



Embedding Wellbeing in Northern Ireland Peer-to-peer learning event on collective resourcing

Tuesday 10 December 2019, 09.30-13.30 Craigavon Civic and Conference Centre

Welcome and introductions

Aideen McGinley, Chair, Embedding Wellbeing in Northern Ireland project Advisory Group

Aideen McGinley, Chair of the Embedding Wellbeing in Northern Ireland project Advisory Group, welcomed attendees to the peer-to-peer learning event on collective resourcing.

Aideen provided an overview of the Carnegie UK Trust's work designed to improve wellbeing in Northern Ireland, commencing in 2014 with the Carnegie Roundtable on Measuring What Matters in Northern Ireland. The work of the Roundtable influenced the development of the draft Programme for Government, and thereafter the Trust sought to continue its work within the new, complex political and policy landscape in Northern Ireland. The Trust considered the re-organisation of local government and the new powers of Community Planning bestowed at the local level to be opportunities to embed the work of Roundtable. As one of the few policy vehicles currently operational, the Trust considered supporting Community Planning as an opportunity to support democracy at the local level; community wellbeing; and the co-production of public services.

Aideen explained that the Trust is working directly with the Community Planning Partnerships working in the local authority areas of Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon; Derry City and Strabane; and Lisburn and Castlereagh, however, is committed to sharing best practice and learning across the eleven Community Planning Partnerships.

Aideen explained that the event was designed to share learning on how collective resourcing can be achieved in a cohesive way, and to celebrate the recent milestone of the publication of the Partnerships' first Statements of Progress.

International policy learning: The development of a wellbeing budget in New Zealand (video address)

The Hon Grant Robertson New Zealand Minister of Finance, Minister for Sport and Recreation, and Associate Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage

The Hon Grant Robertson, New Zealand Minister of Finance, Minister for Sport and Recreation, and Associate Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage, addressed the attendees via pre-recorded video conference. The Minister provided an overview of New Zealand's recent wellbeing budget; the government's wider wellbeing approach; and the corresponding reforms which New Zealand is implementing to their finance system.

This year New Zealand delivered its first wellbeing budget which signalled a new approach and a significant change from traditional budgets, which focused primarily on economic data using a narrow range of indicators such as GDP. The wellbeing budget aims to place wellbeing at the centre of every step of the budget process, from setting priorities to analysing policy proposals, to weighing up the trade-offs and making the decisions that the Government must ultimately make in a budget process.





The wellbeing budget focused on five priority areas, as below:

- 1) Supporting mental wellbeing;
- 2) Reducing child poverty and improving child wellbeing;
- 3) Lifting Maori populations' skills, income and opportunities;
- 4) Supporting a thriving nation in a digital age; and
- 5) Creating opportunities for productive businesses and regions to achieve a sustainable and low emissions economy.

The Living Standards Framework

The above priorities were selected using an evidence base of indicators from New Zealand's Living Standards Framework dashboard, along with advice from key stakeholders. The Framework has indicators on wellbeing, and has a similar framing to the OECD framework, allowing international comparisons.

The Government is looking to solve complex, intergenerational problems. The wellbeing budget is a first important step to addressing some of the challenges faced. The wellbeing budget is part of an overall programme to put the wellbeing of citizens at the heart of everything they do. Achieving genuine and enduring change requires the public sector to move towards a new way of thinking.

A wellbeing approach includes three fundamental challenges, as below:

- 1) Taking a whole government approach: breaking down agency silos and working together to assess, develop and implement policies to enable wellbeing. New Zealand is reforming State Sector legislation, which will now be called the Public Services Act.
- 2) Intergenerational outcomes: the need to focus not only on present generations' needs, but also on the impact on future generations.
- 3) The need to move beyond narrow measures of success to track progress against broader measures, alongside traditional indicators in the budget.

Statistics New Zealand: Tracking trends over time

Statistics New Zealand developed a new set of metrics called Indicators Aotearoa New Zealand. They provide an overarching source of measures for measuring New Zealand's wellbeing and provide a comprehensive sweep of over a hundred social, cultural, environmental and economic indicators.

There are challenges associated with wellbeing data sets, predominantly capturing what matters for everyone whilst keeping it to a manageable number of indicators. This was challenging given the diversity of the population in New Zealand.

