

Carnegie UK Trust

Embedding Wellbeing in Northern Ireland

Phase 1: Expression of Interest

By submitting this Expression of Interest, the Local Authority enters the first phase of selection for participation in the Carnegie UK Trust' s programme Embedding Wellbeing in Northern Ireland, from mid-2018 to December 2020. This Expression of Interest must be submitted with a letter of support from the Local Authority Chief Executive and Chair of the Community Planning Partnership for participation in the programme. Please also attach a copy of your Community Plan and any relevant progress reports or updates.

The documents should be submitted no later than Monday 30 April 2018 at 5pm to Alison Manson, Corporate Services Officer, at the following email address: alison@carnegieuk.org. Acknowledgement of receipt of the documents will be sent to applicants.

Applicant details

Local Authority area	Mid Ulster; Fermanagh and Omagh; Derry City and Strabane
Lead contact	Helen Gormley
Position	Community Planning Co-ordinator
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Community Plan

Please provide a brief overview of your Community Plan including what your priorities are for improving outcomes locally, and how these outcomes align to the draft Programme for Government outcomes framework. (Max 800 words)

Each of the three partner Councils has worked with a wide range of partners and stakeholders to co-design and agree a Community Plan for their respective districts. These are:

- Fermanagh and Omagh 2030 – Community Plan
- Our Community Plan – A 10 Year Plan for Mid Ulster
- Inclusive Strategic Growth Plan – Our Community Plan 2017-32 (Derry City and Strabane)

Each plan sets out a wellbeing framework with:

- an agreed **vision** for the future of that area;
- a range of **strategic aims or objectives**;
- a number of long term **outcomes** reflecting the key wellbeing dimensions of income, jobs, housing, education, environment, safety, health, civic engagement, access to services, community and life satisfaction – all of which have been drawn from our informed understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of our respective areas; and a range of population level indicators which provide the foundation of our developing measurement framework.
- A set of **indicators** which allow us, at a population level, to measure the achievement of an outcome.

The synergies across our strategic aims are clearly evident and presented across the sustainable development pillars, ie:

Social	Economic	Environmental
Health and wellbeing; children and young people; community development including safety and recognising both rural and urban issues	Entrepreneurship and jobs; Business growth; Competitiveness; Education and skills; Tourism, including heritage and culture; Connectivity and infrastructure.	Sustainable management and enhancement of the natural, built and cultural environment; vibrant towns and villages

The challenges facing our districts have been identified through desktop evaluation of a wide range of strategies and data alongside extensive community participation so that we could begin to develop a clear understanding from our stakeholders and citizens of what life is like for them and what they see as the priority issues. These are conversations which we need to continue throughout the lifetime of the plans.

Key challenges identified include:

- **Health inequalities** – exacerbated in areas of high deprivation with increasing concerns around the incidence of **mental health** issues
- An **aging population** – some of the highest increases in the aging population are forecast in the West
- **Rurality and isolation**
- Lack of **investment in infrastructure** – roads, public transport, mobile and broadband infrastructure
- **Wages** below the NI average and a need for more jobs
- Effects of **poverty** on large numbers of our population, including children and pensioners
- Unique **heritage** assets which require both protection and investment so that they are not lost to future generations.
- The **under-utilised tourism** potential which exists.

(Appendix 1 provides an overview of the synergy of the outcomes)

Each of the Community Planning Partnerships has identified a set of population level indicators and there is strong commonality across these.

Appendix 2 also sets out the synergies across the plans in terms of PfG indicators. It should be noted that these synergies will develop further over time as more of the regional indicators in PfG become available at LGD level and as the PfG data development programme develops.) At a local level, data development continues through residents' surveys which have provided valuable data in key areas. For example, in Fermanagh and Omagh, a recent residents' survey has provided local data on the level of social contact people have and on life satisfaction of people with disabilities.

The detailed work to support the strategic community plan in each area has been progressing through the development of **actions** and **measures** at a **performance accountability** level. These set out the partnership actions which will be taken in the short to medium term towards achieving the outcomes and how we will measure and demonstrate the success of those actions and their potential to influence the achievement of outcomes.

