



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for the Office of the First Minister
and deputy First Minister

OFFICIAL REPORT (Hansard)

Inquiry into Building a United Community:
Professor Colin Knox and Ms Sarah
McWilliams

14 January 2015

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

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Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Ms Megan Fearon
Mr Alex Maskey
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Witnesses:

Mrs Sarah McWilliams	Juniper Consulting
Professor Colin Knox	University of Ulster

The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt): Colin and Sarah, you are very welcome. Thank you for coming along. You are the first witnesses to give oral evidence to our inquiry, so we feel that we are taking a big step forward. I invite you to make some short opening observations.

Mrs Sarah McWilliams (Juniper Consulting): Thank you, Chair and Committee members. Good afternoon and thank you for the invitation to provide oral evidence. We will keep our opening remarks brief, but we wish to give you a short overview of the programme and then to focus on some of the high-level outcomes from the evaluation and some transferable principles or learning.

To recap, the programme was launched in March 2011 and was jointly funded by OFMDFM and Atlantic Philanthropies. The budget was £4 million. Its key aim is to promote and improve relations between and across disadvantaged communities. To apply, projects needed involvement of at least one community organisation at each side of the interface and to be in the top 20% of the most deprived wards in Northern Ireland. There are four areas of focus: early years and parenting; shared space via schools; youth engagement; and shared neighbourhoods. Nine projects were funded across Northern Ireland, in urban and rural areas, and there are two phases. The first phase ended in June last year and the second phase will end in March this year.

I will move on to the outcomes. We are going to focus at a high level on six of the key outcomes. The first one is around strengthened relationships and engagement at a personal level, a professional level and a cross-community level. By that, we mean stronger and committed working relationships in which there is trust and sharing. Engagement that may have started out with some reluctance has

now developed to a point at which there is a strong desire for participants to engage and a strong growth in the number of people engaging. The second area is around improved quality of outcomes. The programme started with broad outcomes of improving relationships between communities and encouraging reconciliation, but it is now much more than that, and much wider, and we have seen evidence of outcomes for well-being, such as improved confidence, overcoming fears and anxiety, tackling social isolation among vulnerable people and active engagement in communities.

The third area is around improved educational and skills outcomes, be they for children, young people, schools or parents. The fourth area is around improved access to services. In addition to the services that the projects themselves provide, they also connect participants to other services in the community, such as parenting services, health services, youth services and access to further courses in education.

There is also a greater movement across and through areas of contested space. Where there might have been an initial apprehension, that has changed to a much greater and freer movement across the areas that the projects are in, be they in Belfast, Derry/Londonderry, Portadown, Bessbrook, Newtownstewart or Ballymena.

Finally, new shared spaces have been created. The 50:50 basis of the programme has encouraged projects to find shared spaces for their activities, and we are now seeing an increase in, and multiple examples of, new shared spaces, be they a town hall, a youth club, a school or a community centre.

I also want to touch on the second area, which is transferable principles or learning. We have found that uniting people and communities on common, shared issues rather than through a direct, head-on good-relations approach, has been very effective in building relationships between communities. By shared issues, we mean things such as education, parenting, childcare, bullying, drugs and alcohol. As research has shown, communities at interfaces are some of the most deprived in Northern Ireland. Good relations and deprivation are interlinked and cannot be addressed in isolation. Therefore, the goal should be to improve quality of life and break the multigenerational cycle of deprivation.

We found that the most effective models of working have been in those projects that have engaged and built up relationships with a wide variety of participants, such as children, their parents, teachers, statutory organisations and community groups, thereby securing maximum buy-in and impact. Related to that, we believe that collaboration is important. Projects that have managed to engage successfully and effectively the statutory, community and voluntary sectors to support their work are delivering good outcomes for participants in the communities. Finally, rather than just sustaining the projects in the programme, we believe that we need to identify how to sustain the learning from the ideas, concepts and good models of practice in the programme and transfer those to other areas.

To sum up, the projects that are funded through the contested spaces programme are demonstrating very good outcomes for participants and the areas where they operate. We believe that there is learning and ways of working from the programme that can be transferred and used elsewhere. In saying that, there have, of course, been challenges and obstacles to overcome. However, project participants have adapted their approaches and learned from their experiences.

Finally, we hope that the continuing implementation of Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC) can reflect the experiences of the contesting spaces programme in some way, particularly through its good practice and effective ways of supporting communities.

