

Notes

Stakeholder forum –online meeting

Wednesday 10 December 2025 - 10:00am – 13:30

Attendees:

Elaine Armstrong (Chairperson)	The Cedar Foundation
Ian Simpson (Vice-Chair)	NIPSCBF
Aoife Hamilton	Deputy Chief Commissioner
Andrea Brown	Disability Action
Mary T Conway	Omagh Forum for Rural Associations
Denise Copeland	NICVA
Michele Crilly	Special Olympics
Lorraine Griffin	COSTA
Clare Jenner	Parentkind
Lisa Keys	Boys Brigade NI
Louise Little	North Down Community Network
Brenda McMullen	Halifax Foundation NI
Bill Megraw	County Down Rural Community Network
Diarmuid Moore	Early Years
Ann Breslin	CCNI – PDM, Notetaker.

Apologies:

Tony Clarke	Start 360
Conor Flanagan	Supporting Communities
Denise Hayward	Volunteer Now
Valerie McConville	CO3
Ashleigh Roberts	EBCDA

Ref	Item	Action point/Decision	Update
1	Welcome and apologies		
2	Notes of the previous meeting and update on action points.	Decision: Accepted	
3	Discussion of the results of recent skills audit.	<p>AP1: Overview of skills audit results to be circulated to members.</p> <p>Decision: Members agreed that in the light of the skills audit there was no need to recruit new members to the forum with legal or accountancy skills.</p> <p>AP2: Policy development manager to contact those whose names had been proposed as prospective members of the forum to inform them of this decision. And to invite them to act as critical friends to the Commission.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed – one person agreed to become critical friend.</p>
4	<p>Commission update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NI Direct - Strategic Plan consultation - Research on the charity register - Independent review recommendations. 	<p>Discussion on these items led to the following action points.</p> <p>AP 3: Members to help draw attention to the Commission' survey on why charity incomes have fallen.</p> <p>AP4: Commission to share the results of the survey on why incomes have dropped.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
4	Members agenda items	Discussion on: Credit Union accounts.	

		<p>AP5: Halifax Foundation representative to liaise with the Commission re criteria that the Funders Forum is developing.</p> <p>AP6: Commission to amend references to bank accounts in its guidance to include Credit Union and Building Society accounts and the criteria above in its advice for charity trustees to consider.</p> <p>AP7: Vice Chair to share contact details of Ulster Federation of Credit Unions with representative from NIVCVA.</p> <p>AP8: Representatives from Halifax Foundation and Omagh Forum for Rural Associations to meet outside the forum to share experience of these accounts.</p>	<p>On agenda for next Funders Forum meeting</p> <p>Underway</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Not yet started</p>
6	Members update	<p>County Down Rural Community Network</p> <p>AP9: Policy development manager to ask SMT of Commission to consider whether approved helper groups have an 'approved agent type status' to help them get into the new system quicker?</p>	<p>Response: current focus is on updating the online system for the introduction of registration threshold.</p>
8	Review workplan		
9	AOB	<p>Letter received by chair asking if there are any plans to review the audit thresholds for charities in NI as they have changed</p>	

		<p>in Scotland and England and Wales.</p> <p>Feedback from Commission – DFC is aware of the position in the other jurisdictions and will need to consider the position within NI.</p> <p>NICVA representative shared that she had raised this recently at DFC meeting and they had responded that they would 'hopefully' review it within the current mandate. This mandate ends in 2027.</p> <p>AP10: This information to be conveyed to the letter writer.</p> <p>AP11: Proposed new meeting dates for 2026/27 to be circulated to the forum.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>
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Next meeting:

Date: Wednesday 11 February 2026

Time: 10:00am – 12:30

Venue: Online