongoing work with employers. Through the provision of advice and guidance, the Commission not only promotes diversity in the workplace but also encourages employers to develop a harmonious working environment.

3.10 As one of the largest employers within our society, the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) has a particularly important role in promoting good relations within the workplace. The NICS is committed to:

- Providing a working environment where everyone has a right to equality of opportunity and individual differences are valued and respected; and
- Taking steps towards making the NICS workforce more representative of the community.

3.11 In addition, the Central Procurement Directorate within the Department of Finance and Personnel includes an equality clause which places the onus on suppliers to meet obligations under the Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act. The Central Procurement Directorate also continues to work with the Construction Industry Forum NI to bring forward proposals that address the issue of migrant workers within the NI construction industry and ensures their fair treatment.

3.12 However, the promotion of shared workplaces is not simply a responsibility of the public sector. Private sector employers also have a key role to play in promoting their workplaces as diverse, welcoming and shared environments.

Trademark

Location – Belfast



Trademark is a not-for-profit social justice organisation delivering training, research and evaluation on equality and good relations, human rights and peace and reconciliation. As part of its ongoing work to tackle sectarianism and racism, Trademark identified the workplace as a key area where work was needed to encourage good relations, mutual respect and tolerance of diversity.



The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service – one of our core public institutions – commissioned Trademark to develop a comprehensive good relations training programme which was delivered to over 800 members of staff between 2006 and 2009. The programme directly challenged sectarian and racist mindsets and helped to develop an organisational culture in which promoting good relations became something that was reflected in all training,

communication and leadership roles. The training has been evaluated in overwhelmingly positive terms by the participants.

“Having an environment where you could discuss topics normally considered off limits was good; understanding what constitutes harassment and flags and emblems was enlightening.” (Paramedic)

EDUCATION

3.13 The Department of Education has a statutory duty to encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education. Integrated schools give equal recognition to and promote equal expression of the two main traditions and other cultures. They welcome children from other cultures and are open to those of all faiths and none.

3.14 However, promoting good relations is not just the responsibility of the integrated education sector and schools outside this sector have also a key role to play. The role of schools in providing shared space and addressing issues such as sectarianism is outlined in greater detail in later sections of the document.

THE ECONOMY

3.15 It is clear that poor physical and mental health and other multiple deprivation indices such as low educational attainment, and low rates of employment are prevalent in the areas which have suffered most from the legacy of the conflict. It is important that we pay attention to these areas within the context of taking forward this Programme.

3.16 The key priorities within the programme for Government were growing the economy and tackling disadvantage. Poverty and disadvantage is a constant factor in most interface areas. We are committed to addressing social disadvantage and ensuring that no community is left behind as we continue to embed peace and prosperity. Addressing

divisions in our society and promoting good relations are also key aspects of under-pinning efforts to grow “a dynamic, innovative economy,” which is a top priority in the current Programme for Government. All of this is within the challenging economic context in which we find ourselves.

- 3.17 Over 700 foreign investors and a multitude of UK and Ireland investors have already chosen to locate here. We have a great deal to offer overseas companies with hi-tech expertise, industrial ingenuity and a great lifestyle for incoming workers. However, the legacy of our troubled past and the negative images associated with our divided community can still deter foreign investment. Invest NI’s efforts to attract and support high quality investment, particularly in disadvantaged areas, must be supported by action to address issues of community division.

HEALTH & LEISURE

- 3.18 In light of the economic challenges that we all face, we also must address the issue of duplication in the provision of health and leisure services. Ultimately we want to create a society where people feel comfortable and safe to avail of services outside their neighbourhood. Through this Programme, we will tackle the underlying issues that prevent people from moving outside their own area.
- 3.19 Health inequalities continue to exist in many of those areas that suffered most during the conflict. We want people to benefit from a healthy community and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety’s Investing for Health strategy will be an important way of addressing the issues that face people in those areas impacted most by the conflict.

- 3.20 Sport can play a key role in bringing about positive good relations outcomes but it can also contribute to traditional patterns of segregation.
- 3.21 The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure recognises this in its “Sport Matters: The NI Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation, 2009-2019. The Strategy specifically supports cross-community projects and encourages sharing of community sports spaces in a way that reflects the principles of this Programme and promotes good relations outcomes.

PARTICIPATION IN FURTHER EDUCATION

- 3.22 Increasing access and participation amongst those furthest removed from the labour market is also an important way of improving outcomes for people, particularly in areas most impacted on by the conflict. In recognition of this, the Department for Employment and Learning developed the Learner Access and Engagement Pilot Programme, which allows Further Education colleges to contract with third party organisations for the provision of learner support.
- 3.23 The provision for those in the ‘hard to reach’ categories engaged through this programme are, wherever possible, offered locally, in community outreach settings and tailored to take account of local circumstances and individual needs.
- 3.24 Within the context of the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration, it is vital that we continue to co-ordinate work across Government to build the capacity of individuals and groups within the local community. In this way, all sections of the community will be empowered to become stronger, more vibrant and better equipped for the future.

PLACES

- 3.25 Life and Times surveys have also consistently shown significant preferences in both sections of the majority community for mixed religion neighbourhoods. In the 2009 Northern Ireland Life and Times survey, 80% of people indicated that they would prefer to live in a mixed religion neighbourhood. In the same year, 87% of people were in favour of greater mixing in sports/leisure activities;
- 3.26 Despite the fact that the majority of social housing estates remain segregated in terms of religion, people's preference to live in a mixed religion neighbourhood was emphasised during a round of public meetings undertaken by the Minister for Social Development in 2009.
- 3.27 Evidence also shows that segregation has a correlation with levels of deprivation. Fourteen of the fifteen most deprived areas in Belfast are highly segregated.
- 3.28 While there are other perfectly valid factors which influence a person's choice on where they would prefer to live such as the desire to be close to family circle or work, it is clear that the current process for the allocation of social housing does not readily take account of the aspiration to live in a mixed community.
- 3.29 The Department for Social Development has already set about challenging that deficiency through a twin-track approach which aims to offer possibilities for both new-build and existing social housing developments by:
- Introducing the screening of each new social housing scheme for its shared potential; and
 - Supporting a three year pilot programme aimed at encouraging and supporting 30 shared neighbourhoods within existing estates across NI.

- 3.30 The Department for Social Development will continue to promote a mixed-tenure approach in the development of social housing and in so doing will also examine the process of Social Housing allocation to explore how best to accommodate the aspirations of the majority of the population who wish to live in mixed-religion neighbourhoods.
- 3.31 In 2009, 88% of people were of the opinion that success is not being achieved at making Northern Ireland into a place free from displays of sectarian aggression. This statistic clearly evidences the need for us to continue to work to make all areas within our community more welcoming and inclusive for everyone.
- 3.32 In this regard, we continue to be committed to working with people in the community to remove threatening and divisive symbols such as paramilitary flags, racist and sectarian graffiti, paramilitary murals and territorial markers, where these are used in an attempt to intimidate. This will require updating the Flags Protocol, which was established in April 2005 by the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister in partnership with the PSNI to establish clear working relationships between agencies with responsibilities related to the flying of flags. Within the context of a finalised Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration, we will review the Flags Protocol.
- 3.33 The Re-Imaging Communities initiative, developed by the Arts Council for NI is also a valuable mechanism for achieving a more welcoming community. The objective of the scheme is to support people to feel part of the community in which they live by enhancing the physical and natural environment and removing displays of sectarian aggression and intimidation.
- 3.34 Re-Imaging Communities shows how positive outcomes can be achieved when departments and agencies align their efforts and resources in a more co-ordinated way.
- 3.35 In spite of our divisions there are already many shared spaces – including some city and town centres, shopping streets and shopping

centres, workplaces, community halls, healthcare facilities and leisure centres. However, through this Programme we will seek to ensure that all spaces and facilities are shared and welcoming, created within an ethos of fairness, equality, rights, responsibilities and respect.

- 3.36 It is also important that shared spaces and facilities are welcoming to everyone from the community. This does not mean “neutralising” the area or facilities but creating a good and harmonious environment which removes any perceived threat and reflects and welcomes differing cultures and minority ethnic groups.
- 3.37 The presence of genuinely shared spaces is important in the creation of viable, open and vibrant towns and cities. Such spaces play a vital role in the economic and social health of our communities. Consequently, the promotion of shared spaces is an important feature within the Department for Social Development’s (DSD) city and town centre master-planning programme.
- 3.38 That emphasis is carried into the Department’s programme of physical development and public realm projects, which work to address the legacy of the troubles by removing physical evidence of the conflict, such as redundant security measures, from town centres and by creating shared spaces in towns and cities that will be accessible to all sections of the community.
- 3.39 One such example is found in Derry/Londonderry, where the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister and the Department for Social Development are together supporting the regeneration company Ilex in its mission to lead the economic, social and physical transformation of the city.
- 3.40 The Department for Regional Development’s revised Regional Development Strategy (RDS) will set out guidance on strengthening community cohesion, fostering a stronger community spirit and the importance of city and town centres as shared spaces.

- 3.41 Creating shared spaces and facilities is not only vital in urban areas but is also instrumental in building a more vibrant rural community. In recognition of this, the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) currently funds 75% of the Rural Community Network, Rural Support Networks and NI Rural Women's Networks, which all play a key role in promoting good relations in rural areas.
- 3.42 These structures are crucial in building the capacity of rural areas and ensuring that the voices of people living in these areas are heard. Although the manifestations of sectarianism and racism can be different within rural areas, addressing the underlying issues is no less important.

KEY AIMS

- 3.43 Through this Programme, we have identified the following key aims for People and Places:
- Public spaces, thoroughfares, community facilities and town centres should be safe, shared and welcoming to the whole community;
 - All public authorities, including District Councils, should discharge functions and deliver services equally and inclusively recognising the diverse nature of the community they serve and the barriers which can be experienced by minority ethnic people in particular;
 - Unnecessary duplication of services should be targeted through the enhanced delivery of shared services on the basis of objective need;
 - Safe and secure shared community spaces should be developed in a culture of fairness, equality, rights, responsibilities and respect; and

- Displays of flags and emblems, graffiti or murals, parades or public assemblies or festivals should be held in an environment which respects individual and community rights.

4. EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION

- 4.1 Children and young people have so much to offer the communities in which they live and indeed society as a whole. Their contributions to society are, and will become more relevant as we move forward from a society of mistrust and division to one that is shared, inclusive and respects the rights of individuals and the rule of law.
- 4.2 Now, as in the past, some young people have made flawed judgements about their futures and have taken, or been led down, paths that they might not have taken had they grown up in a society free from conflict. Often, these flawed judgements can result in engagement in civil disturbances, antisocial behaviour or interface violence. We want to help prevent our young people at risk from becoming disaffected and empower them to engage in positive activities and programmes that will have beneficial impacts and outcomes for them.

The Junction

Dealing with the past: Youth Leaders Training

Location – Derry / Londonderry



The Junction is a community relations resource and peace building centre established through a partnership between community relations organisations in the North West.

The Junction, in discussion with Youth Action, identified a need to challenge and maximise the potential of youth leaders through the development of their skills around conflict resolution, conflict transformation and peace building. A series of one-day workshops was organised with Youth Leaders who were preparing to work with young people in their communities. The training was tailored to meet the needs of the Youth Leaders to build relationships with each other at the personal level, and explore their own political and religious backgrounds with each other as a way of better understanding difference and take away the knowledge and skills on dealing with the past which could be applied when working with young people. During the training a range of topics were explored including truth and justice, forgiveness and reconciliation. During the sessions, there was a deep level of sharing and issues around generational impact of conflict were explored. The Youth Leaders were able to take away new learning and insight of the issues that continue to create division and hurt and develop a range of approaches and training resources to support them in their work with young people.

“I had never even thought of this perspective before, it was very enlightening”.

Confronting exclusivity and prejudice in Judaism, Christianity and Islam

The Junction seeks to engage and challenge perceptions, prejudice and discrimination in all its forms and an area of particular interest is the lack of knowledge around 'other' faiths. Rabbi Brian Walt was invited to explore the Abrahamic faiths in relation to peace building. The Rabbi gave a talk followed by general discussion which focused on the teachings of Judaism, Christianity and Islam which have been used to justify prejudice, violence and even murder. The Rabbi asked the participants to think if it were possible for Jews, Christians and Muslims to acknowledge those parts of their religious teachings and tradition that encourage prejudice towards people of other faiths? Could confession of the ways our own religious traditions hurt people of other faiths free us to join together to give voice to the compassion and love for the 'other' that is the cornerstone of all three faiths? Over the course of three workshops, Christians, Muslims and Jews attended and engaged in healthy dialogue and the feedback was very positive.

“This was both challenging and refreshing; I am going away with a much deeper understanding of my own faith and with a greater respect for other faiths”.

- 4.3 In 2007, 24% of young people indicated they were worried about being assaulted due to their religion, while 13% were worried that they would be attacked due to their race or skin colour. In 2007, 10% of young people had been the victims of name-calling or harassment because of their religion.
- 4.4 In recent years Government has invested in diversionary/intervention programmes as a means of sustaining the peaceful summers which are essential factors in the transformation process. However it is now vital that we progress beyond a short-term year-on-year approach.
- 4.5 This Programme will place a particular emphasis on engaging young people and the community in long term strategies to reduce prejudice,

promote rights and responsibilities and build a culture of mutual respect. This work will complement our existing objectives for tackling poverty (particularly child poverty), which contributes to social exclusion and the marginalisation of many in our community.

- 4.6 The Department of Justice (DOJ) will take the lead on developing a long-term approach to reduce the risk of young people becoming engaged in hate crime.
- 4.7 The Department of Education clearly has a crucial role to play in empowering the next generation within our society and more detail on the range of actions taken by the department is included in other aspects of this document.
- 4.8 In recognition of the important part it has to play in promoting good relations, the department is currently developing a new Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED) policy.
- 4.9 In late 2009, the Department of Education also adopted the role of managing agent for the International Fund for Ireland's Sharing in Education programme and works closely with the Fund to bring forward projects which promote reconciliation and community relations.
- 4.10 The department is also committed to promoting the wider use of school premises in an effort to serve not only the needs of the pupils in the school but also their parents, families and indeed the wider community.
- 4.11 In empowering the next generation, we must recognise the range of issues and challenges that face our young people in all aspects of their lives.
- 4.12 To this end, the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) is currently carrying out a scoping study to learn more about those who are not in education, employment or training (NEETs) and this study is expected to be completed soon. These young people can face a variety of barriers of different origin and a wide spectrum of different

degrees of challenge, which can be compounded and which affect their ability to engage, right from their earliest years. DEL intends to bring the results of this work to the Executive for consideration.

KEY AIMS

4.13 Through this Programme, we have identified the following key aims for empowering the next generation:

- Under the auspices of the Ministerial Panel for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration, establishing a major initiative aimed at developing a longer term strategic approach to helping marginalised young people;
- Supporting young people to increase their civic responsibility including facilitating and empowering youth groups to work together on civic responsibility projects;
- Focusing on education and promoting greater understanding of shared values; and
- Establishing multi-agency partnerships between indigenous and minority ethnic and migrant worker communities to address the specific needs of the young people in those populations.

5. RESPECTING CULTURES

- 5.1 We are culturally rich and diverse and becoming ever more so. For many years, instead of appreciating and embracing cultural diversity within our society, many people have felt alienated or intimidated by demonstrations of cultural identity.
- 5.2 We believe that people have the right to live free from sectarian, racial or other forms of harassment and we recognise, promote and respect rights and embrace diversity.
- 5.3 All sections of our community should feel comfortable expressing and sharing their cultural identity. We recognise that there needs to be greater sharing and understanding of the diversity within our community and respect for cultural manifestations where they are compatible with human rights norms.
- 5.4 This not only applies to long established traditions within our community but also to minority ethnic groups and new arrivals coming here to live and work. New arrivals provide new occasions and new celebrations which add to the range of cultural traditions which we can enjoy and embrace.
- 5.5 In the 2009 Life and Times Survey, 95% of Protestants and 95% of Catholics surveyed indicated that they respected the other's culture. We want to build on these positive findings to ensure that this is translated on the ground. Through the proposed Ministerial Panel for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration we want to work together across Government to identify ways of ensuring and promoting intercultural respect and dialogue.

RESPECTING CULTURES IN EDUCATION

- 5.6 This is particularly crucial amongst our children and young people in nurturing an ethos of mutual respect and building a better future for everyone in our society. The Department of Education continues to play an important role in this through the Citizenship Education element of the Revised Curriculum. The Department seeks to ensure that each child and young person is afforded equal opportunities to access and participate in an inclusive environment. Promoting respect for newcomers, Irish Travellers and children from the Roma community is a particular priority for the Department.
- 5.7 Citizenship Education aims to develop the capacity of all young people to participate positively and effectively in society, to influence democratic processes and to make informed and responsible decisions as local and global citizens throughout their lives.
- 5.8 At post-primary level, Local and Global Citizenship is part of the area of Learning for Life and Work (LLW). Through this aspect of the curriculum, pupils will have opportunities to explore a range of issues, including sectarianism and racism.

SYMBOLIC PREMISES & CULTURAL EXPRESSION

- 5.9 Although the number of sectarian and racist incidents and crimes recorded has reduced significantly in recent years, attacks on symbolic premises have unfortunately increased since the baseline of 2005. In particular, attacks on GAA halls increased to 13 in 2008 from 1 in 2005. However this represented a decrease from 17 attacks from 2007. Attacks on Orange Halls more than doubled from 35 in 2005 to 71 in 2007 but has since decreased to 58 during 2008 and 57 in 2009.
- 5.10 This Programme's focus on promoting greater intercultural understanding and respect will aim to foster a change of attitudes and reduction of attacks. In recognition of the importance of achieving

positive outcomes, we will monitor progress through the Good Relations Indicators and will continue to work with the PSNI in tackling this type of hate crime.

5.11 We recognise that some recent progress around contended parades and related issues has come about by local agreement and we will seek to build on this.

5.12 Our aim is to normalise and streamline the process relating to notification of Public Assemblies, including parades and protests and attempt to address any issues that may arise at a local level.

5.13 The Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister published a consultation paper outlining proposals on Public Assemblies, Parades and Protests in NI on 20 April 2010 and the consultation period will run until 14 July 2010.

5.14 The consultation paper publishes the Code of Conduct section from the Report of the Parades Working Group and the draft legislation – “The Public Assemblies, Parades and Protests Bill (Northern Ireland)” – which allows, subject to the approval of the Northern Ireland Assembly, for the implementation of the new arrangements recommended by the Working Group.

5.15 We fully recognise that support from all sections of the community has the potential to create a new and improved framework for the regulation of public assemblies and our approach will be based on the principles laid out in the Agreement at Hillsborough Castle, which are:

- Respect for the rights of those who parade and respect for the rights of those who live in areas through which parades will pass;
- The right of everyone to be free from sectarian harassment;
- The right of citizens to be free from all forms of harassment; and

- Recognition that at times there are competing rights.
- 5.16 Language can be another vehicle of cultural expression. In this regard, the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure will have a key role to play through the Regional or Minority Languages Strategy. Although the specific actions arising from the Strategy have not yet been agreed, it is envisioned that these actions, and this Strategy, will contribute to the Executive's goal of a shared and better future for all citizens living here.
- 5.17 This Strategy will be crucial in moving towards a future where we promote rights, embrace diversity and respect difference in an ethos of mutual respect.
- 5.18 Minority ethnic groups enrich our community and bring many opportunities to appreciate other cultures. The Belfast Mela is just one example of local multi-cultural work.
- 5.19 Organised by ArtsEkta and supported by OFMDFM, this is the largest event of its kind and is an established part of the cultural calendar. The Mela prides itself in being an artistically led celebration of ethnic culture and creativity, inspired by local and international talent, which actively encourages mutual respect and diversity.

COMMUNITY FESTIVALS

- 5.20 Within local areas, a number of festivals and events have been developed to replace conflict with celebration while other events are ongoing. These initiatives are welcomed and can be developed to ensure calm and a reduction of tensions in certain key areas over the summer. Initiatives such as these are evidence that there is a real spirit to move forward into a new era which matches the aspirations for a new society.