Indicators take a long time to shift, creating a tension between seeking to take a long-term view and be more strategic, with the demands of a three-year political cycle. Delivering now whilst also considering future generations is a core challenge for any government.

The reform of New Zealand's public finance system

The reform of New Zealand's public finance system aims to reduce the risk aversion inherent in public services and promote innovation. There is a need for a public finance system that enables the public service to positively assist and improve intergenerational wellbeing of New Zealanders; time and focus on strategic management of public finances; and a system shifted to improve intergenerational wellbeing.

New Zealand recently amended the Public Finance Act to require the Minister of Finance and all government departments to report on child wellbeing and child poverty reduction at each budget. At the time of the budget, the Minister must discuss progress made in line with measures and legislation. In addition, the Act was amended to require all governments to set wellbeing objectives and explain how objectives guide budgets. They are required to report periodically on the state of wellbeing, to ensure that it is an enduring approach.





Shifting a government's focus to wellbeing comes with challenges, as below:

- Changing how we think and work takes time;
- The need to continue building the public sector's capability;
- The need to apply new evidence bases and data;
- Enabling collaboration and partnership working across the public sector;
- Moving beyond silo working;
- The perception of a devaluing or watering down of fiscal policy; and
- Making trade-offs on a wide range of outcomes.

The Minister acknowledged that there are other international examples of countries taking a wellbeing approach to government. The OECD have encouraged countries to look beyond GDP as a measure of success; Wales published its first wellbeing report in 2017 and subsequent report in 2019; France have new indicators of wealth; and in Scotland wellbeing is being measured using the National Performance Framework.

Learning from Scotland and Wales: working to outcomes

Jennifer Wallace, Head of Policy, Carnegie UK Trust

Jennifer Wallace, Head of Policy at the Carnegie UK Trust, re-iterated the Trust's history in supporting wellbeing in Northern Ireland, and welcomed the work of the last five years as a great journey which the Trust has been pleased to be a part of.

Jennifer explained the three different definitions of wellbeing as personal wellbeing, living well; community wellbeing, living well locally; and societal wellbeing, living well together – the consideration of which brings issues such as the environment and inequalities to the fore. Jennifer discussed international and UK wellbeing initiatives and explained that while wellbeing is a global phenomenon, it has a particular local dimension in Northern Ireland. Wellbeing frameworks in place around the world all have a similar structure, in that they have a vision statement; outcomes; and indicators. The key argument in Jennifer's book, *Wellbeing and Devolution: Reframing the Role of Government in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland*, is that there has been a shift away from new public management to a new approach to governance which is manifesting in a set of processes for the development of central and local wellbeing being frameworks.

Jennifer outlined the journeys of Scotland and Wales in the development of wellbeing frameworks, and the challenges and lessons from each jurisdiction. In Wales there have been challenges around partnership working; pooling of budgets; the one-off nature of citizen engagement; a lack of dedicated funding to support the shift in the ways of working; a lack of curiosity about wellbeing data; and a lack of looking to the future, all of which the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales is seeking to address. In Scotland, challenges include alignment both between partners at the local level and from the local to the central government level; tension between engaging the community and accountability; and a lack of focus on what is trying to be achieved. The lessons from these jurisdictions were outlined as the legislation not being fit for purpose in its first iteration; the need for funding from the centre to support a wellbeing approach; the need for leaders from the centre to ensure the approach remains on the agenda; the need for communities to be empowered; the need for support on pooling resources from audit bodies; the need for a single set of data and statistics which all partners use; and the need to recognise that a wellbeing approach requires a long-term culture shift of a programme of around ten to fifteen years to re-think public service delivery.







A local inclusive economy in Northern Ireland

Charlie Fisher, Programme Manager, Development Trusts Northern Ireland

Charlie Fisher, Programme Manager at Development Trusts Northern Ireland (DTNI), provided an overview of DTNI as an organisation and the focus of its work in Northern Ireland.

Charlie outlined the importance of a local inclusive economy to societal wellbeing, explaining the link between local economies and central government strategies. The features of a local inclusive economy were outlined as system changing; a revolution in grassroots enterprise; anchor institutions embedded in and working for the local economy; enabling and empathic local leadership; true corporate social responsibility; assets owned by and working for the community; co-produced local economic development; true devolution and a new social contract; finance that serves people and place; and a more effective set of measurements of a successful economy.

