

## Regional Advisory Group

### Notes of the meeting held on 21 September at 10am in EA Academy Street Board Room, Belfast

<b>Present</b>	
Clare Mangan – Chairperson (EA) Arlene Kee (EA) Alison Morgan (EA) – <i>Notes</i> Andrew Bell (DE) Cathy Galway (DE) Siobain Byrne (EA) Michael Reid (Young Farmers’ Clubs of Ulster) Chris Quinn (NIYF) Derek Capper (YCNi) <i>Proxy</i> Brenda McGrann (Youth Link) Stephen Dallas (EA)	Aoife Nic Collaim (Fóram na nÓg) <i>Proxy</i> Mary Field (Youth Work Alliance) Rita Burke (Youth Work Alliance) Claire Flowers (Girl Guiding Ulster) Tara-Grace Connelly (Youth Representative via NI Youth Forum) Simon Sloan (DoC) Andy Hewitt (Strategic Youth Forum) Dreena Evans (DE) <i>Proxy</i> Stephen Mallet (Youth Workers’ Alliance – NW) Clare Conlon (Youth Action NI) <i>Proxy</i> Esther Millar (EA)
<b>Apologies</b>	
John Peacock (YMCA) Lynsey Branniff (EA) John McCavana (ETi)	Julie Jamieson (Dept for the Economy) Rory Muldrew (Dept for the Economy) Jacqueline O’Loughlin (Playboard)
<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome</b>  Clare Mangan welcomed members to the meeting. Apologies were noted for members (as above). A round of introductions took place with new members (Andy Hewitt, Rita Burke and Andrew Bell) and proxy members of the group being welcomed.
<b>2</b>	<b>Notes of Meeting held on 01 May 2018</b>  Agreed as an accurate note of the meeting held.
<b>3</b>	<b>Matters Arising</b>  a) RAG Terms of Reference (TOR): Draft RAG Terms of Reference were issued to the group based on workshop feedback gathered in December 2017. DE welcomed further comments ahead of the final version being presented at the November 2018 RAG meeting.  Some comments included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>How are youth organisations nominated to sit on RAG?</i> Arlene explained the umbrella organisations Strategic Youth Forum and Youth Work Alliance, previously Youth Net) liaise with their members for nomination (as directed by Priorities for</li> </ul>

	<p>Youth and related policies). The makeup of RAG is broad and inclusive to allow it to respond to need within the sector.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Is RAG limited to two young people in attendance at RAG?</i> No the number of young people attending each meeting is dictated by the support required for the RAG agenda discussion.</li> <li>• <i>Young people cannot always make the time/dates of scheduled RAG meetings. How can we address this?</i> We can use ICT to allow young people to participate effectively; for example by recording feedback or joining the meeting via skype. Its important to have direct involvement by our young people; whether in person, recorded or through video conference.</li> <li>• <i>How will we review the effectiveness of RAG?</i> Previously we have done this annually however the EA intend to instigate online surveys after each RAG meeting as well as a formal annual review. Proposed agenda items are discussed and all members have the ability to suggest agenda items for all RAG meetings.</li> <li>• <i>Can Northern Ireland Youth Forum (NIYF) have formal recognition as a contributing member of RAG within the TOR?</i> It was agreed Chris Quinn would send a suggested line to reflect this going forward (point 8.3 within the draft TOR).</li> </ul> <p>b) RAG Representation (<i>to note</i>)</p> <p>Comment was made to the very strong attendance of all RAG members. Some member organisations have been replaced recently - Youth Workers' Alliance Belfast (Brian Gibson) with Rita Burke (Youth Work Alliance). It was agreed the current attendance sheets and up to date RAG Representatives List would be uploaded to the RAG main webpage for member's information.</p> <p>c) RYDP Action Plan 18/19 – based on feedback from RAG and also the RAG/LAG conference in March 2018, a 1 year action plan was developed and reflects the comments and main items still to be achieved within 2017-2020 RYDP. A fresh copy of the colour coded comments was to be re-circulated.</p> <p>Young Farmers and Strategic Youth Forum to contact Stephen Dallas before November 2018 RAG meeting to discuss their feedback input and concerns directly.</p> <p>It was agreed that the young people's feedback to the 1 year Action Plan document (as presented by NIYF) would be provided online as a separate document for members to see.</p>
4	<p><b>Proposed New Funding Scheme for Regional and Local Youth Organisations</b></p> <p>A presentation on the proposed new funding scheme was given by Arlene Kee to keep the RAG members up to date on progress stemming from previous pre-engagement meetings with RAG and other key stakeholders. No papers would be made available to the group.</p> <p>The next step will be presentation of documentation to the CYPS Committee and EA Board for approval to consult the public on the proposed new finding scheme. The feedback from the consultation will then direct the implementation of the funding scheme once completed.</p>