- 5.21 The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) allocates a cultural diversity budget aimed at promoting an understanding and awareness of the varying cultural traditions across all sections of the community here, in line with the Executive's Programme for Government priority to 'promote tolerance, inclusion and health and well-being.'
- 5.22 A review of the Department's Cultural Diversity policy is ongoing and it is proposed to revisit the current policy to align better with the objectives of the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration.
- 5.23 The Community Festivals Fund (CFF) was established in 2006, in recognition of the potential contribution that festivals can make to the community, to the local economy and wider Government policy priorities.
- 5.24 Community festivals are about participation, involvement and the creation of a sense of identity and are important in contributing to the social well being of a community.
- 5.25 With this in mind, the Fund is designed to enable community organisations to celebrate their cultural identity and to strengthen good relations. All festivals supported are expected to demonstrate their commitment to promoting social cohesion, social inclusion, equality of opportunity and good relations.
- 5.26 The Orangefest Initiative, supported by the Department for Social Development is a particular example of how work has been done to open up Belfast city centre during the 12 July celebrations.

TOURISM

- 5.27 Cultural tourism can have a positive impact on the wider community and specifically can make an important contribution to the economy.

Confidence and pride in the peaceful diversity of our cultural identity is essential to the positive and shared promotion of cultural tourism.

- 5.28 Investment in tourism infrastructure, whether in large-scale projects like the Titanic Signature Building or the new Visitor Centre at the internationally famous Giant's Causeway, or smaller scale projects designed to smarten up town centres and seafronts, can contribute to community well-being as well as enhancing our tourist offering.
- 5.29 Tourism already supports over 40,000 jobs in the economy here but there is considerable scope to boost its contribution.
- 5.30 Research commissioned by Tourism Ireland in 2008/09 in relation to perceptions of safety and security here found that, while concerns about personal safety are reducing in volume and degree, potential visitors' expectations may yet be undermined by concerns about the general political atmosphere and tensions between sections of our community.
- 5.31 While people are now willing to be convinced of the active merits of Northern Ireland as a holiday and mini break destination, such concerns are still strong enough to stop current and potential visitors from spontaneously seeing Northern Ireland in classic holiday terms.
- 5.32 The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI)'s proposals for creating and promoting a new NI experience for visitors as outlined in the 'Draft Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland to 2020' must be complemented by action to ensure that visitors are reassured that here is a safe and welcoming place for all.

KEY AIMS

- 5.33 Through this Programme, we have identified the following key aims for respecting cultures:

- Building a peaceful climate of fairness, equality, rights, responsibilities and respect;
- Working with and supporting the local community to resolve contentious cultural issues;
- Promoting greater understanding of cultural diversity and expressions of cultural identity;
- Encouraging greater engagement with, and understanding of, cultural diversity and intercultural relations;
- Working to eliminate attacks on cultural, sporting and other symbolic property and monuments; and
- Promoting cultural exchanges, joint events and tourism initiatives.

6. A SECURE COMMUNITY

- 6.1 It is essential that this aspect of the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration is read within the context of chapter 3 which looks at 'Changes in Places'.
- 6.2 Many people do not feel safe going into an area which is perceived to be of a different community grouping. In 2009, 27% of Protestants said they would avoid working in a mainly Catholic area and 28% of Catholics said they would avoid work in a mainly Protestant area when applying for a job. This fear can sometimes be based on a combination of past experiences, as well as misperception of current realities. Such fears are hard to eliminate quickly.
- 6.3 Fifty-seven per cent of people in the 2009 Life and Times Survey indicated that they did not feel that the Government had achieved the objective of making town centres safe and welcoming places for people of all walks of life. Although this represents a reduction from the 2005 baseline of 69%, we want to ensure that progress is continued.
- 6.4 The local community can contribute significantly to this aim by creating more shared spaces and facilities and by making public areas as welcoming and inclusive as possible through the removal of threatening and divisive symbols such as paramilitary flags and territorial markers, sectarian and racist graffiti and paramilitary murals. In this regard we will work with statutory and community partners on the review of the Flags Protocol. As outlined in previous chapters, we also fund the Re-Imaging Communities initiative which works with the community to reduce, remove and re-image murals.

Loughview Community Action Partnership (LCAP)

Location - North Belfast

Loughview Community Action Partnership (LCAP) is an umbrella organisation which draws membership from community groups operating in the area bounded by the Antrim Road, Whitewell Road, Duncairn Gardens and Belfast Lough. It was established in 2008 as a direct response to addressing the needs of the local community in the Lower North area of Belfast. The area has suffered from the legacy of division and conflict and remains one of the most deprived regions here.



LCAP is representative of a broad range of interests and needs within those communities and encompasses a variety of groups including local residents' associations, faith based organisations, sporting organisations, older peoples' projects, youth groups and good relations projects. The Partnership seeks to support successful community development, encourage reflective practice and promote cooperation and locally based solutions.

One of the key strategic themes of LCAP is good relations. They believe that divisions exist within and between communities and therefore see the need to work on intra and inter community relationships. The Partnership also recognises the importance of work to tackle the history of suspicion, mistrust and even hatred that exists within communities.

LCAP is now working across the area and in partnership with groups from the New Lodge, Cliftonville and Greencastle areas of North Belfast. Under the themes of citizenship, leadership and good relations LCAP is overseeing delivery of critical cross community activity on the following issues: a cross community youth forum, a volunteer development strategy, a schools environmental programme, and a leadership development programme.



“In a short space of time it has made a very positive impact in the area, meeting all its targets such as establishing a youth forum, courses on drug addiction and suicide awareness as well as a volunteer recruitment drive”

said Junior Minister Newton at a recent visit to the partnership.

- 6.5 There are already spaces within many areas that would be considered as shared spaces for the use of the local community. Libraries are one such example and it is the policy of the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure that these are established in areas that are accessible by all sections of the community.
- 6.6 Similarly, the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure is developing a policy for museums that will likely aim to ensure that museums are seen as safe places for everyone to explore and participate in diverse types of community activity.
- 6.7 The NI Environment Agency also provides access to shared space through the management of a range of sites and properties, which can provide venues for events that, bring together visitors and local people alike.
- 6.8 There is evidence that investment in our shared spaces is already paying dividends. The award winning public realm scheme in Armagh has successfully recreated the Market Square as a public events space

and is now regularly used for cross-community events. The Department for Social Development is providing funding for the Portadown and Lurgan public realm schemes, which will create a more welcoming and neutral environment for everyone in two of our most divided town centres.

- 6.9 The Department of Justice also plays a key role in creating safer communities. The Department is currently on target to reduce the level of Anti-Social Behaviour incidents by 15% by 2011. In 2008/09, there were 87,156 anti-social behaviour incidents recorded by the police, which represented a 12.1% reduction from 2007/08.
- 6.10 Despite this, it is of concern that the latest PSNI Statistical Report on Hate Incidents and Crimes shows that during 2009/10 the number of sectarian incidents increased by 245 (an increase of 15.4%) and racist incidents by 48 (an increase of 4.8%) in comparison to 2008/09.
- 6.11 These statistics reinforce the need to create safer areas and to this end the Department of Justice will, in partnership with a range of stakeholders, develop a new Community Safety Strategy which aligns with the principles, aims and objectives of the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration.
- 6.12 The introduction of the proposed new Crime Reduction Partnerships holds significant potential to contribute to achieving positive good relations outcomes. The new partnerships will result from integrating the Community Safety Partnerships and the District Policing Partnerships and one important aspect will be the inclusion of a good relations duty.
- 6.13 In recognition of the negative economic and social impacts that crime can have on our society, we will work with the PSNI, local partnerships and others to build a safer community to tackle crime including hate crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime.

6.14 The Department of Justice chairs the Hate Crime Action Group, which comprises members of key criminal justice and other agencies. This group was established to take forward recommendations from the Criminal Justice Inspection NI thematic inspection of hate crime and is currently working on a number of areas including management of hate crime cases through the Criminal Justice System, recording of hate crime cases and a common definition of hate crime.

Unite Against Hate

The Unite Against Hate, multi-agency campaign challenges attitudes of prejudice and raises awareness of hate crime through a range of channels. Unite Against Hate is supported by local celebrities, sports organisations and others, with the GAA, IFA, Ulster Rugby, and NI International football squad all supporting the campaign. The campaign is currently rolling out a 'Unite' toolkit to schools across NI, in order to raise awareness and encourage debate around hate crime.

The campaign has been very effective in mobilising sporting, cultural and business organisations behind the message and can provide a model for any future co-ordinated media campaigns to promote good relations.

6.15 Sectarian behaviour at spectator sports events is also of particular concern and the introduction of new legislation in this regard will be particularly important. Although the precise terms of the legislation are yet to be finalised, these will be laid out in a Justice Bill to be introduced during the 2010/11 Assembly term.

6.16 Issues relating to interface areas and the removal of peace walls continue to be key priorities for us across Government. However, it is vital that the local community is involved, consulted and supported in any approach taken.

6.17 An isolated, piecemeal approach will not be effective in creating long-term, sustainable solutions. What is required is a number of interventions to tackle the issues which sustain the maintenance of

Peace Walls. To this end, OFMDFM will lead in the development of a cross-cutting programme with Departments, agencies and the community on how best to work actively towards the removal of peace walls.

- 6.18 The ultimate objective is to create security and safety for the community in ways which would allow the physical interface barriers to be removed over time. Decisions can only be taken when the process has reached the point where people from the local community are ready to move forward.
- 6.19 The building of roads and associated issues can also have a particular impact on interface areas and in recognition of this, Roads Service is committed to offering advice and guidance on issues involving traffic management and roads engineering. Where good relations issues arise from infrastructural work undertaken we will work with communities to resolve those.
- 6.20 A secure community must also be supported by adequate infrastructure and in this regard transport has a key role to play. The Regional Transportation Strategy (2002-2012), which is presently under review, will revolve around economic, environmental and societal themes. We want transportation infrastructure to play its part in connecting people and places and in fostering community cohesion.
- 6.21 Transport can play a part in promoting good relations by connecting sections of the community and providing a neutral shared space. Improvements to our transport system have the potential to increase safety and the perception of safety for people as they travel in their daily lives. In implementing the Strategy through Integrated Transport Plans, the Capital programmes in Translink include plans for an integrated transport hub in Belfast at the site of Great Victoria Street. This, coupled with the introduction of a Rapid Transit System will help connect areas within Belfast.

