

17 December 2018

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Dear Sir/ Madam

## 2021 Census Outputs Strategy Consultation for Northern Ireland

The Carnegie UK Trust welcomes the opportunity to respond to the 2021 Census Outputs Strategy Consultation for Northern Ireland. The Trust works to improve the lives of people throughout the UK and Ireland, by changing minds through influencing policy, and by changing lives through innovative practice and partnership work. Our [Strategic Plan \(2016-2020\)](#) takes a holistic approach to wellbeing and outlines our work as focusing on '[Enabling Wellbeing](#)'; '[Flourishing Towns](#)'; '[Fulfilling Work](#)'; and '[Digital Futures](#)'.

### Evidence Base

The Carnegie UK Trust has been actively involved in promoting wellbeing in policy since the establishment of the first [Carnegie Roundtable on Measuring What Matters in Scotland](#) in 2010. Since 2011 we have published [case studies](#) of how governments and civil society organisations measure wellbeing in France, the USA, and Canada; made recommendations on [next steps for the Scottish National Performance Framework](#); funded a [policy assessment tool](#) which uses wellbeing indicators to critique policy proposals; set out steps for developing a [wellbeing framework in Northern Ireland](#); produced [guidance on wellbeing frameworks for cities and regions](#); convened an [international roundtable discussion](#) on the successes and challenges of developing high-level strategies based on wellbeing and translating this to policy action; and developed a UK-wide programme on the [Enabling State](#) which explores public service approaches which give citizens and communities more opportunity to shape the services that they receive and to contribute to their own wellbeing. Our new project [Embedding Wellbeing in Northern Ireland](#) is providing financial and in-kind support to Community Planning Partnerships in the local authority areas of Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council; Derry and Strabane District Council; and Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council to implement a local wellbeing outcomes approach through their Community Plan.

Honorary President: William Thomson CBE  
Chair: Sir John Elvidge  
Chief Executive: Martyn Evans

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Registered Charity No: 20142957 operating in Ireland

## Data and Community Planning

In the [Expression of Interest process](#) to take part in the Trust's Embedding Wellbeing in Northern Ireland project, the identification, analysis, use, visualisation and communication of data in Community Planning was identified as a challenge by the eleven Community Planning Partnerships in Northern Ireland. The challenges cited ranged from a lack of data, with some key data sets only being available at an all-Northern Ireland level, to too much data – with large volumes of data on some thematic areas making prioritisation in policymaking difficult. A lack of analytical capacity at local government level and a lack of awareness of the importance of good quality data for the accuracy of decision-making by senior colleagues and elected members were also highlighted.

The Trust therefore welcomes the work being undertaken by NISRA on improving the availability of data at local authority level; the presentation of monitoring data; facilitating partnerships between local authorities and Northern Ireland Executive Departments to undertake research or analysis through the Administrative Data Centre; and supporting reporting on Outcomes Based Accountability, as outlined at the first Embedding Wellbeing in Northern Ireland peer to peer learning event.

The challenges experienced by the Embedding Wellbeing in Northern Ireland project participants, and wider Community Planning Partnerships network, have led the Trust to support two projects designed to improve awareness of the importance of data in Community Planning and its communication to citizens. Firstly, the Trust is supporting the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) to develop and deliver a training session on the use of data and evidence in Community Planning as part of its pilot Regional Programme of Learning and Development for elected members. The training will be designed to improve elected members' awareness of the importance of data and evidence for robust, well-informed decision-making. The training will be developed with a view to including the session as a rolling offer within the scaled up Regional Programme of Learning and Development which will be implemented in May 2019 for the new intake of elected members in Northern Ireland.

Secondly, the Trust is supporting the three Embedding Wellbeing in Northern Ireland project participants in the development of effective visualisation and communication of the data in their Community Plans. The Trust's [international research](#) on wellbeing frameworks has found that one way of ensuring wellbeing measures get traction in the policymaking process is to ensure there is broad-based support by developing an effective communication and dissemination strategy. Communicating effectively about wellbeing is also a key part of gaining popular support and building media interest in scrutinising progress. During a study visit to New York, the participants were interested in the data visualisations used by Measure of America for their report [A Portrait of New York City](#), and expressed a desire to develop something similar for their public reporting and communications. The Trust is therefore commissioning feedback from citizens in the local authority areas of Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon, Derry and Strabane, and Lisburn and Castlereagh on key issues such as what would help citizens to understand the progress being made in the delivery of the respective Community Plans; what forms of visualisation do citizens find most engaging; and how important is it for context to be provided, to allow

citizens to understand if progress against delivery of the Community Plan has improved, been maintained, or stalled.

The Trust would be pleased to work with NIRSA in the development and delivery of both of these projects, and to share the learning on how local government and its partners can be supported to identify, use and communicate data effectively.

### **Concluding Remarks**

We hope that you find these comments helpful. We would be delighted to speak with you further on our experiences in Northern Ireland and internationally. If you would like to discuss our response or would like to find out more about our work please contact me via email at [lauren@carnegieuk.org](mailto:lauren@carnegieuk.org) or by telephone on 01383 721445.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lauren Pennycook". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lauren Pennycook  
Senior Policy and Development Officer  
Carnegie UK Trust