The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt): OK. Thank you very much. Would it be fair to say that your analysis of contested spaces is that there is no need to reinvent the wheel as we look at how we deliver T:BUC?

Professor Colin Knox (University of Ulster): Yes. I suppose that one of the things that surprised us a little bit about the lead-in to T:BUC was the focus on running pilots. The United Youth programme in T:BUC started off with a very traditional model of needing to do pilots, but one of the questions that we have asked is why it needs to do pilots if a programme is already being funded that has essentially done some of that work to test out some of those ideas. That is probably a very traditional approach to new initiatives, but some of the things are not new. I am not suggesting for one moment that all the learning is contained within that programme. However, there are many good examples out there of youth programmes, so my point is this: why would you spend £1 million doing a pilot for a youth programme? That is just one example.

The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt): OK. Can I drill down to how reluctance was turned into a strong desire to participate? Are there key elements that come through?

Professor Knox: One of the most successful things that we experienced was that this was not seen as, if you like, an upfront community relations or good relations programme. In other words, the programmes that we found to be most effective were those that identified a common need across both sides of the interface rather than those that saw this as a programme that was overtly about good relations or community relations. At interface areas, the social problems are the same, and it is really about identifying what the common social and economic issues are and whether you can tackle those in a way in which both communities benefit and, in a sense, the traditional boundaries become much more porous. Therefore, it is not about saying that we are going in here to make Catholics more Protestant or Protestants more Catholic. Rather, it is to say this: what are, as psychologists call them, the superordinate goals here? What are the things that overarch both those communities? Get that understanding, and, as a consequence, good relations and reconciliation effects follow suit. It is a much more organic way of dealing with it.

For instance, we supported a project for two schools on the Limestone Road. Both schools identified themselves as suffering because of poor parenting skills. That was a common issue, and some of the interventions were around helping those parents to help their children to read, to get some routine into their life, and so on. Those are skills that organisations that have some expertise in that area could bring to parents. The benefit of that was that parents were in these sessions to become better parents, if you like. They were not there because one was from side of the Limestone Road and the other was from the other. As a consequence, they started to trust each other, saw that they had similar kinds of problems and were there together to learn how to deal with those problems. That broke down personal perceptions, and we found that to be a way of establishing trust.

The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt): That is most interesting. You are not going in saying to the people on the left-hand side of the wall that they have to work with the people on the right-hand side of the wall. You are saying, "You have an issue. Did you know that they have the very same issue?". Why would that motivate me if I were sitting on the left-hand side of the wall with poor parenting skills? How do you convince me of the benefit?

Professor Knox: The motivation is that all parents want a better experience for their child, and that is a common issue. If you want a better education for your child, you will say, "Perhaps I could get that if I had some skills that would improve my parenting". The issue is not one of, "I am better than you or you are better than me" or, "I want to be motivated to go to one side of the interface". It is simply to say that we have knowledge that we have expressed through our own schools. One was Currie Primary School and the other was Holy Family Primary School. They identified in their own school environment that they could do things to help their children. The common superordinate goal was that they wanted to have a better life for their children and wanted them to be better educated.

The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt): Is there an element of strength in numbers?

Professor Knox: Yes, absolutely.

The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt): OK. How important is leadership? I get a sense that these programmes, when they succeed, sometimes succeed because there is an individual who is absolutely core as a driver of the initiative.

Mrs McWilliams: I think that the projects have had good leadership, but I think that where they succeeded was in the partnership approach that we talked about. With that approach, the projects have drawn in the schools, community organisations, the police and health providers. They have kind of drawn in all the resources from the community around them. OK, there is leadership, but there is also partnership-working. That, I suppose, creates ownership as well and is very effective, rather than having just one person lead it. However, it does take good leadership as well.

Professor Knox: To add to Sarah's explanation, I think that that is particularly true in schools. If you are working on a schools project and do not have strong leadership from principals there, it can fall off at the edges a bit, particularly if things start to go a bit wobbly for them when they get a bad experience. For instance, in one project, schools had come together to work together, and there was an incident between pupils. It was an isolated incident, but had the principals not been strong in the circumstances they could well have said, "Look, my life would be easier if we didn't have this kind of

work". Therefore, it is absolutely crucial, particularly — I do not say this in a negative way — in a school environment, which is perhaps more hierarchical than other organisations, in that they get leadership from the top.

