

THE INTRODUCTION OF COUNCIL-LED COMMUNITY PLANNING

1. A key theme underpinning the reform of local government is the Executive's vision for the sector. This is one of a strong, dynamic local government creating communities that are vibrant, healthy, prosperous, safe, sustainable, and which have the needs of all people at their core. Central to the vision is the provision of high quality, efficient services that respond to the needs of people and continuously improve over time. Critical to the delivery of this overarching objective will be an effective, statute-based community planning process led and facilitated by the new councils.
2. Community Planning is a process whereby councils, statutory bodies, agency bodies and sectors work together to develop and implement a shared vision for promoting the well-being of their area and pave the way for the most efficient use of scarce resources. A truly effective plan must not only identify tasks that need to be completed to realise the shared vision, but must also identify who shall carry them out.
3. In 2011 the NI Executive will introduce legislation making Community Planning a statutory responsibility. The legislation will place a duty on local councils to lead the process and on other public bodies to participate and promote Community Planning.

Community leadership

4. Councils and councillors have a unique opportunity in leading and facilitating the community planning process and this leadership role will be central to its success. The leadership role for councils is not just about consultation with citizens and communities but making sure there is effective and genuine engagement with citizens. It will require the capacity for innovation and creativity in responding to local circumstances. Councillors also have a critical role in localising as much decision making as possible and making sure residents know about these decisions. This will result in improved trust in local government; responsive and accountable decision

making; accessible and empowered democratic representatives and more direct powers of influence, challenge and scrutiny for communities.

Partnership working

5. Community Planning is an evolving and long term process. It will improve the connection between regional, local and neighbourhood levels through partnership working and making best use of all available resources. It recognises that no organisation alone can solve the problems or exploit the opportunities that exist in an area - this can only be achieved by working together. There will be significant challenges along the way in enabling a range of different agencies with different but complementary missions to come together to develop a shared vision for the promotion of an area's well-being and there will be a need for ongoing changes to culture, behaviours and attitudes to achieve genuine community focus. It requires commitment from all the partners, not just through agreement to a strategic vision, but also through action on the ground.

6. Bringing the key public sector agencies together is a necessary part of an effective community planning process, but is not sufficient on its own to promote successful Community Planning. Beyond the public sector there is recognition that there are a wide range of businesses, voluntary organisations, community and other groups who make vital contributions to promoting the economic, social and environmental well-being of an area.

Engagement

7. Effective engagement with communities is crucial to Community Planning. There is no restriction on the type of community to be included, they can be linked to a place or can be a community of interest, for example young people. Effective engagement of communities is a long-term process and is likely to be most effective and meaningful at a local or neighbourhood level. It is at this level that agencies responsible for the planning and delivery of services on the ground can come together as Community Planning partners to work with communities to address local

concerns in a way that cannot be achieved at a council-wide level alone. As communities will vary considerably between different areas, the challenge facing councils and their Community Planning partners will be to develop approaches that best suit local circumstances.

8. Community Planning is an outcome focussed evolving process. It can bring many benefits and supports the principles of: easier to access, better integrated, local services; effective collaboration across the public sector; better use of public resources; high standards of public service; and willingness to innovate and learn from others. Organisations gain shared understanding of local issues and they can work together to deliver solutions without duplication. The inclusion of Community Planning partners means that better evidence based solutions can be reached and delivered in the way that best suits the needs of communities and citizens.

Next Steps

9. The Strategic Leadership Board has agreed that a Foundation Programme to address a range of issues associated with Community Planning will be rolled out to support its introduction in 2011. The establishment of this Foundation Programme underlines the Northern Ireland Executive's commitment to the establishment of "an effective, statute-based Community Planning process led and facilitated by new councils" (former Environment Minister Arlene Foster's statement to the Assembly, 31 March, 2008). The Foundation Programme will build on the work already happening by councils in partnership with other organisations that has taken place over recent years.
10. Attached at Annex A is the Community Planning Foundation Programme - Operational Guide. It aims to support Transition Committees to prepare for the introduction of the Community Planning duty and, inter alia, identify the key issues that should be addressed in guidance which will be developed to support the operation of Community Planning. The programme framework provides for a phased approach to Community Planning, and outlines what can be realistically achieved between now and 2011, based on learning here and other jurisdictions.