- 6.22 Building a strong, vibrant community is important for everyone within our society. In this regard, the Department for Social Development invests heavily in community development through a range of schemes and programmes. For example, DSD has lead responsibility for the Executive's Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, which supports 36 neighbourhoods located in the most deprived areas of NI. The composite effects of urban disadvantage and a legacy of political violence and segregation have created a unique challenge for those areas.
- 6.23 The Department recognises that most Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships serve largely single identity communities as a consequence of their geographic basis. Some work is already underway to remedy this situation and the Department will explore further with Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships measures which will be put in place to introduce or improve networking between partnerships and areas and between Neighbourhood Renewal areas and their neighbours where they are not Neighbourhood Renewal areas.
- 6.24 We will work together to maximise the community development, community safety and community relations impacts which should be achievable from a co-ordinated joined up Government approach.

KEY AIMS

- 6.25 Through this Programme, we have identified the following key aims for a secure community:
- Encouraging community events which reflect cultural diversity and are open, welcoming and inclusive to all;
 - Ensuring that all responsible agencies continue to provide a high level of community safety delivered within a rights based framework and an overarching ethos of mutual respect;

- Continuing to promote initiatives based on the principle of mutual respect, which reflect acceptance of cultural diversity and the ways in which it is expressed;
- Building community support networks across community, cultural and minority ethnic groups; and
- Building capacity of the local and minority ethnic communities to support people who have experienced hate crime.

7. A COHESIVE COMMUNITY

REACHING OUT AND BEING INCLUSIVE

- 7.1 Our vision is for an “intercultural” society – a dynamic process where different cultures and communities interact, learn about and question their own and each others cultures. Over time this may lead to cultural change. It recognises the inequalities at work in society and the need to overcome these. It is a process which requires mutual respect and acknowledges human rights.
- 7.2 Integration and intercultural exchange is a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation. In 2009, respondents to the Life and Times survey were generally supportive of the rights of EU citizens to live and work here with 69% saying they were very or fairly welcoming of the idea.
- 7.3 Embracing and celebrating diversity in the context of fairness, equality, rights, responsibilities and respect is central to the full participation of all people within the wider community.
- 7.4 All forms of intimidatory graffiti and the targeting of people’s homes should not be tolerated and the community must unite in condemnation of these attacks. Everyone has a role to play in reaching out to embrace new arrivals and minority ethnic sections of the community, to be supportive of them and to work closely with the PSNI to ensure that harassment is utterly opposed.

South Tyrone Empowerment Programme (STEP)

Location – Dungannon

The South Tyrone Empowerment Programme (STEP) is a community development and training organisation that has been working in the South Tyrone area since 1997. It aims to promote and develop inclusion of the most marginalised groups and areas in South Tyrone, empowering people to participate in the socio-economic life of the area. Senior citizen Eric is a member of the Protestant community who worked hard to reduce sectarian behaviour on the predominantly Protestant estate where he lived. He could see increased tension and racist behaviour as new families and young workers moved on to the estate and he approached STEP to help him with a few ideas he had to address the issue.

Eric wanted the new arrivals to know they were welcome, but also alert them to the less welcoming elements in the estate and assure them of his resident group's support. STEP helped him draft a short leaflet, translate it into the appropriate languages and sent some of their bilingual staff to help Eric talk with the new residents to provide information on programmes running in the estate such as the summer schemes for children and the annual Christmas party, both of which originated with anti-sectarian work undertaken in the estate. STEP also provided signposting to other services.

Eric reviewed his group's monthly community newsletter (a simple two page sheet circulated in the estate) and recognised it needed to take account of the needs, including language, of the new residents. The newsletter became a four page sheet and to meet language support costs, he approached local employers and local businesses for assistance. Both were very supportive and their contribution was acknowledged in the newsletter which urged residents to support the businesses. To ensure the new families could feel part of (and participate in) the annual estate Christmas party, each family was personally visited to let them know what they could expect at the party. Santa Claus arrived with a compliment of diverse helpers (STEP interpreters doubling as 'elves') so every child spoke to Santa and with a little help from

his elves Santa got everybody's message. Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council the community and local businesses all contributed in kind or cash.

STEP continued to translate the local newsletter and provide mentoring and support. The local council also developed a small grants scheme to help other local groups reaching out to new communities for inclusion in their activities and STEP designed good practice guidance and development for local communities.

The residents group has new active members from other cultures bringing new energy and ideas. Eric has now joined the STEP Board and we are now working together to provide support for minority ethnic members to join the management committee and be fully involved in sharing the responsibilities of the group and its decisions.

7.5 It is important that all aspects of our society are inclusive and welcoming. The Health and Social Care Sector in particular represents a significant aspect of our society in which there is considerable diversity across both staff and users. Access to appropriate healthcare is crucially important and consequently should be inclusive and accessible to all.

7.6 As a response, the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, through its Equality, Good Relations and Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan launched in January 2008 aims to promote and mainstream equality, good relations and human rights within a health and social care system that values diversity and is accessible to all those who need it.

7.7 Embracing Diversity – Good Practice Guide for Health Sector Employers was launched in 2004 with the main purpose of ensuring that minority ethnic health and social care staff, including those

recruited from overseas, are not subject to racist abuse, whether in the workplace or in the community.

- 7.8 The Racial Equality in Health and Social Care – Good Practice Guide was also produced in partnership with the Equality Commission for NI. This guide is aimed at assisting health and social care staff in delivering services which are culturally competent and responsive to the needs of all sections of our community.
- 7.9 The NI Health and Social Care Interpreting Service is the health specialised main provider of face-to-face interpreting for all HSC organisations and practitioners here. The aim of the Service is to improve access to Health and Social Care for members of minority ethnic groups who do not speak English as a first or competent second language.

EMBRACING DIFFERENCE AND CELEBRATING CULTURAL DIVERSITY

- 7.10 We want to ensure that all migrants and new sections of the community are treated with respect within our community and we should not tolerate any incidents of racism or hate crime towards any individual or group. We should reach out, help and support new individuals, families and sections of the community from the earliest point of arrival. Moving to a new country, with new customs and language is a challenge for anyone, particularly if elements of the host community are seen to be unwelcoming or threatening.
- 7.11 In 2009, 18% of respondents to the Northern Ireland Life and Times survey believe that the culture of Irish Travellers is more respected than it once was. 61% of people believed there is more racial prejudice than there was 5 years ago and 51% of people believe that people from a minority ethnic community are less respected than they once were.

- 7.12 Travellers in particular have traditionally been a marginalised group experiencing low educational achievement as well as exclusion from society. In September 2008, the Minister of Education established a cross-sectoral Taskforce on Traveller Education. The aim of the Taskforce is to develop an action plan on Traveller education to address these negative patterns. It will present its recommendations to the Department of Education by December 2010.
- 7.13 Migrant workers too play an essential role in our economy. Employers here have increasingly turned to migrant workers to fill labour and skills gaps.
- 7.14 In recognition of this, the Department for Employment and Learning leads a Subgroup of the Racial Equality Forum with the key purpose of ensuring that NI Government departments and relevant bodies ensure that the employment related needs of migrant workers and those who employ and advise them are met effectively.
- 7.15 It is evident that this Programme brings both opportunities and responsibilities for the public sector, private sector and the Trade Unions. The partnership work around Anti-Racist Workplace Week demonstrates that employers and Trade Unions generally do take this issue very seriously.
- 7.16 Accordingly, the Ministerial Panel for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration will take on board the interests of the private sector and Trade Unions to draw the work of this social partnership into the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration.
- 7.17 Whilst we continue to experience relatively high levels of economic inactivity, (including significant increased unemployment during the economic downturn) our reliance on migrant workers is, nevertheless, unlikely to diminish. In order to meet current and forecasted demand for skills as the economy returns to growth, particularly in niche areas,

there will be a continued need to attract suitably skilled people to the region.

7.18 We must also recognise the important role the social economy has to play in developing the wealth of Northern Ireland and contributing to the local community.

7.19 As part of the updated Social Economy Enterprise Strategy 2010-11, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment will continue to support the development of a sustainable Social Economy Network until 2011 with a financial package up to a maximum of £600k. The social economy can straddle community divisions with a high degree of sharing of resources and best practice and can make a real and sustainable difference to people's lives, particularly in areas of economic disadvantage. In this regard, the social economy represents a significant opportunity for sections of the community to work together in forming social enterprises and promoting good relations.

KEY AIMS

7.20 Through this Programme, we have identified the following key aims for a cohesive community:

- Zero tolerance for crimes motivated by prejudice and all forms of hate crime, whilst actively promoting rights and respect;
- Promoting intercultural work through the Minority Ethnic Development Fund;
- Building an inclusive community open to all, regardless of their background;

- Promoting greater understanding between established sections of the community and new arrivals;
- Working closely with the PSNI, the new Crime Reduction Partnerships and Probation Board in local areas to address racism and hate crime;
- Encouraging greater understanding of new cultures and new sections of the community; and
- Developing and supporting workplace initiatives to promote respect and understanding of cultural diversity.

Solidarity Equality Education Diversity Support (SEEDS) Group

Location - North West



SEEDS is a Derry/Londonderry based organisation originally set up to help address the needs of new migrants to the North West area.

In response to rising reports of hate violence and a perceived lack of support for victims, SEEDS initiated the 'Hands Off My Friend' campaign to show that local people would defend the rights of their minority ethnic neighbours and would not allow racist attacks to be carried out with impunity. The campaign was targeted at schools, community groups, and youth groups involving

intensive workshops on anti-racism, and a wide-ranging awareness raising campaign to draw attention to the issue of racism and hate crime.

SEEDS made a particular effort to identify and target those groups and individuals within the community for whom racist, xenophobic and violent attitudes remained especially prevalent. This on occasion required a more sensitive approach including involving individual community leaders and even the perpetrators themselves. The ultimate aim was to make people rethink their racist attitudes and drive home the message that violence is unacceptable. SEEDS have indicated that during the course of the 'Hands Off My Friend' campaign the number of racially-motivated violent incidents within Derry/Londonderry appear to have decreased but when the campaign stopped the number of racist attacks increased.