The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt): You have programmes that can be effectively used as a template but that will work only if you have strong on-the-ground leadership prepared to look after the bad days as well as the good ones.

Professor Knox: Yes, absolutely.

The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt): Is there any big difference between rural and urban schools?

Professor Knox: I will use as specific examples a project that worked in east Belfast and one that worked in Newtownstewart. The geography of east Belfast is such that proximity meant that interfaces were very visible, and so on, whereas in rural areas they were almost invisible, but, nonetheless, everybody knew where they were. The other thing that we found, just by dint of working in rural areas, particularly rural schools, is that they really appreciated any extra resources, because they tended to be operating on a shoestring, particularly small primary schools with limited financial resources. Therefore, they were always very welcoming of any kind of intervention at the start. They saw that it was at least worth doing and were more than happy to participate.

The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt): More so than urban schools?

Professor Knox: I would not say more so, but our sense, certainly on that particular project, was that some urban schools might have had more access to resources than rural schools by dint of the geography and the distance between schools. At a parental level, a lot of the good models that we saw had buy-in from parents. There is a sense of community in rural areas. If it is a farming community, perhaps farmers are lending one another machinery and that kind of thing. If I can say this without being disparaging to urban areas, there is a civility in rural communities that you do not witness as much in urban communities.

Mr Lyttle: Thanks for your presentation. I found the written briefing that was provided very helpful, but I also have the benefit of having met some of the projects involved in the Contested Spaces programme, particularly the project around active, respectful communities that was led by Community Relations in Schools (CRIS). It took six schools from Ardoyne and the Shankill and brought them together for early years family work, parenting work and community relations education. I think that it has now become known as the Buddy scheme. That is obviously a Community Relations in Schools term that has been inserted into the Together: Building a United Community strategy. I was sceptical about that when I first saw it in T:BUC, but, having met CRIS and the people involved in the project, I have experienced at first hand the benefits that it has brought to the areas.

Surprisingly, it is not just the young people from starkly different backgrounds getting to interact but grown men from the Shankill and Ardoyne, who openly confess that they have had interaction as a result of the programme that they would never normally have had. Indeed, it is important to remember that it takes great courage for them to have that interaction. In some of those communities, interacting with people from the "wrong side" is extremely risky and takes quite a lot of courage. The benefits of the projects are clear and should be developed.

My big concern and query is around the fact that phase 1 of Contested Spaces finished around April 2014. I think that phase 2 runs until March 2015, so it is almost finished. T:BUC was published in May 2013, yet many of the excellent pilot programmes do not appear to have been taken forward by T:BUC at the rate that we would like to see. For example, my understanding, having met with Department of Education officials, is that the Buddy scheme is still at the business case stage, yet, as you said in your presentation, those are well-developed projects that are showing positive evaluation and results. Have you seen any more evidence than I have of OFMDFM and other Departments working proactively and rapidly to ensure that we do not lose the ground that has been gained by the successful delivery of some of the projects?

Professor Knox: We gave a presentation this morning to the good relations programme board. Therefore, civil servants, officials and special advisers are interested in the work.

It is probably something to do with the system of moving from the project to the implementation of Together: Building a United Community, where there was some sort of chasm developing. It is not that the learning is not there or that T:BUC is not aware of it, but the pace at which it seems to be unfolding is not aligned with some of the emerging learning.

Phase 1 of the programme finished last March and the second phase will finish in March 2015. That will be the end of the programme. That is why we are keen to push the principles, rather than ask for more money for the projects.

You talked about the Buddy scheme, and that is one of the commitments in Together: Building a United Community. CRIS has developed that as a concept. It is very proud of its work in that area, as it should be as, because it has been very successful.

There learning is there, but it is where that will go in Together: Building a United Community. As outsiders, it seems to us to be getting kicked around among the Department, the boards and the new authority, and no one is quite sure where it will end up. In the meantime, our fear is that, the greater the distance from the programmes, the learning, the experience and the trust that has been developed will start to dissipate. Some of the relationships will still exist, but those often need to be oiled with resources to help with further interventions. I am not saying that all the projects that are paid for out of the public purse should continue indefinitely, with more and more funding. That is why we have tried to stress the transferability of principles rather than projects.