DNTI's Time to Build an Inclusive Local Economy: A Charter for Change outlines four pillars for action as below:

- Developing finance to support local economies;
- Advancing community power;
- Commissioning and procuring for social value; and
- Building local community wealth.

The challenges and recommendations for the pillars for action were discussed.

A proposal for a Community Rights Act for Northern Ireland was outlined, as comprising the below:

- The Right to Own ownership provides community organisations with a physical basis for sustainability;
- The Right to Bid nominating a building as an asset of community value gives communities time to raise the funds to bid for the asset on the open market;
- The Right to Challenge communities could challenge the provision of services where they can be shown to be improved; and
- The Right to Participate getting involved in the decisions that affect the shape of the place people live.

Charlie concluded that Northern Ireland is on a journey of how it better manages what is owned by the public, for the public, and that there is a need to strategically work on the relationship between the right to own, bid, challenge and participate.

Sharing good practice from the Statements of Progress

Nichola Creagh, Head of Community Planning, the Department for Communities and Karen Smyth, Head of Policy, NILGA

Nichola Creagh, Head of Community Planning at the Department for Communities, introduced the session as an opportunity to showcase the successes contained within the respective Community Planning Partnerships' Statements of Progress. Nichola welcomed the opportunity for the representatives from across the Partnerships to discuss what had been achieved since the introduction of Community Planning; what has changed on the ground in communities; and what the Partnerships will do differently in the next phase of Community Planning.

Karen Smyth, Head of Policy at the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA), commended the great work outlined in the Statements of Progress. Community Planning was heralded as a vehicle for improving wellbeing outcomes, and the Partnerships were considered to have made a great start in the current difficult political and policy climate. Karen invited a representative from each Partnership in attendance, in alphabetical order, to provide a brief presentation on one achievement or action from their Statement of Progress of which the Partnership is proud.





Clare Adair, Antrim and Newtownabbey

The presentation from the Community Planning Partnership working in Antrim and Newtownabbey focused on Outcome 1 from the Community Plan: *Our citizens enjoy good health and wellbeing*. The Partnership's Outcome Delivery Plan focused on the following actions within the first two years:

- The launch of the Take 5 framework developed for primary school age children, workplace health initiatives, and used in communities by groups and individuals;
- The Community Growing Programme which aimed to improve access to and provision of play and recreational facilities across the borough. Allotments were installed in two district electoral areas (DEAs) to encourage community engagement with healthy eating, and the programme is continuing with the support of local community groups.

The Council's leisure strategy is also being developed with partner organisations to remove the barriers for citizens using play or recreational facilities.

Community Planning has united partner organisations within Antrim and Newtownabbey to focus on making the borough age friendly. To date, the Partnership has:

- Co-ordinated with Dementia NI to hold a 'real lives' event to share stories of people living with dementia and to showcase the support available.
- Celebrated positive ageing month in October across the borough. In the Borough Life magazine, events which encourage older people to get involved with their local community were advertised, for example, taking an exercise class, joining a walking group, attending a film screening or art class.
- Applied to become members of the World Health Organisation Global Network for Age Friendly Cities and Communities, to connect the community worldwide and increase the visibility of their age friendly work.
- Launched its Loneliness Network which is focused on reducing social isolation and loneliness within the borough. This network will act to better connect people with each other and with services operating in their area.

As next steps, an age friendly steering group is currently being organised; the Partnership is applying to the Communities and the UK Age Friendly network; and is mapping activities and services for older people across the borough to make Antrim and Newtownabbey age friendly.

Patricia Mackey, Ards and North Down

Representing Ards and North Down Community Planning Partnership, Patricia Mackey, Community Planning Manager, explained that the Partnership's greatest successes to date have resulted from people connecting with one and other, especially those who had not come into contact with each other prior to the introduction of Community Planning. An example was provided of the development of a 12 week social prescribing programme by Peninsula Healthy Living and National Trust, following connections made at Community Planning meetings.