More than 2,800 young people have been involved in the 'Hands Off my Friend' campaign since it began in 2006. The campaign has now been developed further and adopted by a range of groups sectors including: the LGBT community, disability groups, the PSNI, the Housing Executive, and District Councils.

8. SUPPORTING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

- 8.1 District Councils play a valuable role in delivering good relations and will continue to have an important part to play in meeting the aims of the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration. Councils have close links to the communities which they serve and work together with those communities to deliver local solutions to local issues. This locally tailored work is an important collaborative approach engaging fully with the local community and will improve delivery of the Programme.
- 8.2 Political leadership at a local councillor level is also essential to embed the good relations agenda into the valuable work undertaken by Councils.
- 8.3 The District Council Good Relations Programme, funded by the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister and managed by the Community Relations Council, acknowledges the unique placement of Councils within the communities they serve.
- 8.4 Through that Programme, District Councils must clearly identify local needs by undertaking Good Relations audits. In response to the audits, Councils develop and implement action plans to address the needs identified.
- 8.5 In consultation with District Councils and local stakeholders we will develop criteria for core funding (and small grants) to ensure consistency with the aims of this Programme. We recognise that a top down, one size fits all approach is not ideal. We in Government will: set the framework for action; the principles to be applied at local level; and will support local initiatives.
- 8.6 We recognise that community leaders are well positioned to influence change on the ground and leading positive local development. We will engage with local leaders who have a role to play in bringing sections

of the community together. This Programme places community at the heart of the decision-making by providing an opportunity for representation on the Ministerial Panel for Good Relations.

- 8.7 Every community needs volunteers and every community has a pool of people willing to offer their time for various causes. Volunteers play a vital role in society by serving their local communities. They contribute time, energy and talents that help to fulfil local organisations' objectives.
- 8.8 Volunteers generate enthusiasm and interest and help to create a positive image of organisations in the community. Communities benefit from volunteers' contribution in that the services they provide help individuals, families and the community to address local needs and problems. They often encourage others to become involved and recognition of outstanding volunteers can contribute to overall community pride. Through this Programme we will continue to support the principle of volunteering in local communities as an important mechanism in the promotion of good relations."
- 8.9 Government is committed to supporting the local implementation of this Programme through the District Council Good Relations Programme and we will:
- Sustain and underpin quality of action at the local level;
 - Provide practical, consistent support, training and guidance;
 - Support innovative actions to develop and promote good relations which extend beyond local boundaries or which are of regional significance; and
 - Support capacity building measures and resources required to enable minority ethnic people and new arrivals

to participate fully and effectively in public, economic, social and cultural life.

8.10 We see this regional support and co-ordination function being provided by funding arrangements set out in Chapter 12.

RACIAL EQUALITY FORUM

8.11 We recognise the strategic importance of the Racial Equality Forum and we reaffirm our commitment to it and its work. The Forum will continue to monitor implementation of Departmental Action Plans and Departmental Race Champions.

8.12 The Forum will be represented on the Ministerial Panel for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration.

KEY AIMS

8.13 Through this Programme, we have identified the following aims for Supporting Local Communities:

- Continue to support Councils' delivery of Good Relations programmes and funding;
- Ensure that the local community is integral to the Good Relations decision making and implementation process; and
- Nurturing leadership at a local level and empowering the local community to identify solutions to local issues.

9. LOOKING OUTWARD

THE NORTH/SOUTH, EAST/WEST AND EUROPEAN DIMENSIONS

- 9.1 It has already been recognised that improving relationships within our society has to be viewed in the wider context of developing strong relationships on a north/south, east/west basis. Furthermore, as the diversity of cultures grows, it is essential to appreciate and allow for the impact of the expansion of the European Community on society and inter-community relationships.
- 9.2 The reality is that ours is a society of many identities and if this Programme is to achieve its full potential, we must ensure that an effective outward looking dimension is part of it. It must be part of our contribution both to learn from the experiences of others and to continue to share our own experiences with areas such as the Middle East, the Balkan states and others emerging from conflict.
- 9.3 As we emerge from conflict, much has changed in terms of relations not only north and south but also east and west, alongside the economy and infrastructure. We have witnessed increased movement of capital, migration and working – north and south.
- 9.4 Other administrations, working to ensure fairness, equality, rights, responsibilities and respect can provide examples of best practice from which we can learn. We want to build networks and share experiences in partnerships with Government and organisations elsewhere.

KEY AIMS

- 9.5 Through this Programme, we have identified the following key aims of looking outward:

- Identifying key exemplar projects which have proven track records of success in promoting good relations;
- Sharing of relevant research and experiences on a North/South, East/West, European and international basis; and
- Mutual promotion of cultural diversity and encouraging better social networks on North/South, East/West, European and international levels.

10. MECHANISM TO OVERSEE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CSI

10.1 OFMDFM is committed to provide strong leadership to ensure that this programme is implemented throughout departments and other bodies.

10.2 This Programme provides an opportunity to develop working practice and structures to promote good relations. We must implement this programme in a new fashion that is both effective and efficient.

10.3 No single Government department, statutory body or community organisation can solve any of the challenges set out in this Programme; however, improving how we work together to identify the causes of problems, agree solutions, allocate resources and co-ordinate actions can improve performance and efficiency across all sectors. It is often clear that communities are best placed to contribute to the change they wish to see and Government must be more inclusive of community resources, in the decision-making processes and the actions towards improvement.

10.4 Woven throughout this document are a range of actions that Government is taking to tackle issues of sectarianism, racism and hate.

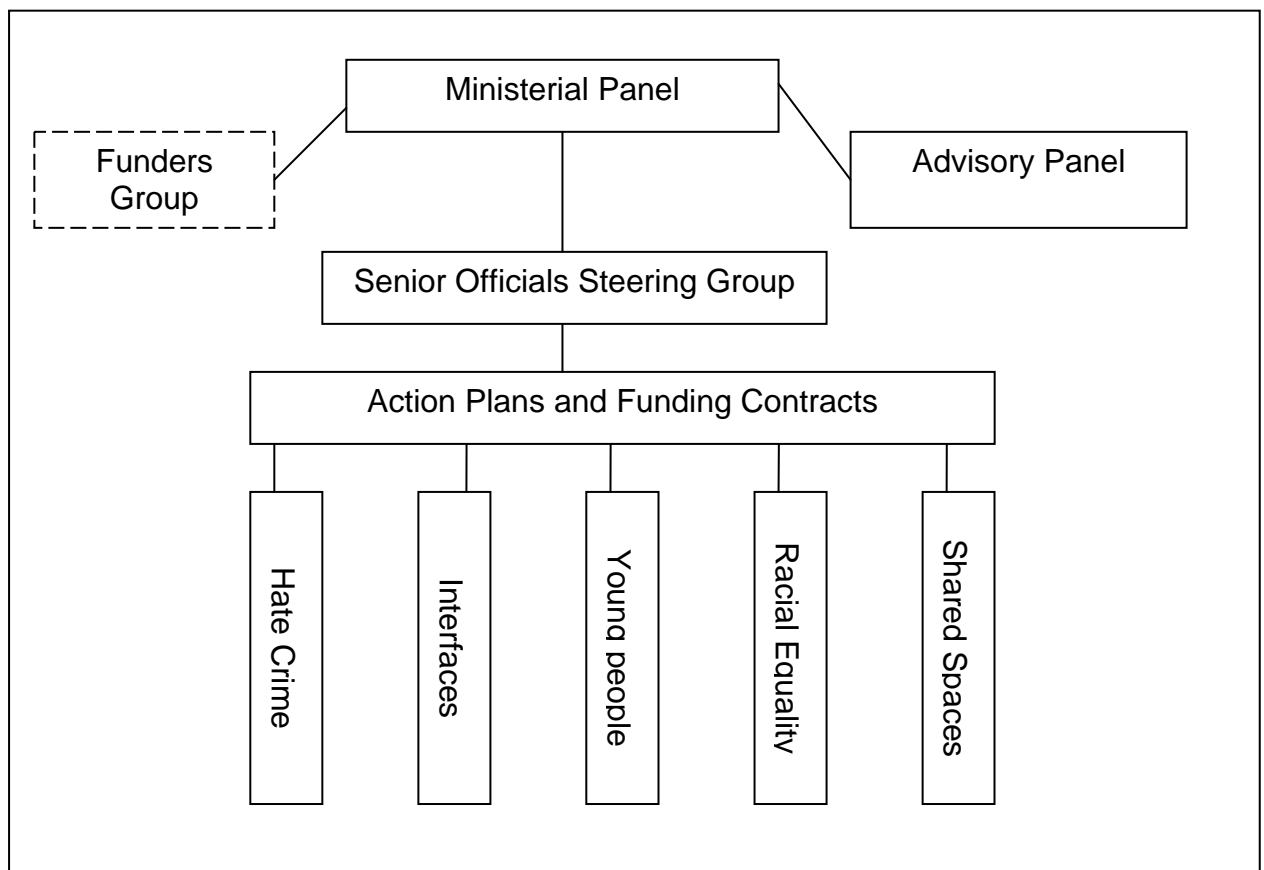
10.5 In times of economic stress Government and all sections of society must work together to be more efficient and effective.

10.6 This chapter sets out mechanisms for the co-ordination of the actions to implement the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration. The key features of implementation are;

- A Ministerial Panel chaired by OFMDFM Ministers, key statutory and community partners;
- A Senior Officials Steering Group which will be tasked with co-ordinating the cross-departmental alignment of activities and allocation of resources;

- An Advisory Panel of practitioners and experts to provide advice to Government.
- A Funders Group that will advise the Ministerial Panel on good relations funding issues and seek to improve the targeting and co-ordination of funding from many different sources.

Mechanism for Implementation of CSI



MINISTERIAL PANEL

10.7 The Panel will be established to be chaired by Ministers of OFMDFM and will include other Executive Ministers. Statutory partners will include representation from the highest level of PSNI, the Youth Justice Agency, Northern Ireland Local Government Association and the NI Housing Executive. Community partners will be Ministerially appointed and will include representatives from a range of community organisations and the Racial Equality Forum. The Secretariat to the Panel will be provided by officials in OFMDFM.

SENIOR OFFICIALS STEERING GROUP

10.8 The Senior Officials Steering Group will comprise Senior Civil Servants of the same group of Departments and Statutory Bodies as the Ministerial Panel and will co-opt others if their Departments are required to take part in any co-ordinated actions.

