

#CoffeeClub @ #AP2017

Alliance Party Conference

25 March 2017

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1. #CoffeeClub Agenda

When?	What?	Who?
9.15 am	#CoffeeClub's first shot of the day!	Coffee supplied by Loaf Catering @lovelyloaf
9.45 am – 10.30 am	Stratagem and The Joseph Rowntree Foundation host: <i>The Politics of Poverty – how can we solve poverty in Northern Ireland?</i> @JRF_UK #SolveUKPoverty	<p>Julia Buchanan, Barnardo's @BarnardosNI</p> <p>Derek McCallan, NILGA @NI_LGA</p> <p>Seamus Lynch, Age Sector Platform @aspni</p> <p>Kate McCauley, Housing Rights @HousingRightsNI @KateMcC16</p> <p>Andrew McCracken, Community Foundation NI @CFNIreland @AMcCracken_</p>
10.45 am – 11.30 am	<i>Unlocking our social economy: What role can government play?</i> Social Enterprise NI on the contribution that social enterprises make to our local economy, communities, and how government policies can better promote social value	<p>Colin Jess and Amanda Johnston, Social Enterprise NI @Socentni @Cjstirling59 @Mandymo4</p> <p>Stewart Dickson MLA, Chair of the All-Party Group on Social Enterprise @Stewartcdickson</p> <p>John McMullan, Bryson Charitable Group @BrysonCEO</p> <p>Marie Marin, Employers for Childcare @EFCCG</p> <p>Jenny Potter, NOW Group @NOW_Group @JennyRuddy</p>
11.40 am - 12.05 pm 12.10 pm - 12.45 pm	Deputy Leader's Speech (Main Hall) Party Leader's Speech (Main Hall)	Stephen Farry MLA Naomi Long MLA
1.30 pm – 2.15 pm	<i>Polls, election results and referendum outcomes – what's the difference?</i> What do recent developments mean for unionism, nationalism and the "centre ground" in Northern Ireland?	<p>Alan Meban, Alan In Belfast @AlanInBelfast</p> <p>Ben Lowry, The News Letter @News_Letter @BenLowry2</p> <p>Bill White, LucidTalk @LucidTalk @BillWhiteNI</p>





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3. #CoffeeClub Supporters



JOSEPH
ROWNTREE
FOUNDATION



Social Enterprise NI



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4. The Politics of Poverty

Julia Buchanan (Barnardo's) raised the issue of child poverty and said that children were often overlooked in the debate. She pointed to the importance of childcare and education as a means to end educational underachievement and close the attainment gap.

Seamus Lynch (Age Sector Platform) agreed that child poverty was a problem that could lead to a very real stigma and lack of confidence but also called for a renewed focus on older people, 20 percent of whom live in poverty. He suggested that relatively easy solutions like automatic pension credit payments and discounts on energy bills would make a considerable difference.

Kate McCauley (Housing Rights) talked about the correlation of housing and poverty. She said that affordability issues are increasing across all tenures but particularly so in the private rented sector which has seen a demographic change in those who live there. She referenced reports that identified that *“by 2020 the expected gap between housing benefit and private sector rents will grow by 300 percent”* which is clearly unsustainable. Kate said work to address financial exclusion and to ensure the voices of those impacted by poverty are heard in policy decisions was important in ensuring people could access and sustain housing.

Andrew McCracken (Community Foundation NI) queried the current approach to poverty. He suggested that the developing world was *“littered with projects that failed because they didn't engage properly with the community”* and called for an approach that worked with communities rather than for. He said that participation, philanthropy and politics are key to solving poverty.

Derek McCallan (NILGA) highlighted the importance of regeneration work being done the right way and used the example of Denny in Scotland where the local community was permitted to create their own anti-poverty strategy.

5. Unlocking our Social Economy

The conversation was anchored by **Colin Jess** and **Amanda Johnston** from **Social Enterprise NI**. The focus of the conversation was on the current political impasse and how this will impact on efforts to implement a social value act in Northern Ireland.

Chair of the Assembly's All Party Group on the subject, Stewart Dickson MLA, explained that a new Assembly would require new legislation. He informed #CoffeeClub that a variety of options had been examined to progress the process – from importing key aspects of the legislation from England and Wales, through to seeking the backing of the Department of Finance – but in future a lot will depend on the position of any new Finance Minister.

In terms of timescales, **Mr Dickson** suggested that using the English legislation would take six to nine months, whilst creating a unique bill for Northern Ireland could take up to 18 months to get passed. Direct rule, he claimed, would preclude a bill from advancing at all.

Asked what would be included in a bill for Northern Ireland, **John McMullan (Bryson Charitable Group)** said the Act would include all public bodies; Departments, Councils and all arms-length agencies and should cover the commissioning and procurement of all goods and services; the disposal or transfer of public assets and the in-housing of outsourced services.

Amanda Johnston and **Colin Jess** brought the session to an end with a discussion about the importance of social enterprise and the wide range of organisations that were social enterprises but did not define themselves as such. It was acknowledged that Social Enterprise NI had carried out significant work in promoting and raising awareness of the social enterprise sector and that the continuation of this would be important going forward.