Patricia focused on the action of Ards and North Down being welcome to everyone, of all abilities and needs, and provided the following examples of actions taken to date:

- The development of an accessible beach at Groomsport, a partnership project between Sport NI, Ards and North Down Borough Council, and the Mae Murray Foundation.
- Off road mobility scooters work being undertaken by the National Trust to increase all ability access to their trails network.
- Virtual Reality tours of Bangor Aurora, a partnership project between Sport NI and Mencap facilitated by a third sector Community Planning Forum meeting.

To date, ensuring that Ards and North Down is welcoming to everyone has focused on Section 75 groups. However, the Partnership is now seeking to take their work further, by considering, for example, skills development and opportunities for entrepreneurs; attracting tourism; and business infrastructure.





Jennie Dunlop, Armagh Banbridge and Craigavon

Jennie Dunlop, Community Planning Manager at Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council, outlined the development of a Community Engagement Strategy for the Community Planning Partnership, supported by the Carnegie UK Trust and developed by Community Places, as an action the Partnership is proud of. The strategy was approved by the Partnership in June 2019, and is currently in its implementation phase.

The strategy is designed to:

- Enhance the Partnership's community engagement through agreed standards, defined roles and clear actions: and
- Maximise opportunities for citizens to be more involved and have a meaningful say in decisions which affect their lives

The strategy is predicated on there being a spectrum of public participation, from informing to consulting; involving; collaborating; and empowering. The strategy has also adopted the Scottish National Standards for Community Engagement. The challenges that were identified in community engagement are impact, clearly linking community engagement to policy and decision-making; inclusion and diversity; and the quality of dialogue and deliberation.

Further to the development of the strategy, actions which have or are being undertaken include the development of a 'how to' guide for community engagement; sharing good practice; and participatory budgeting and mini-publics.

Kevin Heaney, Belfast City Council

In Belfast, Community Planning has been used as the policy vehicle to take action on avoidable winter deaths in the city. While the issue was previously considered in silos, Community Planning provided the opportunity to get the relevant stakeholders in one room and be proactive to consider a 'whole home' service. The stakeholders sought to:

- Identify people who are vulnerable to the risk factors associated with avoidable winter deaths;
- Develop and maintain a referral pathway, for a single point of contact;
- Ensure people who are 'at risk' receive the services and support they need;
- Raise awareness of support via a multi-agency winter communication plan;
- Mobilise local community and social assets to support identification, referral and support; and
- Evaluate the effectiveness and impact of new approach.

To date, the stakeholders have:

- Engaged with partners, through an Outcomes Based Accountability workshop, to better understand the current context/drivers:
- Identified 'at risk' population groups, through data review, identification, and intelligence, to inform activity for 2019/2020;
- Developed an integrated referral pathway and appointed a single point of contact;
- Developed common screening and assessment tools and relevant training resources;
- Secured partner commitment to mobilise frontline staff to support the screening and referral process; and
- Created a Community Fund with seed resources from partners.

This has led to the development of a two-layered model which is both city-wide and focuses where there are localities of greatest vulnerability.

The challenges and opportunities of the approach were identified, as below:

- Establishing a simplified identification, referral and assessment process;
- Securing resource commitment to support delivery in the immediate 2019/20 winter period;
- Support services' capacity for potential referrals;
- Medium to long-term sustainability, for future cold weather periods;
- The opportunity to test a multi-agency, integrated approach to delivery outcomes; and
- Integrating geospatial data from partners into a shared layered map to target joint action.





Louise Pollock, Causeway Coast and Glens

Louise Pollock, Economic Development Officer at Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, provided an overview of the Alchemy Business Support Programme, designed to support a local thriving economy.

Alchemy supports economic growth through engaging; collaborating; mentoring; signposting and hosting workshops. Since March 2018, the Alchemy Business Support Programme has engaged 530 people; signposted 301 to support; mentored 213; collaborated with 12; and hosted 14 workshops.

Louise provided an example of the support provided to Coastal Care, with the contributions provided by Alchemy; Invest NI; and the Labour Relations Agency respectively, and the outcomes secured as a result.