A member noted that it would have been helpful to have received papers outlining the proposals in advance. Dr Mangan noted that due to the sensitive nature of this subject this was not possible.

A member raised the issue of registration and noted that some regional youth organisations supported groups that were not registered with EA and asked how this could be addressed. Officers noted that support would be provided to groups wishing to register and that it was an important and necessary process particularly for governance and Child Protection regulation. Cathy Galway noted that for all other DE funding registration was a necessary requirement eg Early Years.

#### *Young People's Response*

Young People are very encouraged by the objectives of the scheme however they are worried about the lack of government for it to actually progress. It was hoped that our young people could be further involved in the grant-giving process (in addition to their input to assessment panels). Young people want to be actively consulted on the consultation process and where possible they want to be involved in the implementation process.

Discussion continued on general queries related to the local/regional groups, interaction of both and effect of funding opportunities available to them. It was stated that there would be transitional arrangements and support mechanisms when/if a new scheme was implemented for registered groups with the EA. Discussion should take place after RAG regarding the recognition of Irish Medium registered youth groups within current local area plans with Lynsey Branniff.

Some members highlighted concern as to the feasibility of having a three year funding budget given the NI political situation. Currently an annual budget is being provided with an indicative figure for the following year(s).

Some additional queries discussed:

- *What is the purpose of the funding workshops?* To ensure the EA have completed a robust consultation on the proposed new funding scheme with as many stakeholders as possible. The workshops will explain the detail within the proposals and give attendees the opportunity to ask gain knowledge and ask questions on areas they are unsure about which will allow them to feed into the consultation process effectively.
- *Explain the advertisement of the consultation.* A robust communications strategy is being developed to support the consultation process i.e. social media, newspaper inset, website update, C2K announcement, and notice to youth groups.
- *Does the proposal require Ministerial approval?* The implementation of a new funding scheme would however EA are only seeking to consult on the possibility of a new funding scheme at this stage. It was noted that this is the first major step in the process over the last 2-3 years.

<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>Newcomer Research</b></p> <p>Siobain Byrne provided a presentation on the results obtained from the recent study into newcomer children’s engagement and involvement in youth services. It is intended this research will inform the sector on how to better engage within this area of youth work.</p> <p>The full report was made available online. In order to have effective engagement on the research it was agreed that an easy read presentation and copy of the workshop questions would be circulated to the group. The item would be discussed in a workshop setting at the November 2018 RAG meeting. Young people were consulted on the research paper and provided handwritten notes.</p> <p><i>Young People’s Input:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people see a huge role for youth services to engage with newcomer children and young people. To build social connections and to combat their exclusion.</li> <li>• Is there a role for the CRED Reference group or the RYDP to help in this area of youth work?</li> <li>• What experiences do we already have in youth services that we can use to overcome the exclusion of newcomer children and young people?</li> <li>• Can we empower our young people who come from this area to specialise in helping other, newcomer children and young people? We need more bi-lingual volunteers and opportunities for our young people to be involved and progress engagement for those coming into schools and youth settings.</li> </ul>
<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>Dates of Next Meetings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 22/11/2018 – 9.45am (Academy Street, Belfast)</li> <li>• 12/03/2019 – 9.45am (Academy Street, Belfast)</li> </ul>
<p><b>9</b></p>	<p><b>Proposed RAG Agenda Items</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Newcomers Research Workshop</li> <li>- PDG Update</li> <li>- P&amp;M Group Update</li> <li>- Tackling Paramilitarism Programmes</li> </ul> <p>Dr Mangan reminded the group that everyone can feed into the proposed agenda items by making contact with herself or Arlene Kee.</p>