ADVISORY PANEL OR ROLE OF ADVISOR TO GOVERNMENT BODY

10.9 Chapter 11 sets out options for advice to Government, one of these options is to establish an advisory panel. Other options envisage the role to be undertaken by an arms length body. Whichever option is ultimately selected, it will be essential that the panel or arms length body plays a role in providing expert advice and guidance to the Ministerial Panel. If the option for an advisory panel is accepted the panel will comprise a group of expert good relations practitioners, academics and others who will be asked to serve on the Panel on a voluntary basis for a fixed term. The panel's role will be to examine the progress of the implementation of the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration, to provide advice on key good relations issues and to act as a "critical friend" to the Ministerial Panel. The Chair of the Advisory Panel will sit on the Ministerial Panel. Further information on the composition and operation of this panel is provided at Chapter 11.

FUNDERS GROUP

10.10 The Funders Group will comprise key strategic funders involved in the community relations sector. Representation will be chosen from Government and Statutory Bodies, European funders and the relevant Philanthropic organisations with a stakeholder interest. The purpose of the group will be to provide advice to the Ministerial Panel on how best to co-ordinate and target activity at a strategic level to eliminate duplication and maximise the impact of funding on the ground.

11. OPTIONS FOR THE DELIVERY OF FUNDING AND POLICY ADVICE

BACKGROUND

11.1 In addition to the work in central and local Government and within the community there are additional services that Government may choose to procure. These services are advice to Government and the management of good relations funding to the community sector. This chapter outlines a range of options for the delivery of funding and advice to Government on good relations policy to support the implementation of this Programme.

ADVICE

11.2 Advice to Government is an important role in the creation of Government policy. It involves the development of guidance and advice in support of the principles of this Programme across the range of issues it encompasses. Such advice should test and, where necessary, challenge the policies created by Government throughout the development, implementation and review phases, to help deliver the best possible policy outcomes. The role of Advisor to Government provides an additional significant voice in the public and political discourse on good relations, providing sound, evidence-based and expert advice, contributing to public awareness of the issues and encouraging public debate.

11.3 Across the equality and good relations landscape, there are currently a number of bodies that are responsible for providing advice to Government and challenging existing policy, including:

- Equality Commission;
- Community Relations Council; and
- Community Organisations.

11.4 Additionally there are a number of bodies distributing funding and services to specific groups as well as to the public.

11.5 Within such a complex landscape, the importance of clearly defined roles and responsibilities is vital. This is particularly so in times of economic uncertainty when resources must be used with maximum efficiency to deliver the best possible outcomes.

DELIVERY OF FUNDING

11.6 A number of Government departments provide financial support for community organisations, to develop capacity within the community to engage with Government, the statutory sector and with each other and to provide direct services to their local community. Within the context of the current public sector spending environment, it is vital to ensure even greater levels of efficiency and value for money from this direct investment in communities. A range of funding schemes are likely to be developed in support of the objectives of this programme, to target specific issues and increase the inclusion of community groups in the implementation of CSI. These schemes will be developed subject to availability of resources and value for money assessment.

11.7 The North Belfast Strategic Good Relations Programme has had success in taking an alternative approach to the delivery of funding, which recognises the value of utilising the existing capacity that has been built up over many years within the sector. This approach could realise the benefits of the investment in the community sector over some considerable time in building up the capacity of community groups to deliver services on behalf of Government.

MODERNISING GOVERNANCE

11.8 The ongoing development of the administration's Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration will require strong leadership at

Ministerial level – driving policy and delivery from many departments of central Government. Although the importance of Ministerial leadership is unarguable, Government is only one aspect of the overall policy development and programme delivery landscape. Clear policy direction and focused programme delivery must be developed in partnership with the community.

- 11.9 The implementation of the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration may require changes to the current governance architecture to increase efficiency and effectiveness. The options provided below are the basis for discussion about the future procurement of advice and funding services by Government.

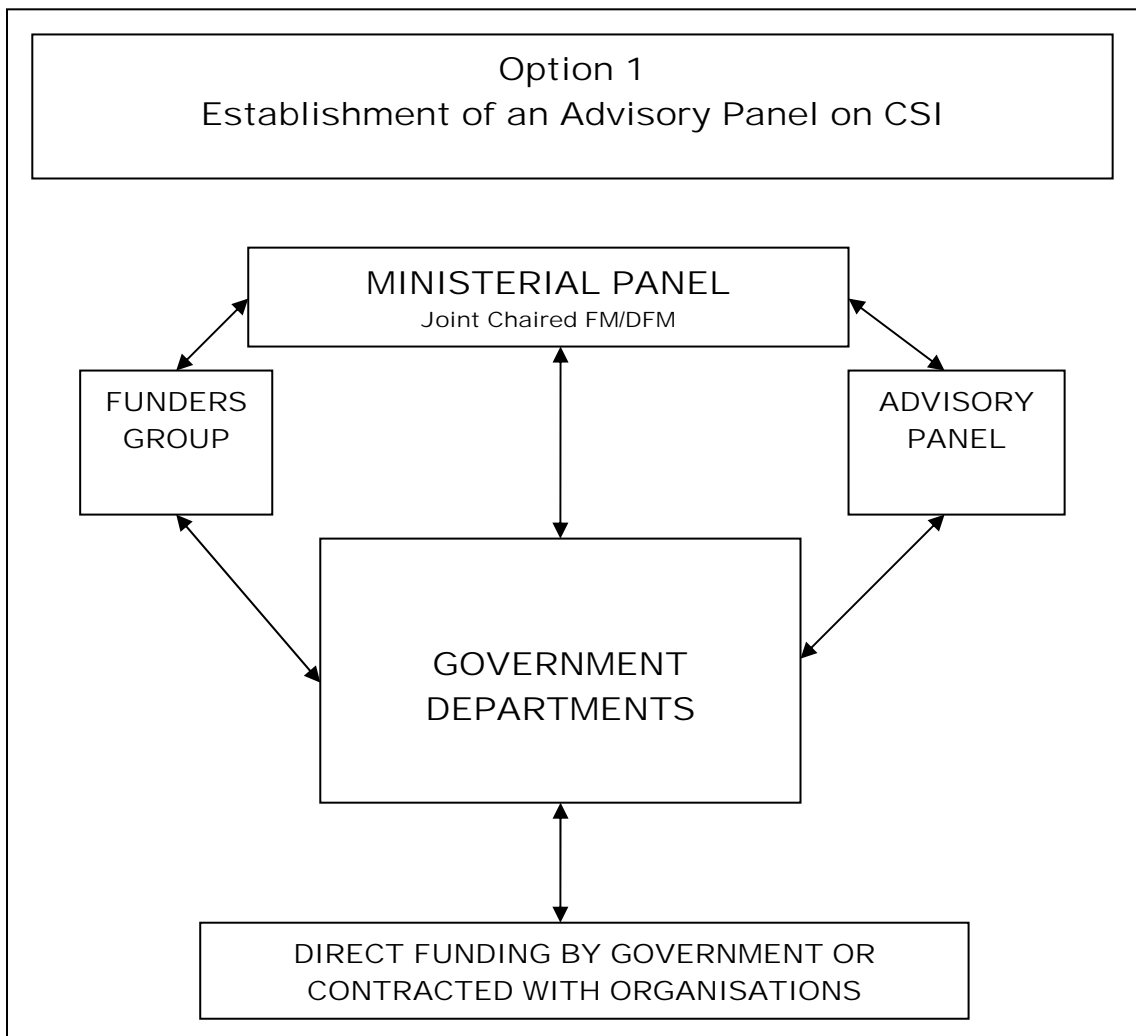
OPTION 1

ADVISORY PANEL AND DIRECT (OR CONTRACTED) FUNDING

- 11.10 This option provides for the establishment of an advisory panel on CSI and funding to the community administered directly by the department or contracted out to organisation(s) with the relevant expertise and experience.
- 11.11 This Programme establishes a Ministerial Panel for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration which will play a key role in reviewing and monitoring the implementation of the Programme, and ensuring its strategic direction is maintained.
- 11.12 Within this model an Advisory Panel of good relations practitioners, academics and others would be established under the Ministerial panel to provide expert advice to Government and act as the ‘critical friend’ for good relations policy.
- 11.13 The Panel would seek to draw from the range of expertise and skills that exist throughout academia and the community. It is also proposed to have representation from the business and church sectors. Membership would be drawn from experts across the good relations spectrum to include sectarianism and racism providing a coordinated and all round approach to policy advice.
- 11.14 The Panel’s role will be to examine the progress of the implementation of the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration, to provide advice on key good relations issues and to act as a “critical friend” to the Ministerial Panel. The Chair of the Advisory Panel will sit on the Ministerial Panel.
- 11.15 Panel members would be appointed by the First Minister and deputy First Minister to serve for the period of the Programme for Government. Panel membership would be non salaried and members would serve on an independent basis.

11.16 The major benefit of this option is that it allows for a minimum allocation of resources to the administration of the 'advice to Government role' while ensuring an expert and strategic overview of good relations work is in place and provide increased resources for activity taking place at the local level. Direct accountability to Ministers is also a key benefit.

11.17 The delivery of funding to the community to underpin the work across themes of this Programme would be delivered either directly by Government, or through a series of contracts with organisations in the community.