Mr Lyttle: You have made a really important point. People take risks, show courage and get involved in the projects, and the time period in which they slip or are not sustained really damages people's confidence when it comes to continuing to be involved in that type of project.

I see that you stated in your presentation that the director of the good relations division in OFMDFM, Fergus Devitt — I do not think that he is still in that role — said that there is:

"real potential to scale-up some of the models",

which the Contested Spaces programme and pilot projects have developed "in difficult interface areas." However, the speed at which that is happening is frightening slow. I hope that your good work is being heeded by the Department and that we will see a dramatic increase in the pace at which that is sustained and rolled out.

The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt): On the theme of things starting and then stopping again, I often think that, for those involved, it is almost like being in a game of snakes and ladders. You introduce an initiative and go up a very nice ladder to a better place, but, just as you get there and begin to enjoy it, you are hit with a big snake, because the funding or the programme is cancelled. You actually feel worse off, because you knew where you were.

Professor Knox: Can I give one very good example of that, Chair? We worked in Bessbrook in south Armagh, and one of the issues there was shared space, or, rather, the absence of it. The project there — the South Armagh Childcare Consortium (SACC) — was very successful. It spent quite a bit of time negotiating with the Churches about venues that would have traditionally have seen to have been aligned to one Church or the other. SACC spent a lot of time negotiating access to those venues, was successful in doing that and demonstrated that the trust that the Churches put in them was well founded, in the sense that subsequent programmes were very much cross-community and met needs in the area.

A question mark for us, having gone through that process and essentially having made those shared spaces rather than contested spaces or single-identity institutions, is, because they will not have the funding to run those activities subsequently, whether those buildings will revert to what they were. Those organisations and buildings are at the heart of communities that have had lots of conflict.

The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt): Absolutely.

Mr Maskey: Sarah and Colin, thank you for your presentation. There is always a conundrum for how we measure that type of work. We all know that there are loads of excellent projects across a whole range of communities and sectors. Some of those will predate this project, while some will outlive it. Others, although one of their phases may have ended last year, are ongoing. For me, it is almost like

trying to reduce the fear of crime among elderly people about burglaries. You can reduce crime against elderly people by 50%, but one highly publicised burglary will scare the life out of the population. I think therefore that, ultimately, it is about what you are actually looking for.

I was very encouraged by you, Colin, and Sarah when you said that there appears to be a wider range of positive outcomes as a result of some of the activity. Again, I am not sure that, if we are honest, we always know what we are really trying to measure. I favour doing a lot of work just because the work, by its nature, needs done. Yes, you can do it on a cross-community basis, bring people together and build other bridges at the same time. We all know that, for years, we probably spent a long time having coffee mornings and getting people together. As long as you did not talk about the Troubles or did not talk about your differences, it was great, but it was not.

Mrs McWilliams: I think that common issues such as education, homework support and childcare sometimes come up in conversation when people have built up that relationship. They will make friendships but perhaps be unaware that the other person is from a different community. Things will enter into conversation, but I suppose that that happens naturally, and people are quite accepting of the need to discuss things.

Mr Maskey: Is there a way of weaving things? If we do not face the realities that there are differences, we cannot deal with what the differences are or empower people to do that.

Mrs McWilliams: Yes. Different approaches have been used by each of the different projects. To go back to CRIS, it takes a very direct approach sometimes and has very good workshops and residential with the children and parents, whereas other projects have to focus on common issues and address issues of community relations through that but not directly. Different approaches work well in different situations, and a head-on approach does not always have to be taken. Certainly, they recognise that those issues need to be discussed and talked about.

Mr Maskey: Finally, a key thing is around sustaining the learning or transferring that on organically. How do we do that? When you are identifying a need in an area, that may mean that the education system, the health system or the community itself needs to work out that it needs to examine its practices and take responsibility for doing that. Ultimately, a lot of that will probably require mainstreaming so that the learning is built in and the problems are addressed on an ongoing basis. For me, that should filter out a lot of the very important issues, allowing people in the community to focus on why they are different and learn how to respect that. Unless you really get to the nub of the matter somewhere along the line, we can all be dead friendly to each other yet not talk about the problems, and that means that those problems are never addressed.

