



Engagement Notes

Stage one: Social Theme

Community planning engagement notes containing a synopsis of results identifying issues relating to social concerns following stage one of the community involvement process

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COMMUNITY PLANNING

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT: STAGE ONE, ECONOMIC THEME

1.0 Introduction

Part 10, Section 73 of the *Local Government (NI) Act 2014* outlines that the council and its partners must ensure community involvement in the development, implementation and review of its community plan and ‘*seek the participation of and encourage the person’s mentioned in subsection (2) to express their views, and take those views into account in connection with – (a) community planning (b) the production of a community plan for the district; and (c) the review of community plans*’. The persons outlined at section (2) are ‘*(a) persons resident in the district: (b) persons who are not resident in the district but who receive services provided by the council or one of its community planning partners: (c) representation of relevant voluntary bodies: (d) representatives of persons carrying on businesses in the area: (e) other persons who, in the opinion of the council, are interested in the improvement of the district’s social, economic and environmental well-being.*’

In facilitating the **community involvement** requirement contained in the Local Government (NI) Act at Section 73, a series of engagement methods were adopted and implemented by Fermanagh and Omagh District Council. The purpose of was to collate the views of the persons outlined in the legislation at subsection (2) and to ensure representation from the new Fermanagh and Omagh District in the identification of priority issues representing all section 75 groups outlined in the NI Act 1998 . Section 75 representations were monitored by the completion of Equality Monitoring Forms (*Appendix 1*) to assist in identifying gaps where more specific engagement may be required in stage two and three of the process.

The engagement will be undertaken over three stages; stage one to present and discuss the data analysis and identify key issues; stage two during the month of September, to present the initial findings and to prioritise the issues which have emerged and which are evident in data findings; stage three during the month of October, to agree what long term outcomes might look like and how progress and performance will be measured.

2.0 Engagement Process



The contents of this report reflect the community planning engagement process of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, in relation to the social issues identified during stage one consultation. Public workshops were held to seek participation from interested members of the community in relation to community planning on 24th June 2015 in the South West College, Enniskillen, 16th July in Dromore Community Centre. In addition, an event took place and 10th July in Community House Omagh with key stakeholders, specifically in relation to social issues. Public workshops were open to all to attend and were promoted and advertised through a wide variety of media. 121 participants took part in total at public events. An additional public workshop which combined social, economic and environmental issues was held 29th July in the Bawnacre Centre, Irvinestown, 38 participants took part in the discussion.

The results presented below also take into consideration the outcomes of an online survey through the Council's website and social media pages, which ran during the same period as the public events; 50 surveys were received and validated. In addition four road shows took place; two of which were held at both Asda's in Omagh and Enniskillen from 9.00am until 5.00pm during the month of June; and the other two at both agricultural shows in Omagh and Enniskillen during the months of July and August. The road shows generated 121 survey responses. Some respondents submitted additional supplementary emails following public meetings which have also been considered.

3.0 Public Events

3.1 What is Community Planning?

Ensuring consistency in approach, attendees were informed at all public events what community planning in NI should look like and what the legislation requires. Members were advised that the NI definition of Community planning states ‘a council must – (a) initiate: and (b) having done so, maintain, facilitate and participate in, community planning for the district. Community planning for a district is a process by which the council and its community planning partners – (a) identify long-term objectives for improving –(i) the social well-being of the district; (ii) the economic well-being of the district; and (iii) the environmental well-being of the district ; (b) identify long-term objectives in relation to the district for contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in NI; and (c) identify actions to be performed and functions to be exercised by the council and its community planning partners’. Attendees were given a brief overview of the process to develop and agree a community plan adopted by Fermanagh and Omagh District alongside a timeline for implementation.

3.2 Data Summary

Smart Region collated data and statistics on behalf of the Council which identified priority areas in relation to employability skills, jobs/ support for businesses, infrastructure and the economy in relation to the economic theme. The initial findings attached at <http://www.fermanaghomagh.com/communityplanning/community-planning-data-gathering> were presented to attendees before breakout sessions progressed to discuss key issues .

Attendees were then asked to break into discussion groups, where trained facilitators asked three specific questions relating to high priority concerns that the statistical data had identified, attendees were encouraged to question the validity of the statistics based on personal experience and local knowledge and to identify the key issues which they felt the data identified or which they felt were relevant to the area. The online survey also directed respondents to the data sheets before allowing completion of the survey.

The diagram below outlines the high level topics identified and the questions used.

Social Theme	Questions
Health Wellbeing Education Good Relations and Strong, Safe and Cohesive Communities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thinking of what you have heard today, what do you see as the main issues? 2. What currently works well? 3. What, collectively, needs to happen to bring about improvements?

