

Motion 13 Implementation & Review of CCN

Report & Recommendations

Introduction

This report is the culmination of the work of the Review Group established by the Congress Executive Council to examine the issues raised in Motion 13 of the 2015 Congress BDC, in particular the proposal for the creation of fully resourced trade union centres in every town. The remit of the review group was extended to take account of developments relating to Congress Centres and the experience of the One Cork Project.

In conducting the review the sub-committee attempted to be as inclusive as possible and this involved engagement with Congress Centres and Councils of Trade Unions as well as individual unions. Thanks to all those who participated in this work and to those unions which responded in writing.

The main driver for the review sub group was essentially to arrive at practical proposals, which if embraced by affiliates, could create the basis for much more effective and sustained interventions by the trade union movement on this island. In our deliberations we sought to recognise and understand the changes that have taken place in the labour market, in the policy responses to unemployment by Government agencies and how these impacted upon the viability and programmes of Congress Centres.

In some ways the recommendations could be seen as an attempt to take forward some of the aims of the Trade Union Commission, but on a smaller scale and with a more local, bottom up approach. The report's recommendations could be characterised as a project to embed the trade union movement ethos and identity into the culture of our local communities and therefore strengthen our capacity and together with other initiatives, increase our power in the political life of the country. This is critical in a socio/economic and political environment in which culture and everyday life is commercialised and commodified.

Whether or not this can be achieved will depend entirely on a commitment from individual unions to increase the level of inter-union cooperation, despite policy or cultural differences, but it may be worth reminding ourselves, that truisms such as "Unity is Strength" and "United we stand, divided we fall" are based on the real and difficult experiences of the pioneers who began the process of building this movement.

The recommendations in the report are not written in stone and it will be for the Executive Council to plot the way forward, in cooperation with individual trade unions, Councils of Trade Unions and Congress Centres.

I would commend the report to you and encourage all to take seriously the task of building trade union membership, influence and power in every town and province in the country.

Brian Campfield,
President

June 2017

Key Recommendations

These recommendations are for implementation on a phased approach with specific recommendations outlined for each stakeholder. For clarity, the term “Local Trade Union Centre (LTUC)” is used to differentiate between current Congress Centres and the proposed new trade union centres.

Priority actions & next steps

- Congress to initiate discussions immediately with unions and centres which have a presence in major towns in key urban and/or industrial locations. The main focus of such discussions will centre on greater co-operation and project collaboration, co-ordination of key activities, assessment of premises for sharing and identification of other resources (facilities and personnel) for sharing;
- Continue to liaise with Northern affiliates about an initiative covering Northern Ireland, given the interest already expressed and using the Draft Implementation Framework as guidance;
- Given the concentration of trade union facilities outside Dublin, work should progress to establish an initiative similar to the ONE project in a number of locations. Such considerations should focus on physical infrastructural resources available in these areas with a view to creating a central focus, shared accommodation and resources for as many unions as possible;
- Establish the property ownership and plans of unions and centres regarding leasing/renting etc., in the agreed locations with a view to adopting partnership approaches to property/office accommodation and facilities, in the short, medium and long terms.

Recommendations for the Executive Council

- Following the presentation and endorsement of this report by the ICTU Executive, all executive members and affiliates not represented on the Executive, will attend an information briefing providing the space to fully debate the context, recommendations and implementation processes as set out in this document;
- Key strategic aims should be adopted nationally by the Executive Council, with responsibility for their implementation to be taken at local level. Such strategic aims could include, but are not limited, to the following;
 - Establish a local trade union centre as the focal point and dynamic hub for all local trade union activity in order to help create better synergies between the local community and trade union movement in order to build power and increase influence for positive change;
 - Affiliates to work more collaboratively, share resources and consolidate all local trade union activity;
 - Establish strong and dynamic local multi-union structures and networks (informal & formal) to work on a partnership basis;
 - Use new and innovative approaches to increase trade union power locally, creating good practice models for repetition in other sectors and areas;
 - Utilise existing local union networks to communicate collectively in order to enhance local engagement and participation;
 - Organise workers using a multi-union collaborative approach;
 - Identify priority local constituencies not in membership, seek ways in which to engage with them and provide supports;
- Establish a Steering Group consisting of nominees of the Executive Council and relevant stakeholders.
- **Function & Responsibility of the Steering Group** is to;
 - provide oversight and governance to local projects;
 - ensure the strategic direction taken progresses towards the achievement of agreed aims;
 - be the basis on which direct support is provided to local project teams (see later sections);

- decide the listing of geographic locations, loosely based on working populations, in order of priority;
- Provide advice and direction to local project groups via the Congress facilitator;
- Report on progress to the Executive Council on a regular (quarterly) basis;
- Encourage networking and collaboration across all Local Trade Union Centres (LTUC);