COMMUNITY PLANNING FOUNDATION PROGRAMME

OPERATIONAL GUIDE

1. Purpose of the Foundation Programme
2. Aims of the Foundation Programme
3. Scope of the Foundation Programme
4. Outcomes from the Programme
5. Timing of the Programme
6. Networking and communications
7. Programme management and evaluation

1 PURPOSE OF THE COMMUNITY PLANNING FOUNDATION PROGRAMME

1.1 The purpose of the Foundation Programme is to support Transition Committees to establish the foundations for an effective and efficient community planning process in advance of the introduction of a statutory duty.

1.2 Its aim is to:

- support Transition Committees to prepare for the introduction of the Community Planning duty;
- identify those statutory agencies to whom a duty to participate in Community Planning should apply;
- identify the key issues that should be addressed in Statutory Guidance, which will be developed to support the operation of the Community Planning process;
- identify appropriate models for an efficient and effective community planning process;
- identify how initiatives across government can be integrated into the community planning process; and,
- assess the resource requirements to support the operation of Community Planning.

- 1.3 The work already undertaken by councils which can be reflected in Community Planning is recognised, but of equal importance is that all eleven Transition Committees must demonstrate significant progress by May 2011. In achieving this, what is important is not where councils are now, but where they need to be come 2011.

2 AIMS OF THE FOUNDATION PROGRAMME

- 2.1 The aims of this Foundation Programme are to:

- (a) have all Transition Committees prepared for the introduction of Community Planning in 2011
- (b) identify best practice and build on existing good practice;
- (c) identify key partners and appropriate partnership structures;
- (d) identify and address capacity issues/needs;
- (e) begin to build relationships and engage, where appropriate, at a regional and local level;
- (f) identify appropriate mechanisms to facilitate community engagement;
- (g) provide advice to Transition Committees on the process of examining the convergence and rationalisation of current partnership working activity across the new council areas;
- (h) where necessary make arrangements to accommodate the development of a new Community Planning Partnership e.g. build relationships across sectors and explore mechanisms/processes for achieving inclusion;
- (i) evaluate the resources required to deliver effective Community Planning;
- (j) identify the data and analysis necessary to support Community Planning and how this support may be delivered; and
- (k) capture the learning from this programme to inform the development of Statutory Guidance on Community Planning.

3 SCOPE OF THE COMMUNITY PLANNING FOUNDATION PROGRAMME

3.1 From the outset it should be noted that this Foundation Programme does not seek to implement a full Community Planning process. Statutory Guidance will be issued in 2011 that will support the full introduction of Community Planning.

3.2 The Foundation Programme has been designed to allow Transition Committees to begin to prepare for the introduction of Community Planning and to provide information that will inform the development of Statutory Guidance. Actions that Transition Committees can take during the programme are highlighted throughout this document and a full list can be found at Appendix A.

3.3 Specifically the Foundation Programme will, through Transition Committee-led work, **begin to address collectively and individually, and provide information** that will inform the development of Statutory Guidance in relation to the following key issues:

- (1) Understanding what a community planning process achieves;
- (2) Creating a plan for the new council area;
- (3) Information gathering and sharing;
- (4) Creating partnerships and shared working;
- (5) Considering memberships and engagement;
- (6) Identification of appropriate governance structures;
- (7) Creating performance measurement and accountability;
- (8) Linkages between local and central structures.
- (9) Identify those statutory organisations to whom a statutory duty to actively participate in Community Planning will apply

3.4 Understanding what a Community Planning Process Achieves

3.4.1 Community Planning is not merely the process of sticking together a number of existing plans and practices but rather formulating a deliverable vision for a council

area. It is a major undertaking and involves integrating all the various streams of public life, weaving these together and producing a statement of the future direction of the new council area. **The most successful examples of Community Planning are premised on robust and vigorous analyses based on sound data and information frameworks.**

3.4.2 The Community Plan then seeks to take the information and show how the current situation can be improved for the benefit of all people in the new council area. The vision in general will be ambitious and lend itself to the creation of real and challenging targets across a range of indicators. Good Community Planning will have involved all significant public service deliverers in any new council area and will have involved effective two way engagement with the community.

3.4.3 Visioning like this will require the ability to be innovative, to be solution rather than problem focused, to be open, flexible, committed and deliverable. The creation of such a process is based fundamentally on the need to exhibit leadership in all sectors of Northern Ireland society and to place a better life for all at the heart of any deliberations and processes.