3.3 Key Issues Identified through engagement process in relation to economic issues

Outlined below is a synopsis of the issues raised in relation to economic concerns during stage one of the engagement process.

OVERVIEW OF RESPONSES RECEIVED FROM ENGAGEMENT EVENTS :SOCIAL ISSUES	
1. Based on the evidence presented, the following main issues were identified:	<p><u>Health</u></p> <p>During the community engagement around health there were two recurring issues identified, mental health and access to services.</p> <p>Mental Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is concern around the high level of prescribing of anti-depressants identified within the statistical analysis, numbers of deaths by suicide and the impact of the conflict and both social and rural isolation on mental health.

- The need to de-stigmatise issues around ‘mental health’ and the increasing pressures on organisations providing support for mental well-being.
- Health and Social Care Services not evenly focused with regard to mental health.
- The lack of residential and care provision for people with drug and alcohol issues.

Access to Services

- The importance of access to healthcare and particularly GP’s, Hospitals and Daycare centres was identified. Issues around waiting times for both GP’S and trusts waiting lists were identified.
- A lack of acute services at the South West Hospital and the Tyrone County Hospital as well as the need for facilities to cater for specific health issues e.g Renal and Cancer Centres was identified. It is suggested that there is a need for more consultant led day clinics in both SWAH and TCH and opportunities for cross border health care provision should be maximised.
- Tyrone County Hospital non emergency and call centre not suitable for current needs
- There is a poor road infrastructure linking Fermanagh and Omagh to hospitals in Derry and Belfast and no consideration is given to the long travel time with early appointments given for people who live far away.
- In some cases it is easier to access Altnagelvin Hospital than The South West Acute Hospital.
- Cuts to services such as Rural Transport impact on access to health care.
- There is a need for more community care especially in rural areas and there is concern around the closure of homes for vulnerable adults and the current review of day-care provision for the elderly.
- Access to services is equitable across the district for example some areas benefit from funded provision such as Healthy Living Centres and Surestart Provision.
- The benefit of an Air Ambulance Service was identified.

General Health Issues

- The need to consider the impact of an aging population on service provision and how resources can effectively meet the needs of older people.
- Greater awareness around dementia is required as up to 40% of cases go undiagnosed.
- There is a need to raise awareness around the health benefits of a good diet and exercise among all ages but with a particular focus on young people and their parents.
- There is a desire to see increased connectivity between health care professionals and other support agencies.
- There is a lack of core funding to the community and voluntary sector to address health issues and concern that contracts for third sector services are increasingly being delivered by larger organisations from outside the area with little local knowledge.
- The need for greater cancer awareness and early intervention and research.
- Negative health impacts of both fracking and wind farm developments were identified along with the need for independently produced environmental impact assessments. Health
- There was general recognition that mental health contributes to wellbeing and that health provision generally needs improvement. This is an area that could do with more provision.
- There have been ventures in the past that have helped isolated individuals such as the provision of meals and this had a positive affect.
- There is a concern surrounding travel still being necessary to access some hospital services in Altnagelvin, Belfast, Cancer services in City hospital, this is not ideal when SWAH is here especially during winter conditions.
- Need to deal with other issues such as consultants staying in hospitals, air ambulance provision,

ambulance service at risk and poor roads that do not aid quick travel.

Wellbeing

During the community engagement around Wellbeing there were a number of issues:

Facilities/infrastructure

- The importance of provision to facilities and good infrastructure to aid wellbeing such as cycle lanes, theatres, forestry walks, leisure recreation and tourism. In addition, that these are located in the right places to allow access and supported by good road infrastructure and telecommunications needs.
- There is concern that the facilities that we have are not inclusive or accessible to those with disabilities, and do not cater for those who don't have English as their primary language. This is also echoed for those with reduced income, retired, and younger population.
- There needs to be a greater promotion of the facilities and activities so that awareness is increased and the cost of using them should be a factor in making them more accessible. This includes better access on Sundays and bank holidays.
- There is concern that the existing facilities will not meet the needs of the population in 5 – 10 years' time and that there needs to be a rebalancing of facilities between rural and urban. Some rural communities do not have facilities and their access to services and facilities is hampered by transport issues.

Environment

- There is a need to take responsibility for our environment so that it is protected, enhanced, safeguarded, this includes addressing pollution, dog fouling and anti-social behaviours.