Recommendations for affiliates

- All affiliate unions will be invited to participate at a forum where this report will be presented and discussed. The presentation will outline the context within which the recommendations are made, the advised implementation process, criteria and principles for Trade Union centres, local work programmes and an outline of sample actions, outcomes and impact of the ONE project initiative to date;
- All affiliates are encouraged to engage with and fully utilise the facilities and services of Congress Centres within the locations in which they operate;

Recommendations for Congress Centres

- Congress Centres to participate in an audit assessment of the full range of functions, services, skills, capacity and resources currently available within the Congress Centres Network;
- Congress Centres will continue to operate as independent legal entities and have sole responsibility for the implementation of the decisions of their Boards of Management, including staff and financial matters and contractual agreements with third parties such as Department of Social Protection and other agencies;
- Brief Congress Centre Network Co-ordinators and Boards of Management to outline the recommendations of the review, the principles and criteria for the establishment of such Trade Union centres and what it means in effect for Congress Centres;
- Congress Centres will be invited to engage in the implementation process as set out later in this document;
- Congress to facilitate training in corporate governance and compliance for all Boards of Management of Centres to ensure Directors are fully aware of their obligations, responsibilities and duties;
- It is acknowledged that a situation may arise where a local Congress Centre and Trade Union centre wish to operate separately;
- Whilst such local project teams are being established, local discussions should take place between Congress, the Centre's management, affiliates and trades councils in a ONE project type initiative where the potential for collaborative projects and sharing of services could be explored;

Principles of a Local Trade Union Centre

- Each trade union centre will espouse a clear trade union ethos;
- All employees will be union members;
- All centres should seek to ensure that services and facilities utilised will be provided by union labour, where possible;
- A clear sustainable relationship will be established and maintained, between the Local Trade Union Centre, Congress and affiliates, through the Steering Group with reporting responsibilities directly to the Executive Council;
- Each centre will have a management team which will report regularly to the Executive Council via the Steering Group;