6. Polls, Election Results and Referendum Outcomes

The final #CoffeeClub discussion of the day looked at '*Polls, election results and referendum outcomes – what's the difference?*'

Bill White (LucidTalk) kicked off the conversation with a look back at some recent polls. He pointed out that much of the polling in the EU referendum had in fact been accurate and that the final poll was within 1.1 percent of the actual result. He also produced polls on voter preference in terms of EU membership and Northern Ireland's place in the UK.

Ben Lowry (Belfast Newsletter) talked about recent election results and stated that the most significant result for him was Belfast East in 2015 when Naomi Long failed to retain her seat for the Alliance Party. He pointed to the fact that her vote share went up when it might have been expected to decline, and suggested that this was indicative of a new moderate middle ground which included SDLP and UUP voters.

Alan Meban (AlaninBelfast) said that despite suggestions to the contrary, the election had not felt like it was about Brexit. That said he felt that identities were fluid in the post-Brexit era. In terms of the prospect of a united Ireland, he suggested that unionists needed to consider what sort of united Ireland they would accept, alluding to the shock of "Brexit" and the lack of thought around what it might look like before the referendum took place. He also pointed out that he feels Alliance need to bank and invest their March 2017 results by carving out a distinctive centre ground position while acting collectively in opposition.

5. Social Media Report

- For #AP2017, 1,617 tweets were transmitted before and during the weekend's conference with 424 participants and 7,254,833 impressions.
- There were 263 associated uses of the #CoffeeClub hashtag. The peak of #CoffeeClub Twitter activity was between 11.30am and 1.30pm on the day of the conference. This was during and immediately following the session on 'Unlocking our social economy' which featured Stewart Dickson MLA.
- Check below to see the rankings for #CoffeeClub and #AP2017, and our full report including pictures, the tweet timeline and an analysis of the top contributors.
- **#CoffeeClub** twitter activity can be viewed [here](#).
- **#AP2017** Twitter activity can be viewed [here](#).

Twitter Contributor Rankings - #CoffeeClub

Most active [?]			Retweeters [?]			Original tweets [?]		
Contributor	Tweets		Contributor	Retweets		Contributor	Tweets	
 StratagemNI @StratagemNI	46		 StratagemNI @StratagemNI	13		 StratagemNI @StratagemNI	33	
 socialenterpriseni @socentni	17		 socialenterpriseni @socentni	13		 Connor Daly @Cdaly29	7	
 Colin Jess @Cjstirling59	11		 Colin Jess @Cjstirling59	11		 socialenterpriseni @socentni	4	
 Connor Daly @Cdaly29	11		 Stewart Dickson MLA @stewartcdickson	10		 Loaf Catering @lovelyloaf	3	
 Stewart Dickson MLA @stewartcdickson	10		 NOW Group @NOW_Group	5		 Pick A Cup @Pick_A_Cup	3	
 Loaf Catering @lovelyloaf	7		 LucidTalk @LucidTalk	5		 Gavin Morrison @Beaver_14	3	
 NOW Group @NOW_Group	6		 Aoife Hamilton @HamiltonAoife	5		 Alan in Belfast @alaninbelfast	2	
 Aoife Hamilton @HamiltonAoife	6		 Jenny Potter @JennyRuddy	4		 Cliona McCarney @clionamccarney	2	
 LucidTalk @LucidTalk	5		 Loaf Catering @lovelyloaf	4		 Campanile Cardiff @Campanile_CRF	2	
 Jenny Potter @JennyRuddy	5		 Connor Daly @Cdaly29	4		 John McMullan @BrysonCEO	2	

Most popular ?

Contributor	Followers
 Slugger O'Toole @SluggerOToole	26,803
 Kyrsten Sinema @kyrstensinema	18,616
 Alliance Party @allianceparty	17,380
 Anna Dodson @annadodson1959	13,124
 Alan in Belfast @alaninbelfast	12,802
 David McCann @dmcdfs	8,265
 Susan @susanpayne26	6,899
 Terri Coutee @6state	6,097
 StratagemNI @StratagemNI	5,464
 Quintin Oliver @QuintinOliver	5,231

Highest impact ?

Contributor	Impacts
 StratagemNI @StratagemNI	251,344
 socialenterpriseni @scentni	80,206
 Anna Dodson @annadodson1959	52,496
 Alliance Party @allianceparty	52,140
 Stewart Dickson MLA @stewartcdickson	38,550
 Colin Jess @Cjstirling59	29,128
 Slugger O'Toole @SluggerOToole	26,803
 Alan in Belfast @alaninbelfast	25,604
 NOW Group @NOW_Group	25,182
 Loaf Catering @lovelyloaf	24,962

Top photographers ?