3.4.4 The community planning process should achieve:

- a rigorous analysis of existing conditions in the new council area;
- an integrated view of the social, economic and environmental needs of the new council area in the context of regional, national and European policies and strategies;
- an ideal vision for the future;
- clear focus on tackling current reality in ways to achieve the ideal vision; and
- a set of outcomes which can be monitored and measured.

Actions for Transition Committees to take during the Foundation Programme.

1. Undertake initiatives aimed at raising awareness of the issue of Community Planning and what best practice looks like. Such a process of information sharing and dialogue can take place with elected representatives, other Transition Committees, and other statutory agencies.

3.5 Creating a Plan for the new council area

3.5.1 A Community Plan has many aspects and facets. Its basic objective is to create a long-term vision which creates communities that are vibrant, healthy, prosperous, safe and sustainable and have the needs of all citizens at their core. Such a plan should seek to maximise resources and create effective and efficient outcome-focused service delivery. Such a long-term vision will generally be of 15-20 years duration. However, the crucial aspect of Community Planning is to translate such “visions” into shorter term (3-5 years) action plans with clear targets and lines of responsibility.

3.5.2 An effective Action Plan should:

- set clear targets and measures for success within a limited timeframe;
- establish clear responsibility lines to the delivery of these targets among the various agencies; and,
- provide a clear review and monitoring process.

Actions for Transition Committees to take during the Foundation Programme.

2. No new council area is dealing with a “blank canvas” so each will have a wide range of short, medium and long-term plans and strategies for the constituent council areas. A clear audit of the existing plans/strategies for the new council area, for all sectors, should be mapped as a way of uncovering duplication and gaps in addressing issues.
3. Identify the key issues that will inform the development of the long-term vision through a fact based audit.

3.6 Information Gathering and Sharing

3.6.1 Information gathering and sharing is essential to the success of Community Planning and better joint working between agencies for the benefit of customers and citizens. Also Community Planning, in bringing agencies together, provides an opportunity to promote the need for, and implementation of, information sharing. In particular, it provides the opportunity for improved information sharing not just between public sector organisations but also with the voluntary, community and private sectors.

3.6.2 Information is required to be gathered and shared for a variety of reasons. These include:

- to assess community needs appropriately and accurately;
- to gain a shared understanding of need;
- to provide a basis for joint planning and targeting of resources;

- to assist in performance management activities in setting and monitoring shared targets;
- to improve efficiency and reduce duplication;
- to promote mutual understanding by sharing key organisational information (e.g. committee decisions, resource allocations);
- to share information on customers to promote consistent and improved customer services.

3.6.3 It is envisaged that through the Foundation Programme Transition Committees will carry out an information audit to identify what information is required to support Community Planning in their new council area; the purpose for which the information will be used and when is it required, both in terms of timing e.g. to inform the development of a particular plan and the frequency for refreshing the information. The Foundation Programme will highlight what information is available currently, what gaps exist, examples of good practice in sharing information and the barriers to collating and using information, e.g. the impact of different boundaries and how relevant information can be gathered efficiently and effectively.

Actions for Transition Committees to take during the Foundation Programme.
4. Consider and correlate the current information that the constituent councils hold on any aspect of the new council area.
5. Research other information sources that may exist which provide information on the new council area and how easily accessible these are.
6. Consider any current information sharing processes between sectors that exist in the new council area.
7. Seek to identify good/effective practice on information-sharing within the new council area, across councils and at a regional level.

3.7 Effective Partnership Working

3.7.1 Community Planning is about delivering services that meet people's needs and create improved outcomes. Key to this will be the development of new ways of thinking and working across functional and sectoral boundaries to deliver improved outcomes, through joined-up approaches. Its success will be grounded in the development of effective partnership working between, at one level, organisations delivering public services in the council area and, at a second level, between these organisations and communities.

3.7.2 The effectiveness of relationships will be supported by a shared understanding within the partnership of the respective roles and responsibilities of the individual organisations and their significance in the delivery of the improved outcomes. The identification of the relevant statutory bodies will, during the Foundation Programme, be a matter for Transition Committees taking account of local circumstances and the experiences of the constituent councils.