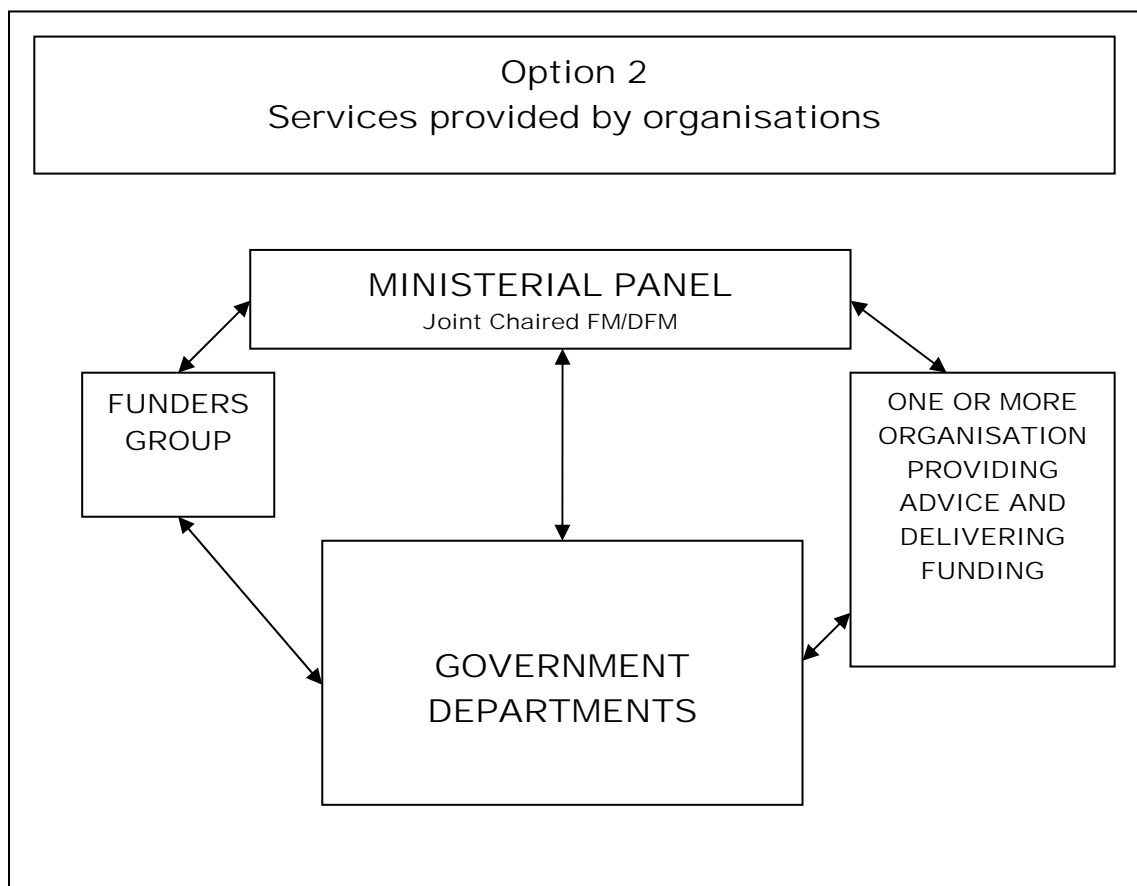
OPTION 2

SERVICES PROVIDED BY ORGANISATIONS

11.18 This option would allow Government to procure all services from organisations. In relation to the delivery of funding it is similar to the previous option, however it also provides for Government to procure advisory services from organisations. For the purposes of this option organisations are defined widely and are intended to include social enterprises, companies limited by guarantee and charities.

11.19 The contract(s) for the provision of advice would permit flexibility for Government to seek a range of advice from experts depending on the issue under focus.

11.20 The option to procure the delivery of advice and funding from one organisation – along the lines of the present role of the Community Relations Council – is not excluded. The management of the contract with such a body would be overseen by OFMDFM.



OPTION 3 (a)

DEVELOPING A NEW STATUTORY NON-DEPARTMENTAL PUBLIC BODY

11.21 Within this proposed model, the Community Relations Council could become a statutory NDPB. The Council would retain the funding delivery function in addition to its roles in providing advice to Government and other agencies.

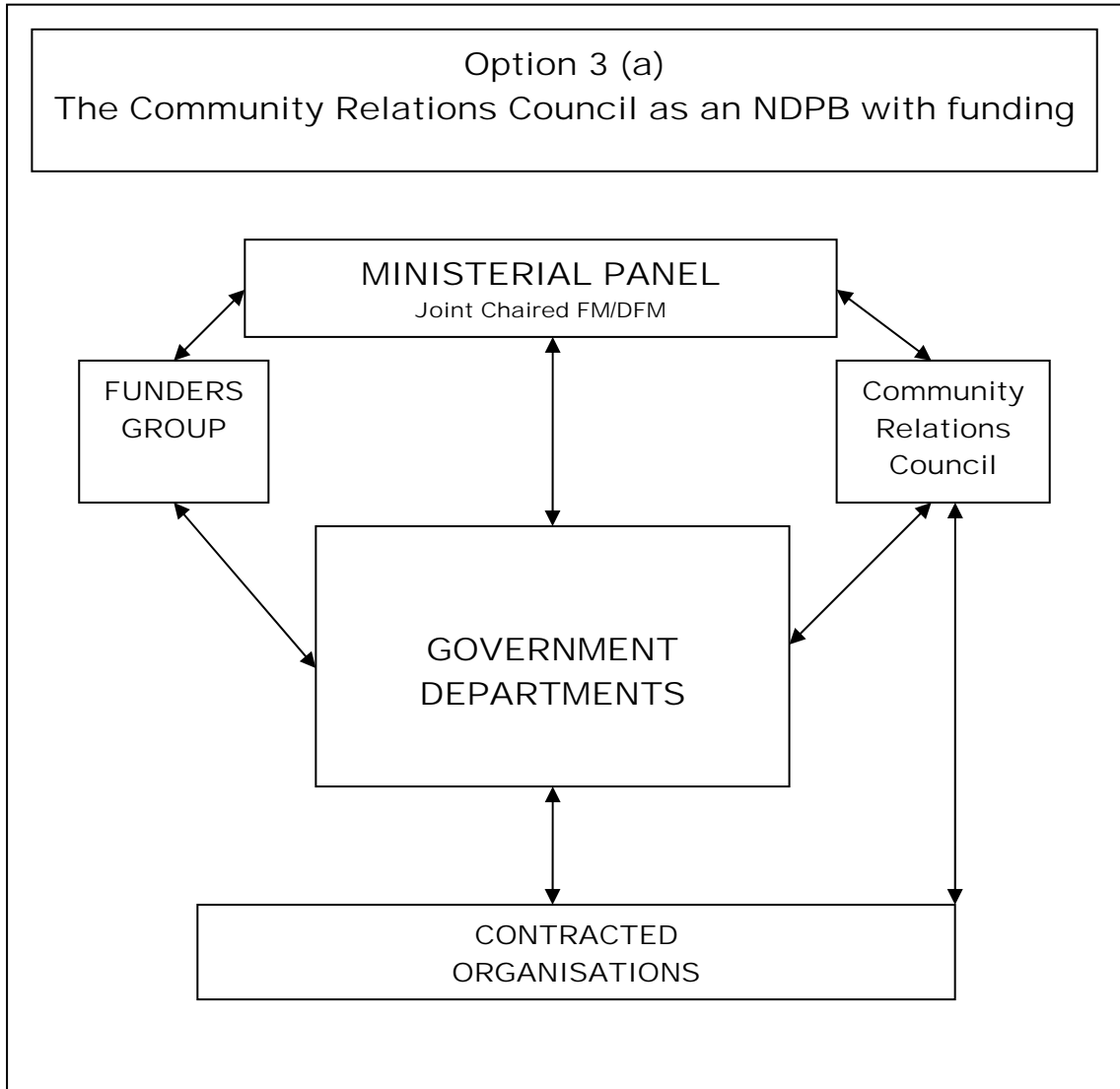
11.22 The benefits of this option would lie in the ease with which change could be implemented and the minimal disruption to the organisation itself although this must be considered against the need for creating such a body given the current economic context and the drive for greater efficiency within Governments existing structures.

11.23 Within this proposed structure, the depth of knowledge and expertise in policy advice and at practitioner level that currently resides in the Community Relations Council would be safeguarded within the organisation. Any delivery mechanism must make full use of the valuable resource that exists in the form of an established knowledge base.

11.24 The skills that reside within the current council will help to shape and influence the way ahead and this proposed model would ensure that none of this knowledge is lost within an extensive restructuring exercise.

11.25 This option would require an assessment to determine if the current Community Relations Council is fit for purpose. One criticism that may be levelled at the current remit of the Community Relations Council concerns the wide range of functions for which it has responsibility. In particular, the funding to groups/bodies and the contracting of funding services to other funders splits the focus of the organisation. The vital advice to Government role is sometimes compromised by the delivery of funding role. It is important therefore that the preferred delivery model is clear in its definition of the Council's responsibilities and

relationship with Government so as to ensure that its advisory and challenge role is not subsumed within wider funding delivery responsibilities.



OPTION 3(b)

STATUTORY NDPB WITHOUT FUNDING FUNCTION

11.26 In this model, the Community Relations Council would be formally constituted as an NDPB with board members being appointed according to the existing Memorandum of Association (as in Option 3(a)). Funding would be delivered either directly by Government or through a contracted arrangement with a body with the relevant expertise and experience.

11.27 Government has created a number of advisory bodies in areas where additional advocacy and oversight of law, policy and practice is required, such as:

- Commission for Victims and Survivors;
- Equality Commission; and
- Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children & Young People.