There is commonality across the three districts in respect of the Sperrins Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) whose geography spans across the three local government areas and also into the Causeway Coast and Glens district.

The three Community Planning Partnerships have each recognised the potential of the Sperrins region and, within each plan, committed to the development of the region through the Community Plan and associated Tourism and other strategies. The opportunity to work at an intra-Council and Partnership level has been identified and initially progressed through the Future Search process which has agreed five common ground statements as a basis for future progression. The benefits of an intra-council approach go well beyond tourism and economic

agendas and, at a macro level, there is potential to draw on the Community Plans to progress a collaborative wellbeing framework for the Sperrins which will drive forward improvements to quality of life and public services throughout this cross-council region. This is a truly ambitious project and one which will require strong leadership and commitment across partners to secure the long term benefits which could be achieved for the benefit of those living in this area.

Ways of working

The Carnegie UK Trust wishes to work with Local Authorities who share the Trust' s understanding of wellbeing, and commitment to partnership working and participation.

Please provide a description of your understanding and application of wellbeing within the context of your Community Plan. (Max 300 words)

Statutory guidance notes that the purpose of community planning is to “develop a long term strategy for the area and all its citizens based on a thorough analysis of needs and priorities, and opportunities for addressing them. This should generate a 10 to 15 year vision for improving social, economic and environmental wellbeing, and contributing to sustainable development”. This statement embodies how we each see our Community Plan and, taking account of the wider powers delivered to Local Government through the recent reform process, eg, through the Local Development Plan, provide a framework for Councils and their partners to shape and redefine the areas and communities we serve.

The What Works Centre for Wellbeing has set out the following definition of wellbeing: **“Wellbeing, put simply, is about ‘how we are doing’ as individuals, communities and as a nation and how sustainable this is for the future”**. There are eleven characteristics of wellbeing, ie, income, jobs, housing, education,

environment, safety, health, civic engagement, access to services, community and life satisfaction. Considering all of these will allow us to fully appreciate the strengths and weaknesses of our areas.

At a local level partners can influence the wellbeing of individuals and communities and, indeed, of the places we inhabit. We can maximise this influence by working better together – hence, the development of this collaborative project which will see the continuation of a wellbeing framework specific to the needs of the Sperrins region.

Our individual plans, influencing this collaborative plan, address social, economic and environmental wellbeing and clearly reflect the issues which our people have told us matter to them, backed up by a strong evidence base.

Progressing outcomes is addressed in detail through our actions and the development of measures which will, at a performance accountability level, demonstrate how well the programmes or services delivered through these actions are doing. This remains work in progress and partners are actively working together towards this.

Please outline how you are working with partners to deliver on the Plan' s commitments with examples of how partners are taking a lead role in delivery.
(Max 500 words)

There are governance arrangements in place for each of the individual Community Plans. These are detailed in the documents themselves. This collaborative project which also involves Causeway Coast and Glens Council, brings four councils together with a wide range of community planning partners and stakeholders to deliver a multi-disciplinary project that will achieve the aspirations for the Sperrins region using the

Community Planning process. This highlights the innovative thinking which has been applied across our partnership areas and the strong partnership relationships which exist in the West.

This project is a direct outflow from actions planned and delivered through the existing Community Plans for the four named regions. It cross cuts four council tourism strategies, local development plans and agreed planning policy for the Sperrins. There are a range of partners identified through the Community Plans with specific roles and responsibilities including Tourism NI, Failte Ireland, DAERA, Department of Infrastructure, CAFRE, Invest NI, Regional Colleges, Community and Voluntary Sector.

To date there has been much work on getting this joint initiative off the ground with the four local councils coming together to explore the issues around developing a framework to work together and make action plans enabling the Sperrins region reach new heights and realise its full potential while protecting and enhancing its natural heritage. To this end the four Councils committed to embark on adopting the Future Search planning process to agree a common mission and take responsibility for action and develop commitment to implementation. Work is ongoing to establish a partnership structure for the Sperrins region based around an overarching Board supported by thematic groups, working to an outcomes based approach.