Professor Knox: I will expand a little on the Community Relations in Schools model, which I think is excellent on the point that you are making, Alex. CRIS starts off by saying, "What is the common issue here for parents?". In that particular model, it was saying, "We can do things better to educate our children together". Once it does that, it, in a sense, has hooked the parents, and I do not mean that in a pejorative way. The parents become interested in the process of learning with their children. CRIS then invites those parents to residential, and those parents then know each other very well. They know each other in a very natural setting very well. They have built up trust. We have sat in on those residential, which do not pull any punches on some of the hard issues. Therefore, it is not to suggest that, somehow or other, issues are brushed under the carpet; rather, they are dealt with in an environment in which trust has already been created around an issue that is outwith the conflict, sectarianism, and so on.

The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt): How much more needs to be done on single-identity work as a precursor to groups engaging in interface and cross-community-type work?

Professor Knox: I will jump in here.

The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt): I did not mean that to be a grenade.

Professor Knox: I am not a great fan of single-identity work at the stage that we have got to. That should now be passé. Clearly, there are difficulties in communities, particularly communities that suffered a lot over the whole conflict. We have reached the political circumstances where single-identity work should be very much a minor lead-in to stuff that is cross-community. We have moved beyond that, and we should have moved beyond that. We have spent enough money on that kind of

single-identity work. There are models in place that accept and respect people's right to their own identity and perhaps the nervousness about that initial meeting and so on. There are ways of tackling that, and there are some excellent facilitators and mediators in this work now, who are very skilled in this kind of work.

Mrs McWilliams: I agree.

The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt): Some support?

Mrs McWilliams: Projects that might have had a small bit of single-identity work, for example, with young people in Portadown, quickly moved to joint activities. I agree with Colin that there should be a small amount, if necessary, before quickly moving on.

The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt): Let me expand it to the kind of area that you were looking at, which was contested spaces. What about an area with a single-identity geography, which has issues because it is a single-identity village or town, but it is not homogeneous, in that there are —

Professor Knox: — factions?

The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt): Yes.

Professor Knox: One project that we worked with was shared education in the Foyle area. Schools were relatively close. When trying to roll that out, as, indeed, the Department of Education will do with shared education, the geography, particularly of large urban spaces like Belfast, is such that you do not have the same opportunities for cross-community work as in other areas. That said, transport permitting — usually in urban areas that is not such a big issue — they should move as quickly as possible to pairing up or buddying up with schools. I think Sarah agrees. The quicker they get into that the better.

The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt): My point is this: in some areas, intra-community is as important for the grouping as cross-community is for many others. I accept, however, that this goes beyond what you were evaluating, which was contested space.

Mr Attwood: I appreciate that this is a how-long-is-a-piece-of-string question, and I have a sense of what your answer will be. As you indicated, the interfaces are more visible in urban areas, and the 21 or so walls that we now have in Belfast are very visible, in particular. Given that physical separation, but also the work you have been involved in, where are people in relation to doing something more concrete in respect of the interface — the structures as opposed to the emotions and other expressions of separation?

Mrs McWilliams: These projects have worked in certain areas and may have a limited geography. Certain areas, say, north Belfast, are still quite fragile at times. I go back to projects there. Even when there has been a slight step back on issues of parades or flags or disputes, the participants, particularly parents, come back in greater numbers to participate. They are almost saying, "We want to do this work, and we want to engage." Each community will be different, but there is still the resilience and desire to move forward in the projects despite a few setbacks. More work needs to be done, but there is a good foundation.

Mr Attwood: Do people in these projects get together and ask how they can moderate these structures?

Professor Knox: A good example of that is a school working with Community Relations in Schools (CRIS), which said that it had to get a bus to go to a school and that, if it negotiated for some space across the peace walls, the project would operate better. In this particular case, they went to a supermarket and said, "If you opened this gate, which is your property, we could access other schools more easily." They were taking those kinds of decisions themselves. It was really encouraging to hear parents saying on behalf of their children, "This might have divided us in the past, but now we see a better future for our children." I re-emphasise that the common learning was identifying an issue that was common to both communities and that they wanted to resolve.