Activity

- The importance of providing activities to the community either by providing more variety and /or by utilising community centres and nursing homes to provide more activities, explore the possibility of youth cubs and coaches providing additional activities to make an active community.
- There was a call for more activities to be provided such as athletics, equestrian, niche sports for young people and activity provision after school not just during summer holidays. It was noted that IFA school of excellence for football is not available in Fermanagh and there is no funding from the council.
- There needs to be more services and activities for older people
- Provision should be made for “boy racers” so they are not out on the roads.

Employment / Unemployment

- Local levels of unemployment have a negative impact upon wellbeing as does the journey time to work experienced by many to gain employment.
- Access to employment is a concern especially for those with a disability or living in rural areas.

Funding

- The importance of funding for activities to take place as well as streamlined processes and assistance to enable access to funding and even distribution of grant aid.
- Priority areas need to be identified and funding made available for programmes such as health, youth and facilitator costs.
- Funding needs to be continuous as start / stop funding does not permit sustainable provision, there needs to be a more joined up approach from all agencies and interested bodies.

Transport & Access

- The rural community need better access to activities and facilities as social isolation is a major factor in wellbeing. Rural transport providers are key in this.

Communication

- There needs to be better advertisement and communication around what activities are available and facilities that are provided, this needs to be done in a number of ways to ensure as many people as possible are made aware (includes: Community Newsletter, Facebook, Community Radios Service, Internet, social network, word of mouth.

Volunteers

- There needs to be more done around volunteering and time banking as people are a valuable resource that can be shared between community, voluntary and business sectors.

Arts & Culture

- It was felt that arts & culture could make a bigger contribution to wellbeing but that it is not promoted well enough.
- Multicultural events should be embedded within arts and culture provision.
- There should be a broader provision of the arts for all ages and catering for all interests. There is a positive link between arts and health that should be developed. There was also opinion that both The Ardhowen Theatre and Strule Arts Centre could be better utilised and that access could be improved if the pricing structure was revised.
- There is a belief that there is a disparity between council investment and interest in different events.

Various

- Holistically there was recognition that wellbeing was dependent on a sense of happiness and to be well you need to be able to pay your bills.
- There were issues surrounding funding disparities and the need for statutory partners to recognise that one size does not fit all and social disadvantage ties into wider issues. Both Sure start and Neighbourhood Renewal are geographically distributed and there is a need to improve access to these types of initiatives.
- Is there scope for prescribing health & wellbeing.

Education

During the community engagement around education, the main issues identified were:

Schools/resources/shared education

- Falling pupil numbers, especially in the primary school sector and the need for creative thinking around sharing for example is there a need for two schools in every village.
- The impact of Government cut backs affecting teacher numbers
- There are surplus places in secondary schools and this is a poor use of resources.
- Centralisation of secondary education in towns is a concern and will result in higher transport costs and longer travel times for young people.

Emigration/local job opportunities/adult education

- Increasing emigration of young people is leading to falling numbers in schools
- There is a need to attract young families back into the rural areas by providing good quality local

jobs.

- There is a lack of accessible adult education across all areas, including non accredited courses which are important due to our aging population.
- Lack of relevant training/educational programmes available locally e.g. agriculture and there is a need for training programmes to adapt to meet needs of changing job market

Link between schools/employers/careers education

- Education should be linked to careers especially opportunities available locally and there is a need for a new approach to careers teaching.
- Education provision for children with long term illness is poor
- There is a lack of opportunities for vocational training, too much focus on academic skills only.
- There is a need to encourage entrepreneurship and it is suggested that work placements could be used in a more meaningful way to achieve this.
- Educational providers need to consider progression options for people with disabilities.

Rurality/broadband/access

- Closure of rural schools will have detrimental effect on rural communities/areas
- Lack of funding for small schools creates difficulties in delivering a varied curriculum
- Difficulties accessing broadband leaves rural children and young people at a disadvantage especially given the increased use of online homework.

- Co-operation between sectors offering education/courses and an awareness of what each sector is offering would provide a more effective and efficient service.
- Geographic location/poor roads seen as a barrier to new employers coming to the area e.g new hospital can't get staff

Good Relations and Strong Cohesive Communities

During the community engagement around good relations and cohesive communities the main issues identified were:

Youth

- Lack of funding for youth clubs and inequalities in provision between voluntary youth groups and those run by EA staff.
- Transport to activities for young people is an issue and cuts to community transport worrying.
- Emigration is a threat to communities.

Volunteering

- The increasing bureaucracy associated with voluntary activity can be off putting for volunteers and the short turnaround time for grant calls puts volunteers under pressure.
- It is hard for ethnic communities to get involved in community activity due to short term residency.
- Our volunteer base is aging and there is an increasing reliance on volunteers to deliver services.
- Voluntary groups need support/information to access funds.