3.7.3 The significance of the individual partners in the delivery of Community Planning will develop and change over time in the future, depending on the issues and priorities identified by the Community Planning Partnership. While a specific partner may not have a key role at a particular point in time, relations need to be maintained to provide the ability to respond to changing circumstances and local needs.

3.7.4 The Foundation Programme also presents the opportunity for Transition Committees, working with the constituent councils and other organisations, to take a more strategic view on existing partnerships. In the long term Community Planning context, it may be appropriate to rationalise certain existing partnerships.

Actions for Transition Committees to take during the Foundation Programme.

8. Conduct an audit of all existing partnership arrangements in the new council area.

9. Map this existence and seek to identify duplication, gaps and the possibility for more effective working.

10. Consider models of best practice in partnership working in the new council area, across council areas and at a regional level and create a list of key elements which ensure effective working.

3.8 Engagement

3.8.1 The membership and participation in the Community Planning process will involve a wide range of individuals and groups at various levels.

Elected Members

3.8.2 The experience and skills of local elected representatives, built up over the years, will be the bedrock of an enhanced, more central leadership role in the new council arrangements. Community Planning will enhance civic leadership by putting it at the heart of every council and in the hands of every elected representative – bringing together statutory agencies and key stakeholders to act in partnership to secure outcomes that address local issues and needs.

3.8.3 Councillors and members representing various organisations may be engaged in the Community Planning Process at a number of levels –

- as members of a Community Planning Partnership, including associated thematic groups where they will be expected to play strategic leadership roles;

- as members of partnership bodies, where they will play key roles in determining the contribution of the partner body to Community Planning;
- as representatives or the “voice” of communities;
- as members of sub-groups or working groups associated with the Community Planning Partnership to which they can contribute their own specialist interests, experience or expertise;
- as representatives on various other bodies with a stake in Community Planning, such as Area or Joint Committees; and,
- through regular liaison with relevant partner bodies on initiatives which can make a positive contribution to community planning processes.

3.8.4 Councillors and members of relevant bodies, if they are to be fully engaged in community planning processes, will require support. As part of the Foundation Programme it is important to identify good practice in the possible approaches to giving support to Councillors and members. The approaches could include:

- regular briefings on key Community Planning issues and developments;
- capacity building and skill-sharing workshops;
- development of electronic networks, discussion forums and so forth, for sharing experiences and good practices.

Lessons learned during the Foundation Programme may inform the development of a support programme for new Councillors.

Public Sector Organisations

3.8.5 Without the active participation of other public sector agencies, especially those with significant public resources, Community Planning will not work. It is, therefore, essential that key relationships are established with these agencies. Where existing relationships are well established, these should be further developed and where not, actively pursued.

- 3.8.6 When the Community Planning duty on councils is introduced, participation will become a statutory responsibility for a number of agencies.
- 3.8.7 A key output from the Foundation Programme will be a recommended list of statutory bodies on whom the duty to participate in Community Planning will apply. In addition, to make the community planning process effective there will need to be a degree of involvement and participation from a wide range of sectors and organisations. Many of these organisations are already participating in partnership working across Northern Ireland and there have been many benefits as a result of this work. Community Planning will bring immense change to the way Northern Ireland does business, especially in relation to public services. It will require new forms of working relationships to overcome the inevitable tensions that will arise over prioritisation, especially in a situation of limited resources.

Community

- 3.8.9 The community planning process is as important as the eventual Community Plan itself. It will be vital to ensure wide, local ownership of the community planning process, which should be meaningful and inclusive. Community Planning must give local people a powerful voice in planning local approaches to meeting local needs and aspirations. A key aspect of effective community planning will, therefore, be citizen involvement throughout the process.
- 3.8.10 The way Councils and Community Planning Partnerships engage with communities should reflect the circumstances of their particular area. The structure and working practices of organisations and groups in rural areas will differ from those in urban areas. As a result, each will require distinct approaches.
- 3.8.11 Transition Committees, as part of the Foundation Programme, should review the approaches to citizen engagement of their constituent councils and determine if they meet the requirements for broad local ownership of the process. They

should also examine the opportunities for and, if appropriate, pilot alternative approaches for local engagement. This should be achieved through consultation and feedback.

- 3.8.12 A key feature of the engagement process must be transparency in relation to the decision-making process. The process needs to ensure that individuals, communities and representative bodies feel their views have been listened to and, where appropriate and feasible, taken into account.