Rachael Craig, Derry and Strabane

Strategic Business Manager at Derry City and Strabane District Council, Rachael Craig, reported on the outcomes achieved by the local Community Crisis Intervention Service. In a bid to improve challenging mental health outcomes in Derry City and Strabane, the Western Health and Social Care Trust; Health and Social Care Board/Public Health Authority; Derry City and Strabane District Council; Ulster University; and Foyle Search and Rescue came together to develop a 24-hour crisis response service. In the first six months of the service, there were 141 interventions, generating approximately £230,000 in savings to the health service.

Rachael also briefly addressed the development of Derry City and Strabane District Council's Green Infrastructure Plan, the first to be developed in Northern Ireland. A key action within the Plan is to create a Natural Capital Account, which is being developed with support from the Carnegie UK Trust through the Embedding Wellbeing in Northern Ireland project. Indicative findings from the Natural Capital Account are that green and blue spaces provide around £49 million per year in mental wellbeing value to the district.

Oonagh Donnelly and team, Fermanagh and Omagh

An overview of the actions taken towards Outcome 2: Older people lead more independent, engaged and socially connected lives, and Action 2.1: Establish an Age Friendly District, of the Fermanagh and Omagh Community Plan were provided. The indicators, baselines, latest data and trends for Outcome 2 were explained, and the activities of the South West Age Partnership to achieve the outcome were outlined. It was determined that the activities to support older people to lead more independent, engaged and socially connected lives would not have happened without the Community Planning Partnership and its approach, which levered funding.

In the development of an Age Friendly District, asking the performance measure questions of 'where are we now?' and 'is anyone any better off?' provides a set of criteria for any provider of services for older people. The next steps for activities to achieve the outcome were considered to be new actions; improved performance measures; and the use of data and evidence to inform decision-making.

Mabel Scullion, Lisburn and Castlereagh

Mabel Scullion, Early Intervention Lisburn Manager at Help Kids Talk, provided an overview of the local project designed to improve speech, language and communication among children. The project involves cross-sectoral partnerships between statutory, voluntary and community agencies to improve outcomes for children, young people, and families. Action to improve speech and language among young people was considered important due to it being an indicator of educational achievement; behaviour; mental health; employability; criminality; and the cycle of disadvantage.

The project is aligned to Community Planning and the draft Programme for Government by undertaking a preventative approach. The difference Community Planning has made to the project was considered to be as below:

- It has provided a platform to progress the project;
- It has helped to establish a steering group of 26 members of community, voluntary, statutory and private partners, such as Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council, the Public Health Agency/Health and Social Care Board, South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust, Surestart, libraries, schools, and churches;
- It has facilitated a co-ordinated and consistent approach by a partnership of key stakeholders;
- It has allowed a public health campaign, with 12 key, simple messages disseminated monthly; and
- It has provided training opportunities.





Catherine Black, Mid and East Antrim

The presentation from Mid and East Antrim Community Planning Partnership focused on the Partnership's efforts to tackle poverty. A symposium was held to collect views on how partners could work together, and tackling deprivation, debt and poverty were agreed as central to improving outcomes. A central portal was developed to signpost to services and gather information in one place, and it was agreed to tackle illegal money lending at a strategic level.

Catharine provided an example of a uniform exchange project as part of the effort to tackle poverty and deprivation. Research found that the average cost of children returning to school is £250, and as such, a drop off point for preloved clothing was designated to help with costs. While the impact of the project is difficult to measure, it has helped 145 families; 208 children; and involved 600 items of clothing, which has resulted in a saving of £7,000. A partnership has now been established with a private company to assist with branded school clothes; warm clothes; and PE kits and equipment.

David Patterson, Newry, Mourne and Down

David Patterson from Newry, Mourne and Down District Council outlined how the Partnership is embedding Participatory Budgeting in Community Planning. In the Mournes District Electoral Area (DEA) in 2018, 12 groups were engaged with the opportunity for Participatory Budgeting. Nine groups pitched their project ideas which benefitted one or more priority area of rural isolation; mental health and emotional wellbeing; and improving the area. More than 70 residents voted, and six groups were awarded funding totalling £3,000 for their projects. Two unsuccessful groups applied for another Participatory Budgeting pilot, Youth Leading Change.

Youth Leading Change involved engagement with 24 youth groups from across the district; 21 project ideas submitted on how to benefit youth in the area; and over 5,000 votes being cast. The awards event was attended by 100 young people, and 15 groups were awarded funding totalling £7,500. The Partnership is now working with PB Works! on a Participatory Budgeting for Youth European shared learning project.