Access to services/facilities

- There is no community hall or shared space in Enniskillen.
- There is a need for more social housing for the elderly.
- Poor disabled access impacts on the community and there is lack of funding to improve this.
- There is the perception of an urban/rural split across district-with some areas better resourced than others.
- Community associations that understand their communities are vital in isolated areas.
- Cut to community transport budget of 33% will impact on rural community groups/individuals ability to travel to access services/education/health etc.
- There is concern around language barriers for ethnic minority families accessing services.

Older People

- There is no plan to support an aging population and its changing needs.
- Older people should be respected and included in decision making processes.
- There is a need to encourage intergenerational activities.
- There is concern around cuts to services for older people that are working such as “Good Morning” phone calls.

	<p>Policing/emergency services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is concern around changes to community policing and a greater dependence on neighbourhood watch. • There is a need to address the high levels of unreported crime-especially within ethnic minority communities/domestic abuse. • There are lengthy response times for police/ambulance/fire in rural communities • There are concerns around high levels of ASB and no follow through by police. • 6 wards in the district have high crime rates. • There is a need for air ambulance highlighted due to rural nature of district. • There is a high fear of crime <p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is required within communities to promote inclusiveness especially for LGBT and ethnic minority communities. • A sense of belonging across the District is vital and the community plan should ensure this is encouraged.
<p>2. It was felt that the following approaches/initiatives currently work</p>	<p>Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership approaches between agencies already in place such as the Community Response Plan to Suicide

well

- The Family Support Hubs
- The Policing and Community Partnership
- Locality Planning Groups
- Western Domestic Violence Group and other single issue groups.
- The use of organised summer schemes as a vehicle to educate young people around healthy living.
- Healthy Living Centre initiatives targeting various health related issues at a local level.
- Provision of day centres for older people and the call service to older people operated by Omagh Volunteer Centre, both of which tackle isolation.
- The strong community and voluntary sector .
- The provision of good healthcare facilities and specialist care locally including hearing and eye cats clinics.
- Active living approach and schemes such as the GP referral scheme and falls prevention scheme.
- The progression of 'Age Friendly' work taking account of best practice in other areas.
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Wellbeing

- Locally organised community activities and targeted funding for community groups
- Good community groups and facilities.
- The use of social media to promote key messages and activity.
- Incentives for example – carer or support worker can access services for free.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local infrastructure and continued investment in facilities for example Omagh Leisure Centre • Leisure facilities including multi use games areas, outdoor gyms and leisure centres. • Community transport . • Natural resources such as the Lakeland's, Geo Park and Gortin Glens. • Summer Schemes. • Local library provision. • Commitment to promoting Irish Language and Ulster Scots. • Great theatres/arts centres with increasing numbers and good engagement with voluntary arts communities. • Neighbourhood Renewal
<p>3. It was suggested that the following collectively needs to happen to bring about improvements</p>	<p>During the community engagement exercises a number of suggestions were made to bring about improvements</p> <p>Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action needs to be taken to address Transport issues affecting access to health provision. • Health and social care ownership needs to be an integral part of community planning and local approaches should be taken, local initiatives should be implemented to educate the local community about what support is available and where support is available so that they are able to access better services because of better sign posting. • There should be an improvement of communication between groups and initiatives and increased linkages between agencies to address communication. This also extends to shared training

between agencies and information sharing.

- The provision of good value for money resources are required for the delivery of activities on the ground that have been proven to work. Sustainable funding that enables high quality local delivery
- Education plays a key part especially in addressing rural isolation and the negative mental health aspect that is associated with it, for example looking at educating older rural people on internet usage so that they can access and interact more.
- Health care budgets need to be protected and maintain ring fenced resources for advice services, there should be specific health related taskforce groups, GP should be able to access funding to target specific areas of concern caused by deprivation within their areas and pharmacies need to engage more to target minor health issues and be better utilised by the community.
- In order to improve health there should be more person/individual focused services provided and information that is supplied should be user and reader friendly.
- Action needs to be taken to address the mind-set surrounding physical disability and the fear of using services such as shop mobility.
- In order to encourage locally based community organisations to apply for tenders on delivery of services the tender policy needed to be examined to allow for this.
- A strategy needs to be put in place that looks at the health needs of the aging population and encourages inter agency work.
- When attending meetings there needs to be an attendance from those who can action changes rather than send people who will deflect issues.
- To address obesity and the long term burden this creates, suggestions have been made to introduce a range of incentives such as district wide cycling and walking path provision, that will

provide easily accessible exercise options as many local roads due to their design and volume of traffic are not safe for cycling and walking.