I return to your point on communities at interface areas, particularly visible interface areas. The issue of social deprivation in those communities is very obvious to us and probably to you as well. That

seems not to have moved on a lot despite quite a bit of resources being targeted at those communities. Is it because these communities have been so neglected by public services? How do we move those communities on? Those peace walls will not be tackled just by pulling down the wall. Those communities are the most deprived, and they feel it. They have not seen, to use the rhetoric, the peace dividend that other parts of Northern Ireland have. If we are able to push at that together through Together: Building a United Community, taking into account the common needs of those communities, doing so in a way that is not artificial or contrived, that is not good-relations- type work or symbolises a desire to make everyone "protolic", then that work would have real meaning for those communities, and you would see much more buy-in from them collectively. It is about identifying the common issues.

The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt): And how to solve them.

Professor Knox: And how to solve them.

The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt): As you say, a lot of money has been put in, but nobody could be content with the outcomes.

Professor Knox: I am not here with a magic wand. A lot of money has been put into each community. Has the money really been used so as to cut across government Departments? Needs are not parcelled out into government Departments. Has it been used in a way that sees these communities as a collective, rather than individual parts?

Mr Attwood: I have a final question. You hinted at, or maybe even gave, the answer earlier. Did you find that people involved in projects were more resilient when things around them were more volatile?

Professor Knox: Absolutely.

Mrs McWilliams: There is a determination to continue to engage in the project. There may be a few wobbles, but the vast majority of people have made a decision themselves to continue to engage and to encourage others to engage.

Mr Attwood: To be more specific, then, at the height of the flags impasse, the people were pulled in different directions —

Mrs McWilliams: There were a few issues with some projects. They pulled back temporarily but then went back and continued.

Professor Knox: They did that of their own volition. People involved in delivering their projects said, "We are sensitive to the fact that it might be difficult for you to go here or go there." The fact, however, that they went back gave project deliverers the confidence. These people are saying, "We do not want that to be an impediment". They were sensible about their own security. I think your point is spot on. Maybe it is the nature of people on these projects that they are willing to become participants and are slightly more resilient. As Chris said, we have witnessed, in parent sessions, people who are hardliners in their own community and have softened — maybe that is the wrong description — to the extent that they say, "This has to change for the next generation, and we are going to be part of making it happen collectively."

Mr Moutray: Thank you for coming along today. If I picked you up right, you talked in your opening remarks about the benefits of intergenerational projects. Can I ask you to expand on that? We have the Communities Unite in Reconciling and Building Society (CURBS) project in Portadown, which is doing a great work among the youth, not only on a cross-community but a cross-cultural basis, because we are finding that as many issues are cross-cultural as cross-community. I would like to have seen that as not only a youth project but across all ages. Will you expand on that?

Professor Knox: I absolutely endorse your comment about CURBS, which is an excellent project. Clearly, you have to work within certain parameters. They see their expertise as primarily in youth work, and they have done great work around that, particularly in working with ethnic minorities as part of that youth project. One of the successes of the CURBS project has been its working across statutory organisations. They work with statutory organisations and with youth groups. They have turned — maybe "turned" is the wrong word, but they have transformed — some of those contested spaces into shared spaces, such as the YMCA, St Mary's Hall and all of those places that you know

very well. However, they have not, to a great extent, concentrated on that intergenerational work. I do not think they would claim that they have done a lot of that. Some other projects will have done more of it, but, in the spread of the projects, we did not have projects that specifically targeted that kind of work. Is that fair to say?

Mrs McWilliams: Yes, but there were excellent outcomes. The way that they work with young people, especially in the use of media and sport, is very innovative. They make a lot of films and DVDs. We have been to a number of events, and they are really fantastic in what they are achieving.

Mr Moutray: Absolutely, and I endorse that, but the problems that we find emanating at weekends, especially in a cross-cultural area, are not coming from the teenagers and the younger people; it is the older generation. If there could be something in the future to address that —

Mrs McWilliams: Yes, and I think CURBS or the Community Intercultural Programme (CIP) are great organisations that could move forward with that.

Professor Knox: Can I just pick up on a point that you have not made there, which ties into building united communities? There is a project in Craigavon that is doing excellent work with young people in summer camps and sports programmes. You look at the headline actions and T:BUC and ask why the learning from that project is not being immediately transferred into T:BUC. Why are they starting off with yet more pilots, when they could go to Portadown? I am not saying that Portadown/Craigavon is the only example of that, but, by dint of the kind of work that we are doing, we are saying that there are some excellent examples of stuff that is going on in areas where kids are hard to reach etc. Why can we not see the immediate transfer of that into building a united community? Why are they going out as if they have never done it before, starting with a clean sheet and going out for pilots etc?