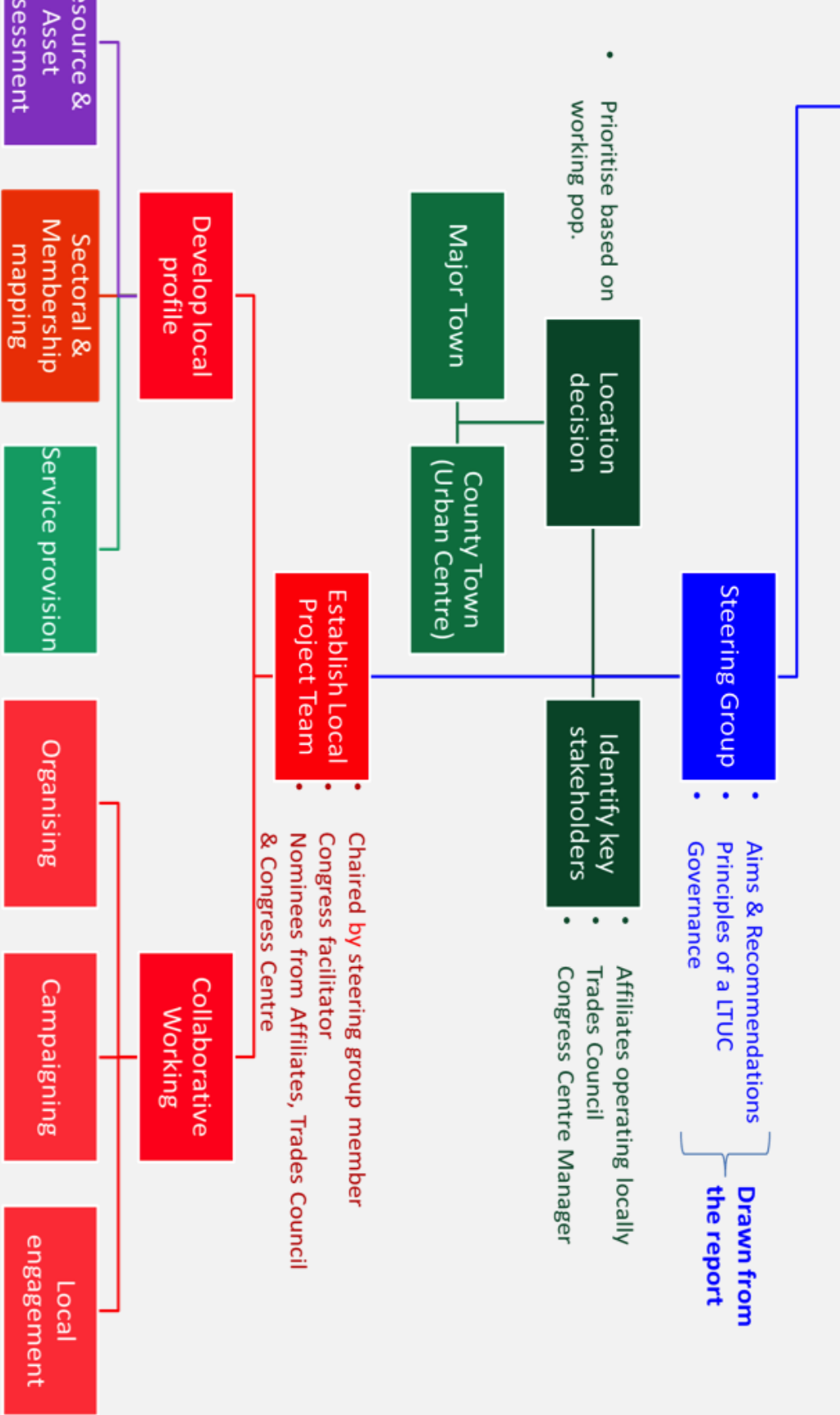
Draft Implementation Framework

See chart below, used to illustrate the implementation process

- Arising from the adoption of this report and recommendations, a Steering Group (SG), comprising Executive Council members and stakeholders, and a Congress facilitator, will be established;
- The functions and role of the Steering Group are set out above;
- On establishment of the SG the location(s) will be prioritised and local stakeholders contacted (affiliates, Congress Centres, Trades Councils) to ascertain their interest in engaging with the project locally and make nominations to the local project team;
- A local project team will then be established which will be chaired by a member of the SG (direct link to Exec Council), facilitated by Congress and on which affiliates, trades councils and Congress centre nominees will work collaboratively;
- The Congress role in each LTUC (local trade union centre) will be one of facilitation to develop the centre and its capacity locally. As at present Congress will have no legal or financial obligations to each LTUC, rather this will be the responsibility of the local management team comprising stakeholders as agreed (affiliates, trades councils, CCN);
- Initially the key roles of the project team will be to;
 - Implement the Strategic Aims set out on a local basis;
 - Draft guidance for agreement on a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at local level. This MoU will
 - Define the relationship between the stakeholders locally, in accordance with the principles as set out in this approach;
 - Outline the set of responsibilities for each of the stakeholders to include financial and legal obligations, ownership status, employment relationships (where appropriate) and other operational issues as necessary to the daily running of an LTUC.
 - Develop a local profile of key resources (available & required), physical and service based;
 - Map the County (area), in terms of key sectors, membership density, unionisation within the county (by organisation), location of non-traditional constituents;
 - Collaborate in organising, campaigning and educating with local affiliates and other relevant groups;

- Executive Council
- Establish Steering Group
- Executive Nominees
- Congress Facilitated

Draft Implementation Framework for LTUC



Background

In July 2015 Motion 13 to the ICTU Biennial Delegate Conference was carried which stated:

“Conference respects the contrary perceptions of the 1916 Insurrection as between the different traditions on the island of Ireland. However, Conference deplores the abject failure to realise the egalitarian aspirations of the Proclamation in either of the jurisdictions which emerged after the ‘decade of rebellion’.

We hold that this is primarily attributable to the dominance of a value system which reflects the interests of capital and the wealthy in all aspects of public policy formation since 1922. Prioritisation of private affluence over the interests of the common good has resulted in the perverse incentivisation of speculation to the detriment of innovation and the consequent failure to develop sustainable indigenous economies. This is most manifestly evident in the fact that uniquely in all of Europe the population is lower now than it was in 1840.

Therefore Conference resolves that as a custodian of the values of social solidarity, the trade union movement must focus energetically on asserting the primacy of the common good, as the platform for all public policy development, towards the objective of the attainment of an egalitarian society in which all the public services necessary for the pursuit of a full, free and happy life are available equally to all, free at the point of use, underpinned by a dynamically sustainable economy and fair taxation.

Moreover, to this end, Conference directs the incoming Executive Council to vigorously promote all the structural changes in the organisation of the movement, which are necessary to optimise the interests of all working people, in the architecture of the future including:

- *Strengthening NERI.*
- *Establishing a fully resourced Workers’ College of political economy.*
- *Developing an effective centralized Media Platform.*
- *Launching fully staffed Trade Union Centres in every major city and town.*
- *Optimising organising capacity.*
- *Effectively coordinating Collective Bargaining and industrial strategy.*
- *And pursuing properly resourced intelligent political policies.”*

Since its establishment in 2014, the ONE Cork project has progressed to a point where consideration can be now given, as to how similar initiatives can be progress in other cities and towns.

The Executive Council made a decision, in light of those and external developments, to incorporate a review of the Congress Centres Network along with the work of the implementation group on Motion 13 and the experiences and learning of the ONE Cork project to maximise their benefits to the trade union movement and local communities.