Contributor	Photos
 StratagemNI @StratagemNI	3
 Denise McAnena @dmcanena28	1
 David McCann @dmcdfs	1
 Alan in Belfast @alaninbelfast	1
 Mel...The Phoenix @MelRises	1
 SoHostel London @SoHostel_London	1
 Dhoha Jerbi @DhohaJerbi	1
 BMA Northern Ireland @BMA_NI	1
 Shahida Qureshi @shy_qureshi	1
 The Butler Pantry @ButlerPantry	1

Twitter Contributor Rankings - #AP2017

Most active [?]			Retweeters [?]			Original tweets [?]		
Contributor		Tweets	Contributor		Retweets	Contributor		Tweets
	Alliance Party @allianceparty	145		Aine Rafferty @aineduck97	79		Alliance Party @allianceparty	99
	Aine Rafferty @aineduck97	79		Alliance Party @allianceparty	46		Slugger O'Toole @SluggerOToole	63
	Slugger O'Toole @SluggerOToole	66		Ann Gilliland @Carrie_O_HARA	29		StratagemNI @StratagemNI	39
	StratagemNI @StratagemNI	51		Brown O'Connor @Brown_OConnor	24		Eye on the Hill @chambrepa	30
	Eye on the Hill @chambrepa	31		Stewart Dickson MLA @stewartcdickson	23		Trendinalia UK @trendinaliaGB	24
	Ann Gilliland @Carrie_O_HARA	29		Kellie Armstrong MLA @Kelmba	23		RNIBNI @RNIBNI	15
	Kellie Armstrong MLA @Kelmba	29		Paul Stephenson @paul_CPSU	21		FSB Northern Ireland @FSB_NI	14
	Brown O'Connor @Brown_OConnor	26		Naomi Long MLA @naomi_long	17		NICON @NHSC_NI	12
	Trendinalia UK @trendinaliaGB	25		Heather Moorhead @HmmMoorhead	16		Dr Kate Flynn @katyusha13	11
	NICON @NHSC_NI	24		Clare Higgins @CHiggins101	16		WSLobbyistNI @WSLobbyistNI	11

Most popular ?

Contributor	Followers
 Ulster University @UlsterUni	29,956
 Slugger O'Toole @SluggerOToole	26,803
 Naomi Long MLA @naomi_long	21,783
 Belfast Times @Belfasttimes	20,521
 Niall Ó Donnghaile @NiallSF	18,538
 Arts Council NI @ArtsCouncilNI	17,469
 Alliance Party @allianceparty	17,380
 michelle oneill @moneillsf	16,226
 mourne seafood @mourneseafood	14,950
 Emmanuel D. @Emmman_D	14,105

Highest impact ?

Contributor	Impacts
 Alliance Party @allianceparty	2,520,100
 Slugger O'Toole @SluggerOToole	1,768,998
 Naomi Long MLA @naomi_long	392,094
 Stratagem NI @StratagemNI	278,664
 Trendinalia UK @trendinaliaGB	211,850
 FSB Northern Ireland @FSB_NI	148,029
 Eye on the Hill @chambrepa	115,754
 Stewart Dickson MLA @stewartdickson	88,665
 Alan in Belfast @alaninbelfast	76,812
 Ulster University @UlsterUni	59,912

Top photographers ?

Contributor	Photos
 WSLobbyistNI @WSLobbyistNI	11
 Slugger O'Toole @SluggerOToole	9
 RNIBNI @RNIBNI	8
 FSB Northern Ireland @FSB_NI	8
 Will Chambré @WillChambre	6
 Eye on the Hill @chambrepa	6
 RCN Northern Ireland @RCN_NI	6
 Women's Aid NI @WomensAidNI	5
 Stratagem NI @StratagemNI	4
 UCIT @UCIT_Ltd	4

7. List of Attendees

Name	Organisation
Julia Buchanan	Barnardo's NI
Alan Meban	Alan in Belfast
Alex Kane	Commentator
Andrew Edgar	
Andrew Muir	Councillor, North Down and Ards
Andy Boal	
Anne Moore	Save the Children
Ben Lowry	Belfast Newsletter
Bill White	LucidTalk
Caoimhe McElduff	Alliance Party Staff
Clare Higgins	RCGP
Cliona McCarney	NICON
Colin Reid	NSPCC
Connie Egan	Alliance Party Staff
Danny Donnelly	#AE17 Candidate in East Antrim
David Armitage	Councillor, Belfast
David Honeyford	
David McCann	Slugger O'Toole
Elizabeth Hendron	BMA
Eric Bullick	
Gavin Morrison	
Helene Lynn	
Irene Ritson	

Name	Organisation
John Blair	
John McBride	RCPCH
John McMullan	Bryson
Julia Andrade Rocha	
Keith Flynn	
Kris Nixon	
Louise Kennedy	Women's Aid
Marie Marin	Employers for Childcare
Martin Gregg	
Mary Kerr	NISMP
Mel Boyle	
Owen Gawith	Councillor, Lisburn and Castlereagh
Paul Sinclair	Councillor, Mid and East Antrim
Peter Garry	
Richard Bullick	
Richard Good	Global Partners Governance
Ruairi Rowan	FPA
Sam Nelson	Campaigns Officer
Simon Bridge	
Stewart Dickson	MLA for East Antrim
Tim Morrow	Councillor, Lisburn and Castlereagh
Tina McCann	CVSNI
Wilton Farrelly	Choice Services