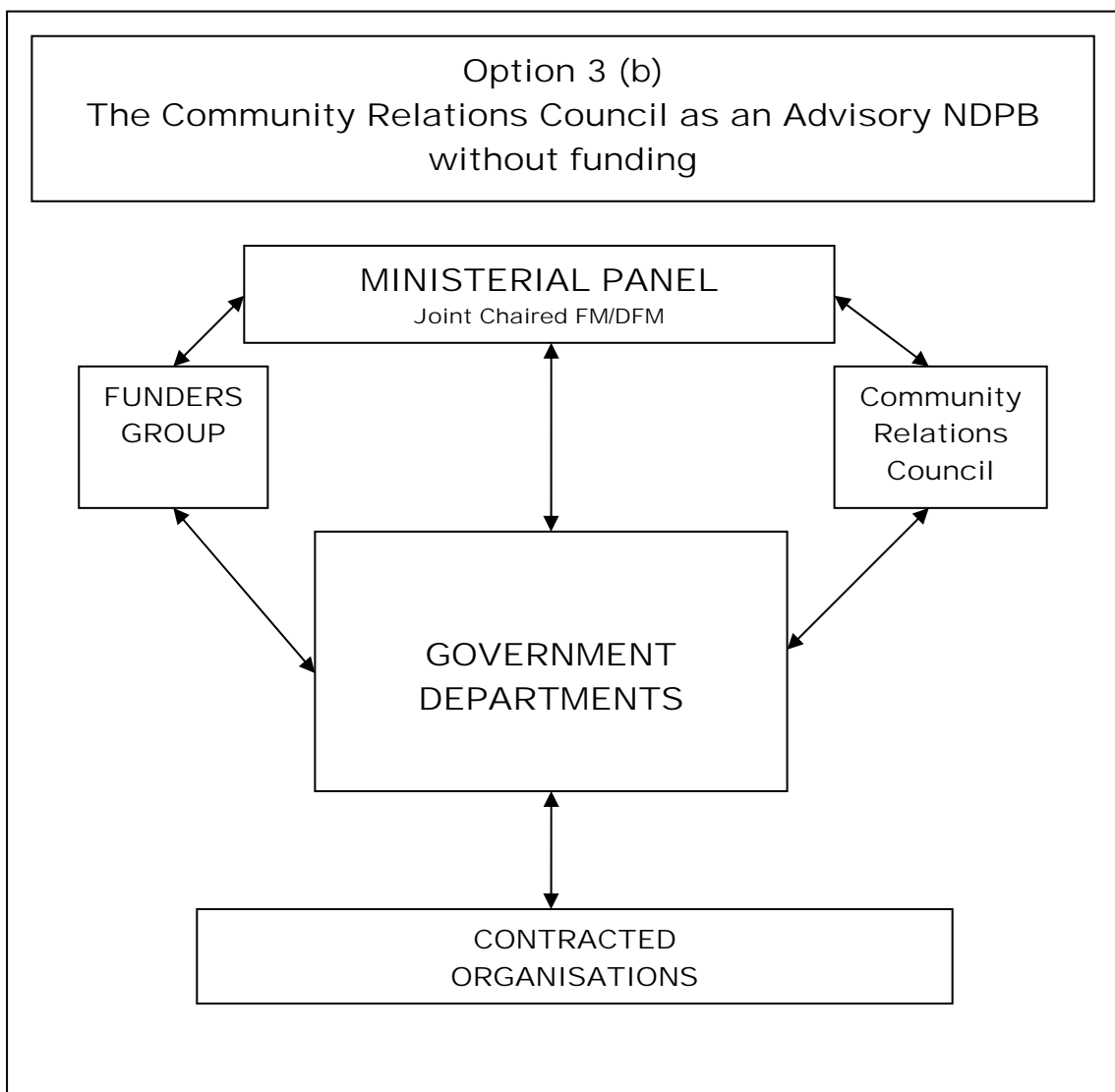
11.28 Within this structure, the funding service would not reside with the Community Relations Council but would be administered within the Department or contracted out to external delivery agents. The removal of the funding delivery function would give the Council the space and resources to refine and sharpen its role as an advisory body to Government. However, inevitably it would not be afforded the same level of resources as it currently attracts.

11.29 Removing the funding delivery element would serve to strengthen the organisation's capacity to comment on Government policy and provide improved, effective advisory services.

11.30 In order to construct an effective framework for programme delivery and implementation, it is important that Government is continuously challenged and inspired to realise improved outcomes for all citizens in our society. Providing advice to Government on good relations issues is a central part of that framework. Allowing the Community Relations

Council to exist as a non-departmental public body but removing a funding function would help ensure improved delivery to Government in the form of more focused, strategic advice across all of Government. This option would allow the Council to concentrate its efforts and direct its expertise towards a more focused role as Government advisor and challenger.

11.31 In this model, the funding function would be contracted out to other bodies with contracts being managed by OFMDFM.



12. OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF OFMDFM FUNDING FOR GOOD RELATIONS WORK

CONTEXT

12.1 This Programme recognises the continued need to resource the vital work being carried out at local level to make a difference in communities. Over the past decade departmental [and other] funding has made a real difference to allowing and supporting work to tackle sectarianism and racism, and build more cohesive communities. Since the Nineties funding from Europe, the International Fund for Ireland, and various philanthropic sources has also been a key and invaluable resource to support our work to build a shared and better future for all. We recognise that much of this work would not have been able to take place without the financial support provided.

12.2 We are currently operating within a context of constrained resources for all types of Government spending. It is also likely that European funding levels will not be sustained in the coming years, while other funding sources are constrained. This Programme therefore seeks to establish a framework within which available resources can be more effectively managed and integrated to target the funding strategically, avoid duplication, ensure complementarity, and maximise the impact on the ground. This Programme will provide a platform for the development of more innovative and creative ways of working which encourage communities to effectively and efficiently work together in partnership with each other, with Government, and with the private sector.

VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR

12.3 The voluntary and community sector will play a crucial role in ensuring this Programme is delivered in a way which has positive, tangible impacts on the ground. We recognise that voluntary and community

groups are operating with knowledge and expertise on the frontline, making differences to the issues that matter in local communities. The effective delivery of funding is vital in continuing to support community and voluntary work to deliver Good Relations and in shaping a better future for our society.

12.4 This chapter presents options for delivery mechanisms which involve the voluntary and community sector. In line with the best practice outlined in The Compact, this sector will be involved in developing the details of these delivery mechanisms. By involving the sector in the practical out workings of this Programme, we will ensure that Government meets community need by providing the right resources at the right places to achieve better outcomes.

12.5 This Programme will aim to work closely with the third sector to identify and deliver on community relations issues that impact on communities. We are operating within a context of constrained resources for public expenditure. Accordingly we will ensure that this Programme is resourced in varied and flexible ways which are appropriate and tailored to improving people's every day lives. This should result in positive outcomes in terms of physical, economic and social regeneration in areas which have suffered the most as a result of conflict. Investing in these areas will, in the long-term, make them more attractive for inward investment from the private sector and beyond.

CO-ORDINATION

12.6 No single Government department, statutory body or community organisation can solve any of the challenges set out in this Programme; however, improving how we work together to identify the causes of problems, agree solutions, allocate resources, and co-ordinate actions can improve performance across all sectors. This Programme will enhance the coordination of Government activity and

provide for better working of funding in partnership with the community and voluntary sector.

12.7 In times of economic stress Government and community must work together to make more improvement with fewer resources. We have been greatly assisted in the transition from conflict to peace by the funds from international partners, but these are not going to be available in the medium and long-terms. In the context of increasing pressures on public expenditure, we cannot afford to continue to provide services separately to divided communities. Government and the community must work together in the spirit of fairness, equality, rights, responsibilities and respect to limit the division in communities, to improve a sense of security for all, to tackle the reasons why our different cultural identities are challenging to each other and to be more welcoming to those who want to join our community from other countries.

OPTIONS FOR OFMDFM FUNDING

12.8 At present the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister administers a number of funding programmes directly, for example, the North Belfast Strategic Good Relations Programme and the Minority Ethnic Development Fund. Funding is also provided to the Community Relations Council to administer funding streams on behalf of the Department in the areas of community relations and cultural diversity, research and victims / survivors groups.

12.9 The Community Relations Council currently administers core funding, small grants, and Pathfinder programmes. These programmes have funded jobs, and helped to deliver services on the ground. Funding has built the capacity of community hubs and networks and enabled cross community work to take place which would not have taken place however, dependency on grant funding is becoming unsustainable in the medium to long term.

12.10 In the development of funding options for the delivery of programmes under the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration, 3 levels of funding have been identified:

(i) LOCAL DISTRICT COUNCIL PROGRAMME

12.11 The District Council Programme has provided local Government with the resources to embed good relations at Council level. The programme recognises the importance of resourcing and supporting the development and implementation of local solutions to local problems.

12.12 Funding is allocated against action plans which address problems clearly identified and prioritised through community audits. We propose that funding arrangements will continue in their current form for 2010/11 with a view to a review of the performance of the District Council Programme in 2011/12 to identify recommendations for improvement.

(ii) THEMATIC

12.13 Funding would be delivered by a body such as the Community Relations Council or through a series of contracts with organisations with a proven track record and local knowledge which could tender for delivery.

(iii) TARGETED AND EMERGENCY

12.14 Ministers wish to retain the flexibility to be able to provide, in exceptional circumstances, small amounts of funding for reactive and innovative work and 'one off events' that could, if funded, encourage communities and organisations to positively explore engaging in longer term relationship and capacity building work.

12.15 This funding provides an emergency response to combat crisis incidents in the community caused by sectarianism, racism and hate crime.

13. EQUALITY STATEMENT

EQUALITY ISSUES

Section 75 (1) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, which came into force on 1st January 2000, states, 'A public authority shall in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:

- (a) between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- (b) between men and women generally;
- (c) between persons with a disability and persons without; and
- (d) between persons with dependants and persons without.'

In addition Section 75 (2) states that; 'Without prejudice to its obligations above, a public authority shall, in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.'

All government policy is developed within the context of the equality of opportunity provisions set out in section 75(1) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. This is particularly relevant to the Good Relations duty, the legislative foundations of which are in section 75(2). Obligations under section 75(2) cannot prejudice the obligations under section 75(1). It is recognised that good relations cannot be built on inequality. It is recognised that the promotion of equality of opportunity is an essential element of building good relations.

Consideration of available data and research

Information on incidents and crimes motivated by sectarianism, racism or homophobia are available from the PSNI. Attitudinal information is also available on issues such as integration and segregation, flags and emblems

In many communities there is a high correlation between interfaces, sectarian attacks and social disadvantage. We will continue to monitor hate crime and social disadvantage and develop indicators relevant to measuring the impact of CSI.

Annually, OFMDFM update and publish on their website a set of Good Relations Indicators. The indicators are used to illustrate the state of good relations. Data from a variety of sources are relied upon to inform the indicators e.g. Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey; Department of Education's Annual School Census and School Leavers Survey; and statistics from the Police Service of Northern Ireland; Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Northern Ireland Tourist Board; Office of the Industrial Tribunals and Fair Employment Tribunal; Equality Commission.

All individual Departmental policies must be equality screened. Wherever screening indicates that it is necessary, policies are subject to a full Equality Impact Assessment.

Equality is mainstreamed throughout the strategic development process of this Programme. Together with Equality Impact Assessment at programme level we will work with the Equality Commission to monitor any equality impact assessments of policies deriving from this Programme, to ensure consistency; to continue to develop our overview of the equality aspects of the strategy.

Decisions and Publication

The consideration of these equality issues and any others raised in consultation, will be taken into account prior to final decisions being made by Ministers. This will be fully reflected in the final strategy.