Raising awareness and understanding

- 3.8.13 Community Planning challenges traditional ways of working and delivering services. It requires the development of new attitudes, behaviours, skills and competencies that underpin joined-up policy development, effective partnership working and effective engagement. It can place new demands on Community Planning partners as organisations at all levels, from key decision-makers to those working at the point of service delivery. The new challenges can successfully be addressed by raising the awareness, understanding and ability of citizens, organisations and communities to become fully engaged in Community Planning Processes.

Actions for Transition Committees to take during the Foundation Programme.
11. Begin a programme with elected members of awareness-raising and information on Community Planning and its implications.
12. Map out current engagement with other public agencies in the new council area and consider the quality of the relationships and the gaps in engagement.

13. Begin a process of active engagement with the public agencies which are key to the ongoing development of the new council area.

14. Consider the current organisation of the business community and private sector in the new council area and begin a dialogue about their potential role and engagement in Community Planning. (Note: further guidance on the form and composition of Community Planning Partnerships will be contained within statutory guidance).

15. Consider the current organisation of the community and voluntary sectors in the new council area and begin a dialogue about their potential role and engagement in community planning. (Note: further guidance on the form and composition of Community Planning Partnerships will be contained within statutory guidance).

16. Consider and organise a number of seminars and conferences to raise awareness, and to debate and discuss the development of Community Planning in the new council area.

3.9 Developing governance structures to support Community Planning

3.9.1 It is envisaged that Community Planning Statutory Guidance to be issued in 2011 will contain a number of possible governance structures or models that can be used by the 11 new council areas to facilitate Community Planning. Transition Committees during the Foundation Programme should consider current partnership working and any issues that should be considered by the Strategic Leadership Board when identifying possible governance structures and models. **It should be noted that a Community Planning Partnership should not be developed before the issue of Statutory Guidance in 2011.**

3.9.2 In reviewing the development of Community Planning, no single governance structure or model exists. Some of the key characteristics that have emerged in other areas are:

- an over-arching Community Planning Partnership which has responsibility for creating the vision and key priorities for the new council area and to find the resources to translate and realise the Plan;
- a small number of thematic partnerships which will work to create more detailed plans on specific issues. These will have much broader representation than the Community Planning Partnership; and,
- local area partnership arrangements working directly with local communities to ensure the over-arching plan/thematic plans are targeting and addressing the needs of local people.

3.9.3 There are, however, some common elements that can be identified:

- Partnership Groups – usually comprising elected Members, Senior Officers from the Council and Chief Executives, Directors and senior representatives from partner organisations;
- Implementation or Operational groups – involving less Senior Officers from partner organisations. The groups are usually charged with taking forward the delivery of Community Planning between meetings of the main partnership group;
- Thematic groups – are responsible for developing the key strategic themes outlined in the Community Plan (in some areas the groups could build upon existing groups which will be brought into the wider community planning process, e.g. CSPs/DPPs); and,
- Local area planning processes.

Actions For Transition Committees to take during the Foundation Programme.

17. Carry out a survey of existing partnerships and the core issues for each new council area and consider how the issues could be used to create a series of thematic partnerships;

18. Consider any current models of working at a more local area level. How effective are they and what is their potential for the Community Planning Process?

3.10 Creating Performance Measurement and Accountability

3.10.1 Community Planning is about results. Once the community planning process is in place its success is measured not on the process itself but in relation to the outcomes it produces. The need for robust and sound data/information frameworks is crucial as a foundation, but ultimately an agreed performance management framework will also have to be constructed. Monitoring and measuring are key parts of the process. This will not be an easy task but is an essential one.

Actions for Transition Committees to take during the Foundation Programme.

19. Audit current performance management processes among those organisations operating in the new council area and assess the issues which need to be addressed in attempting to create more coherence and consistency in these, where appropriate.

3.11 Implementing Regional Initiatives

3.11.1 A number of initiatives are currently being developed across Central Government that, following the re-organisation of local government, are likely to form strands within a Council's Community Plan. These include:

- the piloting of joint working between councils and the new Public Health Agency;

- the development of arrangements for closer liaison between councils and Roads Service in relation to roads planning and maintenance;
- preparation for the transfer of Planning Service functions to councils;
- the proposed rationalisation of DPPs and CSPs to form one single integrated partnership, operating within the Community Planning Framework.