Over 100 stakeholders across the Sperrins came together to work through the Future Search process with a view to achieving an agreed vision, objectives, strategy and comprehensive action plans. Stakeholders groups included Community, Land Owners/Farmers, Government Departments & Statutory Agencies, Tourism Heritage & Environment, Outdoor Recreation, Business & Industry, Elected Representatives and Young People.

The joint planning process highlighted that there were many outcomes identified as key to the future wellbeing of the Sperrins region including:

- Better Quality of Life
- The need for Social and Economic Development
- Creating links between the communities
- Addressing the key infrastructure shortfalls in the region
- Improve local confidence
- Better facilities
- Make the isolated rural communities accessible
- Creating local employment opportunities
- Generating wealth to address poverty
- Creating a generational opportunity for young people to stay in the area they were born into – jobs
- Build tourism sector using natural resources
- Creating industry with other areas
- Keep the population in the local areas to secure future services in local areas
- Better health, education and transport
- Sustainable rural communities.

To deliver the strategic direction identified, it is recognised that we require an effective partnership that identifies and co-ordinates actions to achieve agreed outcomes. The right partnership for the Sperrins will comprise the necessary authority, resources, legitimacy and expertise. There is agreement that there must be an inclusive structure specifically designed for the task and that we should learn from best practice and other governance models elsewhere. The support, expertise and learning which Carnegie could bring to this process is recognised and all of the partners would greatly value the opportunity which working with Carnegie would present.

Please outline how you will continue to engage people and communities for the duration of the Plan, and give details of how the Community Sector is participating in the governance structure of community planning. (Max 500 words)

Each of the three Community Planning Partnerships has engaged in significant co-design processes involving a wide range of stakeholders and citizens from across their districts to inform and develop the respective Community Plans. Each Plan has its own individual governance arrangements which includes representation from the Community and Voluntary Sectors at a strategic partnership level and also at action level. Two of the plans are thematic plans with community representation across the respective themes, one of the plans is supported by locality plans drawing extensively from local communities. Each has arrangements for community/voluntary sector representatives to report to the sectors through community panels or forums.

Each plan is supported by a Communications Plan which has governed the ongoing engagement and communications. Each recognises the need for ongoing community engagement and these are either in place or under further development. There is a need for us to seek views from the wider community on a regular basis to ensure that our plans remain fit for purpose and address relevant issues.

The Sperrins project will need to be supported by its own distinct Communications and Engagement Plan which will be informed by and draw on the work already undertaken at a Community Planning Partnership level. This work will be progressed in conjunction with the governance arrangements for the Sperrins project and be informed by all partners.

We anticipate that the Sperrins governance structure will be overseen by a Board

and four Thematic Groups and a Co-ordinating Group. We foresee that the Community and Voluntary Sector will have a representative role across this structure with the detail of the appointment process yet to be designed and delivered. It is expected this will reflect the stakeholder involvement from the Future Search process.

Key issues for consideration could be a Community Panel drawing on the wide range of stakeholders and interest groups. The Future Search process has identified the role of the four councils' community planning and community services teams in supporting and co-ordinating community involvement and engagement, perhaps through the networks of community development groups to enable networking and discussions around future approaches.

It is important that ongoing engagement and communication embraces a wide range of methods to involve as many stakeholders as possible. Innovative approaches have been used throughout our community planning processes involving work with children and young people through arts and creativity, social media and online engagement alongside more traditional methods such as workshops and public meetings. It is important to recognise barriers to engagement, for example, areas where there is a lack of digital connectivity and to adapt your approach accordingly. We will draw on the knowledge and expertise gained across our community planning partnerships to ensure that an ongoing, tailored and effective approach is designed and delivered.

Community Planning: Successes and challenges

Please outline the three main successes to date in developing and/or implementing your Community Plan. (Max 300 words)

Key successes to date are:

- Successful development of a co-design approach across all stakeholders and communities to develop each Community Plan with a clear and informed view of how citizens view quality of life in the respective areas and the key issues and challenges which they have experienced – thereby informing priorities
- Developing and embedding an outcomes based approach and gaining the support of all partners towards this. Supporting appropriate professional development so as to enhance the skills of the partners in the outcomes based methodology and involving all in the identification of outcomes, indicators, actions and measures
- Develop meaningful engagement and involvement of partners in the governance and delivery arrangements which has resulted in partners taking on lead roles and responsibilities either at thematic levels or in respect of individual actions. This demonstrates a maturity of partnership working and the development of trust across partners and commitment towards community planning.

