

Ja Canavan
Civic Forum Review Team
5th floor
Lesley House
25 Wellington Place
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Dear Ja,

Thank you for your correspondence dated 29th May 2008 about the Civic Forum Review Team. My initial response is to draw to your attention the document that was drafted by Civic Forum members at the time of suspension as part of the first review dated 24/03/04. This document was agreed by 28 of the then remaining membership of the original Civic Forum. I attached a copy of this document for you're information.

I would agree with much of what has been posted on the NICVA web site published on 03 Jun 2008 written by Fiona Veitch:

http://www.nicva.org/index.cfm/section/news/key/020608_Civic_Forum_review

I believe civic society has much to contribute to the building of good governance in Northern Ireland. But this can only take place if the fundamental flaws in the original structure of the Civic Forum are addressed. There must be clearly defined and equal representation of the social partners with less members overall. Civic Forum members should represent their sectors, not individual organisations or themselves. There needs to be clearer accountability, reporting structures and communication with those sectors. Full authority should be given to the Civic Forum in relation to staff, budget and authority over the chair, which the Civic Forum would account for on an annual basis. There needs to be defined reporting mechanisms between Civic Forum and government in the form of the Executive at Ministerial level. There should also be a relationship with the assembly possibly through the Committee of the Centre. There needs to be a permanent home for the Civic Forum, which the public can clearly identify as the Forums own Office and Facilities. The work and commitment of Forum members should be acknowledged with attendance and work allowances. These are some of the issues, which still need to be addressed.

I would be happy to meet with the review team to discuss these or further issues.

All the best

Kevin Cooper.
Former Trade Union Civic Forum Member



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the context of the Ag