3.11.2 Northern Ireland Executive Ministers are committed to ensuring the initiatives will, as far as is practicable, be taken forward in the context of, and with regard to, the proposed Community Planning Framework. Guidance issued by the sponsoring Departments or Agencies to support the implementation of these initiatives will include reference to how the particular initiative will integrate into Community Planning.

3.12 Informing the Development of Regional Strategies

3.12.1 Community Planning offers considerable potential for the better alignment of national priorities with local priorities. During the period of the Foundation Programme the Northern Ireland Executive and its constituent Departments will be undertaking consultation on various regional strategies and policies. The strategies and policies may, in some cases, have a significant impact on the ability of any particular Community Planning Partnership in the future to address agreed local priorities.

3.12.2 It is essential that Transition Committees through the Community Planning Foundation Programme actively contribute to any such consultation exercises to ensure that local priorities as far as possible are taken into account. It is likely that not all the 11 areas will have adequate information to support the agreement of local priorities. Regionally the Executive and Departments will be asked to take this into account and build in review processes within the next 2-3 years to ensure Community Plans, when fully developed, will be considered e.g. the draft Regional Development Strategy to be consulted on later this year.

4 OUTCOMES FROM THE FOUNDATION PROGRAMME

4.1 In implementing the programme of activities in each area, the precise outcomes and ways of seeking to achieve them will clearly vary from area to area depending on local circumstances including stages of development in existing partnership working and community engagement. However, in generic terms all Transition Committees should seek to demonstrate progress in putting preliminary arrangements in place to address the:

- clearer identification and targeting of issues;
- prioritisation of available resources;
- joined up delivery of services leading to better outcomes for citizens; and,
- engagement of citizens and communities in the identification of need, prioritisation and delivery.

5 TIMING OF THE FOUNDATION PROGRAMME

5.1 The period up until May 2011 will provide a unique opportunity for local government to develop its capacity, learning and experience in leading a citizen-focussed, multi-agency approach to Community Planning. However, the time period is also limited. To ensure that the Foundation Programme is appropriately evaluated and learning is captured to inform the development of Statutory Guidance to support Community Planning, the programme will be delivered through the following phased approach.

OUTLINE OF PLANNED PHASES

Phase 1 : Planning December 2009 - January 2010
Transition Committees will be asked to submit proposals for participation in the Community Planning Foundation Programme and these proposals will be agreed by the Department of the Environment. (This approval will facilitate the evaluation process as Transition Committees will set out clearly the Foundation Programme activities that they will undertake)
Phase 2 : Implementation January 2010 to March 2011
Transition Committees will implement agreed actions and collect appropriate data as detailed in the Foundation Programme Evaluation Framework. Data will be collected throughout the implementation phase.
Phase 3 : Evaluation March 2011 to May 2011
Evaluation of the Foundation Programme is analysed and reported to the SLB with recommendations for the development of Statutory Guidance for Community Planning.
Phase 4 : Introduction of Community Planning The duty to Community Plan is introduced along with the relevant Statutory Guidance.

- 5.2 In order to support the effective implementation of the Foundation Programme and to ensure the relevant issues are addressed across the region, Transition Committees will be required to submit Foundation proposals to [TBC] for assessment, to ensure the proposed activities are compatible with the agreed Programme.

5.3 The Foundation proposals should be developed in accordance with normal project management practice and be submitted by (timing to be determined).

5.4 The activities proposed should cover the following broad headings:

Rationale

Project scope and management arrangements

Major activities

Success criteria/benefits

Governance and accountabilities

Resources

Goals and objectives (based on the programme objectives)

Underpinning/baseline evidence

Deliverables

Risks and assumptions

5.5 The Foundation proposals should be shared with the key statutory partners and, ideally, their engagement and commitment to the Programme demonstrated by a simple partnership agreement. This document should clearly and simply set out the respective roles and responsibilities of the different partners during the programme. Transition Committees will be required to be the lead partner.

6 NETWORKING AND COMMUNICATIONS

6.1 The learning opportunities presented by the range of approaches adopted in the transition clusters will be used to inform the finalisation of the statutory guidance and to establish examples of good practice. To support the learning process and the sharing of experiences the following will be developed centrally as the programme progresses:

- guidance to participants in the Programme;

- email news-shots and updates, with a focus on the different aspects of the Foundation programme; and
- regular meetings, seminars and workshops.