Please outline the three main challenges to date in developing and/or implementing your Community Plan, including how the Local Authority is overcoming these challenges. (Max 500 words)

Challenges include:

- Ability to identify and develop unique arrangements allowing us to address the outcomes and actions arising from the Community Plans – the Sperrins project being a prime example of the need to develop an innovative approach, spanning distinct council areas which will enable us to, collectively, address key challenges and take advantage of the opportunities. This innovative approach also requires us to develop solutions to facilitate issues around shared resourcing and planning for longer term projects, particularly in light of the annual budgeting processes which many statutory partners are subject to. There is a need to work with regional partners and central government to resolve this issue.
- Inertia at a central government level caused by the political instability and collapse of the NI Executive. This has created a vacuum in which many regional issues have not been able to progress and which is having an impact on local approaches. For example, work to address the issues and effects of poverty at a local level have been influenced negatively by the absence of a regional social strategy encompassing the regional approach to this issue. There is a need to find a more effective way forward if the political impasse is to continue and to ensure that partners remain at the table and are playing an effective role bringing appropriate resources.
- Ensuring that we continue to engage and seek the participation of communities and stakeholders throughout the process so that we keep

informed of changing issues and circumstances, so that our plans reflect the changing needs of the community and that we develop appropriate responses and actions to ensure that effective and targeted actions are progressed. This will need to be supported by effective data which informs us of how well current actions are working and their ability to ‘turn curves’.

Please identify your Community Planning priorities for the next three years.
(Max 300 words)

Key priorities are to:

- Embed the outcomes based approach across the plans and ensure that we have effective performance reporting and monitoring arrangements in place. This will allow us to ensure a responsive approach to actions and their effectiveness and to produce performance statements which will demonstrate the value of the Plan and gain ongoing ownership across partners and wider stakeholders.
- Progress delivery of agreed actions to ensure that we move towards achieving the desired outcome and so that we can improve quality of life and public services for our people – in essence this is about ensuring that we make a difference and improve wellbeing for our people.
- Continue to invest and build in strong, effective partnerships so that we make the best use of our combined resources, working effectively together and moving away from ‘silo-based’ thinking. This will achieve a shared

understanding that we all contribute and have a remit to improve wellbeing beyond our more narrow individual organisational or sectoral responsibilities. To achieve this there is a need to invest in capacity building and development of synergies across partners – an outcomes approach and wellbeing framework provides the mechanism to do this.

Declaration

Participants in the Embedding Wellbeing in Northern Ireland programme will be expected to commit to the principles of openness, partnership working, shared learning, and participation. The Chief Executive of the relevant local authority and Chair of the Community Planning Partnership will be asked to sign a Memorandum of Understanding which commits the participants to the above principles and an openness to publication of the participants' experiences and performance in the programme.

By submitting an Expression of Interest and supporting documentation, I/we hereby confirm that I/we will participate in the programme for its duration and in accordance with the above principles.

I/we certify that the information contained in this Expression of Interest and supporting documentation is complete and accurate to the best of my/our knowledge.

Signature:

Print name:

Date:

Checklist

- ✓ I have completed each section of this application form.
- ✓ I have attached a letter of support from the Local Authority Chief Executive and Chair of the Community Planning Partnership.
- ✓ I have attached a copy of my Community Plan and any relevant progress reports or updates.
- ✓ We (the Local Authority) are committed to engaging in peer-to-peer learning with the other Local Authorities participating in the programme, and sharing learning with other Local Authorities in Northern Ireland across the duration of the programme. We will take part in an evaluation process to enable policy learning across the UK, and report to the Carnegie UK Trust and project Advisory Group as required.
- ✓ We understand our commitment to engage proactively in the programme which will involve committing in-kind resources, including staff time.