What action needs to be taken to maintain and develop the independence of the NI community and voluntary sector?

Responses to this question made by participants at the seminar and debate held at NICVA on Friday 5 July 2013

- Info note
- Push the open government agenda
- Consciousness raising and debate
- ACF (Association of Charitable Foundations) will help create “space for debate” through organising debate (Pipers and Payers) around its annual NI conference
- Create a network of those who speak out
- Bring accountability to joint forum between the sector and government through for example an annual meeting
- More essays, papers and debates
- Training and development in advocacy and campaigning especially at CEO level
- Improve the way in which the value and impact of the challenge and dissent function of organisations is expressed outside the sector, specifically to potential non grant financers
- Identify and publicise organisations which successfully combine a lobbying and advocacy role with an income generating service
- Just talk about independence more in general – to remind others
- Increasing need to make a distinction between the voluntary sector and the community sector. They are not the same and this debate makes this all the more urgent. Not Barry Knight’s suggestion re “service deliverers” and the rest, but two very different sectors operating in different contexts with different interests and different capabilities
- Honest debate whether the push for consortia working is hindering grass roots community and voluntary work.
- Consider the work of the Baring Foundation in GB and if/how this could be replicated in NI
- Establish a panel on independence for the NI CVS to scope out a series of actions that may be needed to investigate and support independence
- Scope and commission research into the particular issues of procurement as they impact on independence
- Continue to have conversations about the role of independence in the sector