6.2 A central programme of information and awareness-raising events across all areas and sectors will be put in place in the lead up to the establishment of the new councils. A “launch event” will be designed to explore some of the critical issues that could impact on the success of work to be undertaken by the Transition Committees and at appropriate stages there will be seminars to consider lessons learned, provide networking opportunities, and to draw together practitioners and best practice.

7. PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT AND EVALUATION

7.1 Effective management of the programme of activities in each of the Transition Committees will be important for the success of the whole programme. A programme management framework linked to the evaluation process for the Foundation Programme will be developed and issued for use by the Transition Committees. There will be agreed periodic reviews with individual Transition Committees as the lead partners to monitor progress and ensure that the framework remains fit for purpose.

7.2 An independent, robust, evidence-based evaluation process will be put in place to support the operation of the programme and the introduction of the statutory duty by:

- identifying and sharing lessons learned and best practice;
- identifying any barriers to progress and potential solutions; and,
- identifying key issues for the finalisation of the statutory guidance.

**MATRIX OF POTENTIAL ACTIONS
FOR STATUTORY TRANSITION COMMITTEES**

3.4 Understanding what a Community Planning Process can achieve.

1. Undertake initiatives aimed at raising awareness of the issue of Community Planning and what best practice looks like. Such a process of information sharing and dialogue can take place with elected representatives, other Transition Committees, and other statutory agencies.

3.5 Creating a Plan for the New Council.

2. No new council area is dealing with a “blank canvas” so each will have a wide range of short, medium and long-term plans and strategies for the new council area. A clear audit of the existing plans/strategies for the new council area for all sectors should be mapped as a way of uncovering duplication and gaps in addressing issues.
3. Identify the key issues that will inform the development of the long-term vision through a fact based audit.

3.6 Information Gathering and Sharing.

4. Consider and correlate the current information that the councils hold on any aspect of the new council area.
5. Research other information sources that may exist which provide information on the new council area and how easily accessible these are.
6. Consider any current information sharing processes between sectors that exist in the new council area.
7. Seek to identify good/effective practice on information-sharing within the new council area.

3.7 Effective Partnership Working.

8. Conduct an audit of all existing partnership arrangements in the new council area.

9. Map this existence and seek to identify duplication, gaps and the possibility for more effective working.

10. Consider models of best practice in partnership working in the new council area and create a list of key elements which ensure effective working.

3.8 Engagement

11. Begin a programme with elected Members of awareness-raising and information on Community Planning and its implications.

12. Map out the current engagement with other public agencies in the new council area and consider the quality of the relationships and the gaps in engagement.

13. Begin a process of active engagement with the public agencies which are key to the ongoing development of the new council area.

14. Consider the current organisation of the business community and private sector in the new council area and begin a dialogue about their role and engagement in Community Planning. (Note: further guidance on the form and composition of Community Planning Partnerships will be contained within statutory guidance).

15. Consider the current organisation of the community and voluntary sectors in the new council area and begin a dialogue about their role and engagement in community planning. (Note: further guidance on the form and composition of Community Planning Partnerships will be contained within statutory guidance).

16. Consider and organise a number of seminars/conferences, to raise awareness, and to debate and discuss the development of Community Planning in the new council area.

3.9 Developing governance structures to support community planning

17. Carry out a survey of existing partnerships and the core issues for each new council area and consider how the issues could be used to create a series of thematic partnerships.

18. Consider any current models of working at local area level. How effective are they and what is their potential for the Community Planning Process?

3.10 Creating performance measurement and accountability

19. Audit current performance management processes among those organisations operating in the new council area and assess the issues which need to be addressed in attempting to create more coherence and consistency in these, where appropriate.

Meaning of Terms used in the Foundation Programme Operational Guide

Community

Community in the context of this document means individual people living in a defined geographic area or individual people who share an interest.

Area

Area in the context of this document means the area covered by the existing or new Councils or a smaller defined area within a new Council boundary.

Locality

A locality in the context of this document is a smaller defined area within a new Council boundary.

Neighbourhood

In the context of this document a neighbourhood is a localised community within a larger city, town or suburb.

Local

In the context of this document local means a particular place or small area.