Wellbeing

- Key to improving wellbeing is communication
 - To community groups around what they can avail of to aid their community activities.
 - To all residents via Facebook and other means, on what is happening on their doorstep so they are better educated and more aware.
- Share and distribute information such as a Newsletter, as well as statutory agencies sharing information to the general public.
- Want to see better cohesion and support from statutory agencies for the voluntary / community sector, recognise that the people in the community are a resource and the loss of knowledge from the community is detrimental going forward.
- Establishment of friendship clubs that provide a range of activities to involve all ages/ groups and abilities. The development of wellbeing and self-esteem needs to be addressed. This also includes training and awareness building and helping communities to help themselves. The provision of support for local initiatives will strengthen local organisations that are working well and making a positive difference.

Education

- More opportunities need to be provided for agricultural qualifications as there is no access for 15/16 year olds in the area.

- Creative solutions need to be found such as preschools working together, shared education, amalgamating single sex schools, and cross border education provision.
- Education should not stop at a particular age and needs to be more accessible for adults and encourage the development of community through building up skills and confidence. There should be more reskilling options available to encourage people to stay rather than leave for employment opportunities elsewhere. There was suggestion that there needs to be a local focus on the employment needs of the area and then focus apprenticeships around this.
- Children with disabilities should not be overlooked when it comes to education and training and investment is needed in this area to ensure inclusiveness and equal opportunities are available.
- Education providers need to work more closely with industry and provide more outreach course to rural areas and at the same time include cross community working and encourage more joined up thinking for example transportation to places of study- making sure times align for access.
- Social skills are important for employment as much as qualifications, this needs to be addressed by the education providers to ensure well rounded individuals are leaving the education sector and seeking employment.
- There is a need to look at providing better learn while you work opportunities and expanding young enterprise programme.

Strong, Safe, Cohesive Communities

- Community planning needs to look at individual community needs already identified through Village Plans and then tie in with these, as they have already identified local issues for the local community.
- All stakeholders need to share their information that can feed into the community plan such as

	<p>statistics on carers, learning disability etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage networking across the new district area as this will support local initiatives and strengthen local organisations. • Integration of services must be core to community cohesion, blue light collaborative working and stakeholders feeding into policing services. • To encourage safe communities – community policing should be reinstated along with direct dial police station numbers. • There should be an early intervention around ASB with supporting organisations taking the lead such as sure start, home-start, parenting programmes and involving education authorities. • There should be a promotion of intergenerational working, a joined up community approach that will empower communities to take more responsibility for themselves. This will see a sharing of resources between communities and provide a grass roots approach to the local community. • There should be inclusion of the migrant population in all activities and the provision of language lessons to encourage active participation in the community. • The provision of better communications for essential services as the result of emergency situations. <p>The main consensus from those in attendance was that they wanted to be actively listened to and to see action on all of the views that have been expressed</p>
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**Appendix 1 Equality Monitoring Form
(COPY)**

- 3. Family Status:** No caring responsibilities Care for children
 Care for other relative Other
 (Please specify)

If you have indicated that you have caring responsibilities, please confirm the number of hours per week.

- 1 – 19 hours 20 – 49 hours 50+ hours

- 4. Marital Status:** Married Single Divorced/Separated
 Widowed Partner Civil Partnership
 Other (Please specify)

5. Ethnic Origin/Race:

- Bangladeshi Black African Black Caribbean
 Chinese Indian Irish Traveller
 Pakistani White Mixed Ethnic Group

Other (please specify)

Nationality (please specify)

6. Disability :

Under the Disability Discrimination (NI) Act 1995 a disabled person is defined as a person with:

“A physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial or long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out a normal days activities.”

Having read this definition, do you consider yourself to have a disability?

Yes **No**

If yes, please give details of the type of disability

Visual impairment Hearing impairment Mobility disability

Communication difficulties Other please specify

In relation to the above questions, do you have any support needs which could impede your attendance which the Council may be able to address? Please provide details:

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.....

7. Perceived Religious Affiliation/Community Background

For most of us in Northern Ireland we are perceived to be from either the Protestant or Roman Catholic community. Please indicate the community to which you belong by ticking the box below

Protestant **Roman Catholic**

Other (please specify)

8. Which category best describes your age?

Under 16 16-25 26-65 65+

Optional Questions – You do not have to answer these questions

9. Please indicate your political opinion by ticking the appropriate box.

Unionist generally Nationalist generally
Other (please specify)

10. Please indicate your sexual orientation:

I am gay or lesbian (homosexual) I am heterosexual or straight
I am bisexual Other (Please specify).....

Thank you for your cooperation