

**Participation Working Group
Monday 19th November 2007**

Present

David Guilfoyle - Chair
Eamonn Keenan (in place of Jacqueline O'Loughlin)
Joe Hawkins
Ann Godfrey
Vivian McConvey
Chris Quinn
Stuart Mullan
Paula Keenan
Martin McMullan
Pauline Leeson

Apologies

Gerard Doran
Denis Palmer
Sara McCartan
Sheri Chamberlain
Gilbert Bell

Karen Witherspoon, Clare Harvey - Secretariat

1. **Minutes** of the 10th October 2007 were agreed

2. Update

C Harvey recapped that thirteen written responses had been received to the pre-consultation. Added to these was the report of the consultation conference for 70 young people which was co-ordinated by the NI Youth Forum. In total the responses constitute the views of approximately 160 young people and eight organisations which work with or for children and young people. However some categories of child/young person had been under-represented in the responses- hence the need to ensure additional engagement.

The Chair tabled a revised timescale which had been submitted to DE, and which reflected the need for this additional engagement with children and young people. He noted that DE had cautioned against a disproportionate amount of time spent on the pre-consultation process, as the full consultation would also need to fully engage with a wide range of children and young people.

Given the additional engagement of children and young people, the Chair anticipated that the full consultation document would be disseminated around April 2008.

Following a proposal by J Hawkins, it was agreed that there should be a single version of the consultation document which would be accessible to young people, rather than separate 'adult' and 'young persons' versions. It was also agreed that materials would need to be developed to ensure that younger children can be engaged in the consultation process.

3. Involvement of Children and Young People

S Mullan presented a paper which proposed a two-phased engagement strategy for children and young people. Phase 1 would enable young people to have greater involvement in the production of the consultation report, and this phase could include targeted focus groups and the establishment of a representative Advisory Panel of young people. Phase 2 would entail the Big Deal playing a significant role in delivering consultations with children and young people across Northern Ireland during the formal consultation period from April 2008. This work would supplement responses to the consultation process to ensure that a broad range of children and young people have been directly engaged in the process.

The group approved the proposed engagement strategy, and it was agreed that a consultant should be contracted –overseen by NIYF- to co-ordinate the engagement process. Members of the group were asked to forward contact details of potential candidates (drawn from existing select lists) to the Secretariat.

A sub-group was established to progress the consultancy proposal and oversee the development of the Advisory Panel. Subgroup members were : D Guilfoyle (Chair), C Harvey (Secretariat), S Mullan, V McConvey, P Leeson, and a representative from Playboard. M McMullan noted he would be available from the new year.

Date of next meeting : 15th January 2008 (date to be confirmed with those absent)