In 2019, Participatory Budgeting in Downpatrick DEA involved an evening event featuring 17 groups pitching their ideas for funding, and over 170 people attending to vote. Additional funding was leveraged from the Partnership partners and the Police and Community Safety Partnership to support projects with the theme of building community connections. £9,360 was awarded to 13 groups. An evaluation of the process found that 77% of those involved agreed that the process helped them feel more involved in decision-making in their area, and 96% thought this method of financial assistance would be useful in the future and for larger pots of funding.

A market stall model was used in Newry DEA in 2019, on a Saturday morning. 17 groups pitched their ideas to the over 300 people in attendance. Additional funding was leveraged from the Partnership partners and the Police and Community Safety Partnership to support projects with the theme of building community connections. £9,750 was awarded to 13 groups. Of those in attendance, 94% agreed that the process helped them to feel more involved in decision-making in their area, and 100% thought this method of financial assistance would be useful in the future and for bigger sums of funding.

The next steps are to roll Participatory Budgeting out in further DEAs in 2020, and the potential to extend the mechanism to other grant processes. Other Partnerships will also be encouraged to pilot Participatory Budgeting and examine the potential to mainstream the methodology.

Panel discussion: responding to good practice

Nichola Creagh, Head of Community Planning, Department for Communities Caroline Gillan, Head of Programme for Government and Northern Ireland Civil Service of the Future Division Karen Smyth, Head of Policy, NILGA Jennifer Wallace, Head of Policy, Carnegie UK Trust

Aideen McGinley welcomed the range of successes outlined by the Partnerships, and the other panel members reflected on the presentations in turn, as below.





Caroline Gillan, Head of Programme for Government and Northern Ireland Civil Service of the Future Division, highlighted the culture change in the ways of working required, as well as producing the Statement of Progress documents. Caroline reflected that local government is further ahead on the journey of a number of key processes, such as community engagement and the use of data, than their colleagues in central government.

Jennifer Wallace welcomed the detail provided by the Partnerships as new energy and new insights for achieving collective resourcing, early intervention, and prevention. Jennifer reflected that in understanding the impact of Community Planning, stories of change and qualitative evidence are as important as data.

Karen Smyth commended the quality and breadth of the examples provided by the Partnership representatives. Karen offered that the leadership of local authorities is important, and encouraged attendees to seek forgiveness, rather than permission, and to be bold. Elected members need to be made aware of the impact of Community Planning and how they can support the process. Karen sought input on how NILGA can assist, for example, by seeking to improve legislation; support community wealth building; reviewing policy; and improving policy learning between councils and government departments.

Nichola Creagh reflected on the importance of collaboration in all of the examples cited; on harnessing individual energies for the collective good; culture change; and moving outwith areas of expertise and comfort zones. Nichola confirmed that the pooling of resources, ideas, and people will be something that the Department for Communities will look at over the next few years.

Discussion points were raised from attendees as below:

- The development of a regional measure of wellbeing for young people by the Public Health Agency, involving the Departments of Justice; Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs; and Communities. The Public Health Agency was encouraged to critically examine what data is being collected, so as not to add additional burden on to schools.
- The Civic Innovation Programme by Community Foundation Northern Ireland and its support for public engagement and decision-making projects.
- The need to involve young people and facilitate them to share their own ideas, as mechanisms such as Community Planning are developing plans for their adulthood.
- The statutory link between Community Planning and spatial planning which can ensure a more resilient future for communities, and more age and child friendly environments.

Nichola closed the session by announcing the development of a new working group designed to support the next steps in Community Planning. The working group will develop a practical implementation plan for support, focusing on four areas of leadership; communications; data and engagement. The aim is for this support to help progress Community Planning over the long-term with practical issues such as pooling of budgets and participation by The Executive Office.

Close

Aideen McGinley, Chair, Embedding Wellbeing in Northern Ireland project Advisory Group

Aideen closed the event with thanks to the presenters, panellists and attendees. The event concluded with a video clip of Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister of New Zealand, listing the achievements of the New Zealand Government over the last two years in the space of two minutes, to inspire attendees with what can be achieved when a wellbeing approach is undertaken.