Mr Attwood: I know that this is an inquiry, but, given the point that has just been made, why are we not replicating in T:BUC what is working in a hard place? Why do we not just ask? Are we recreating the wheel here unnecessarily?

The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt): On that, Colin and Sarah, you have made very clear your questioning of the wisdom and the funding of the pilots. We would need to get a sense from you of the extent to which you think OFMDFM has learned the lessons from the likes of the Contested Spaces programme and is transferring them into T:BUC. Beyond pilots, are there other things that you are critical of? Is there anything that you would speak in praise of in terms of the transfer?

Professor Knox: For me, one of the big issues is around shared education. There is lots of learning from a project that looked at schools in Derry/Londonderry. It was called Foyle Contested Space. I thought that was an excellent project. It had very clear boundaries, with the river and schools on both sides of that river. Officials from OFMDFM have carried those kinds of messages back to individual Departments. The officials that we work with have been very good at doing that and have been very supportive of the work that we have done in that sense. I just think that it is a little bit harder to infiltrate the system — to move from the level of individuals into the system. Maybe the pace of government grinds very slowly in that sense. I would say that that kind of learning from schools must offer great opportunities to take the work of shared campuses, the shared education programme and the work before the Education Committee now on the Shared Education Bill. There are ready-made models there that have lots of learning, including on some of the obstacles that they had to address and tackle. Other schools will have to do likewise. Once again, why not learn from that.

Mrs McWilliams: Yes. Because some of the lead headlines and actions in T:BUC are with other Departments, we need to be able to communicate from this to the other Departments, and there are learnings from that. Yes, we did that this morning.

The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt): I think that that is the challenge. If it is going to finish positively, we need to look at the culture, rather than the speed of government. We do things vertically; we have environment, education, health and housing, and we now all know that, unless you can deliver that horizontally, you will not make a big positive different to people's lives.

Professor Knox: May I just make one final point, Chair. I think that there are opportunities to do that outwith central government now. So, I would be very optimistic about community planning — if it

operates as it should — in the new 11 local authorities. I would describe community planning as almost like delivering social change at a local level. There are opportunities for holding Departments to account in the new 11 councils through the local government legislation. Whether central government Departments will be amenable to that is the challenge.

The second and final point that I would make is that I think that there is a real opportunity here for Peace IV. I do not think that there is sufficient alignment between what PEACE IV is offering with €45 million for shared education, €50 million for children and young people, €90 million for shared spaces and €30 million for civil society. This is the bread and butter of Contested Spaces and the bread and butter of Together: Building a United Community. Why are we not dovetailing those things so that the learning does not just go from Contested Space and other good projects, but from Contested Space to Together: Building a United Community to Peace IV. There are huge opportunities there.

Mr Attwood: I got a sense from what you said, Sarah, about your meeting this morning — I do not want to put words in your mouth — that you might have found it a bit frustrating, and, in your latter comments, you asked why we were not merging Peace V, Contested Spaces and T:BUC. Would it be fair to characterise your sense of things, including this morning, as frustrating?

Professor Knox: Let me give a diplomatic answer to that. I think that there is a willingness on the part of officials whom we deal with in OFMDFM and that there is an appetite for change and a willingness to learn from these things. All of those things have been hugely positive, and, indeed, very supportive of the kind of work that we have done. Maybe they experience the same sense of frustration as we may have expressed, maybe too vividly, but there is something in the system here that creates blockages when, for outsiders like us — maybe it is easy to say these things as an outsider — that pathway seems fairly clear.

Mr Attwood: That is forthright.

The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt): So, mark for us, out of 10, Contested Spaces as a tool or a foundation for delivering T:BUC.

Professor Knox: OK, so I will jump in — go ahead please.

Mrs McWilliams: I would put it at the upper end. I think that it is not perfect, so I would probably say seven.

Professor Knox: Yes, and I agree, with one caveat, which is that to mark something like that requires a consistency in the nature — the homogeneity — of the projects. We were looking at four different strands within those projects, and I think that some of them were a lot better than seven and some of them were less than seven, so maybe seven is a good place to land.

The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt): We have your breakdown in your submission across those four.

Mr Maskey: I think that those two are on the wrong side of the table, Chairman. *[Laughter.]*

The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt): Colin and Sarah, thank you. That was most informative.