Congress Centres Network Background

The Centres were first set up in the 1980s as a Congress initiative to address the high unemployment of the time. They were financially supported by AnCo/Youth Employment Agency/National Manpower Service and were established under the auspices of local Trades Councils. The centres were set up as separate companies limited by guarantee with Boards of Management largely consisting of representatives of the sponsoring trades council. This model of governance by local unions and finance from the state continued for some time. From the outset, Congress had no role in the funding of the centres. Each had been set up as an independent company limited by guarantee, with its own Board of Management responsible for financial and staff matters.

However the traditional link with trades councils which characterised the Centres Network in the 80s and 90s gradually became more tenuous. There is no doubt that in some cases this was a result of relatively weak trades councils. Some centres have maintained a very strong trade union link and would see themselves as being firmly rooted in the trade union movement. Others identify less while in some cases there is no evident

trade union link. The criteria for being members of a Congress-led network also seemed to be weakened over time and an oversight maintained by the Executive Council of Congress effectively ceased.

In the early to mid 2000's a process, initiated by Congress, was put in place to re-purpose the centres to enable them to become training providers. This was in response to decreasing unemployment and 15 subsequently became FETAC-registered training providers. This put them in a position to avail of labour activation programmes at the time which were putting an increasing influence on training provision.

At the core of services offered by Centres was the Community Employment scheme, with some centres also offering Jobs Clubs and Jobs Initiative schemes. This was supported in turn by FAS funding for a central CCN office which consisted of a Manager, Training Officer and Administrative support.

A plan was developed for a new corporate governance model for the centres which sought to address a loosening of ties with the trade union movement over the years and which would have had Congress set up what was essentially a holding company. A document was drawn up as part of this process which set out various commitments to be entered by Congress and those centres who continued with the network under the new terms.

However, the overall plan for a new model was never implemented. The advent of austerity and subsequently the collapse of FAS resulted in the core funding being ceased and significant cuts in budgets to centres.

The Centres Network essentially continued in an ad hoc manner. Congress staff continued to support the work of the centres but were effectively funded only by labour activation and other training contracts secured by Congress. Centres participated in delivery of training funded under these contracts. Examples include the Momentum programme, Disability Action (DACT), Benefit4 (Digital Skills) and Skillnets. This became a significant source of funding for some participating centres but perhaps has masked underlying financial vulnerabilities and reliance on CE schemes with increasingly rigid administrative procedures. As the emphasis of government policy moves from labour activation to training in employment, these vulnerabilities may become more evident. A number of centres have closed in the last 2 years arising from financial difficulties.

Over the course of the last 12 months, resulting from illness, the completion of Labour Activation programmes and redeployment, Congress has not been in a position to provide dedicated staff support to CCN. However, general oversight has been in place despite not having such dedicated staff available to support the network.

Scope of Review

The Executive Council of Congress proposed that a review be undertaken to explore the purpose and key considerations in the practical implementation of a more visible and accessible trade union presence in cities and town. The primary objective of such a review is to maximise the opportunities and potential for strengthening trade union industrial, political and social presence along with improving their engagement and effectiveness in local areas.

A sub-committee was established comprising six members nominated by the Executive Council and one representative each from the Centres Network and local Trades Councils.

The working group comprises;

- Congress President Brian Campfield
- Congress Treasurer Joe O'Flynn SIPTU
- Executive Member Ciaran Rohan, AHCPs
- Executive Member Aileen Morrissey MANDATE
- Executive Member Alison Millar NIPSA
- Executive Member representing Trades Councils Colm Cronin
- Congress Centre Network representative Brendan Mackin
- Congress Staff Frank Vaughan and Fiona Dunne

The Executive Council set out the following areas to be examined and to produce a report outlining key recommendations within a six-month timeframe;

- The range of work currently being delivered by the Congress Centres and their connection with the core work of Congress;
- The centrality and connection between this work and current and future priorities for the Trade Union movement;
- The relevance and lessons of the ONE Cork project to this review;
- The participation of local councils of trade unions and branches of affiliated unions in the work of the centres;
- The future structural and governance relationship between Congress and Centres;
- Other relevant matters as determined by the sub-group.

The review group met regularly between June 2016 and January 2017 on the basis of the agreed primary aims and objectives set out below.

Primary aims & objectives

In its initial meeting, the working group agreed the following objectives of the review;

- to encourage greater integration and collaboration between the Congress Centre Network (CCN) and the trade union movement and to re-establish the CCN identity within the trade union family, where relevant and appropriate;
- to develop a long-term sustainable strategy and implementation process, including critical success factors, in order to implement the key elements of Motion 13 to BDC 2015;
- to include the recommendations and outcomes from the strategic and functional review of the Congress Centres Network (CCN) into any strategy as outlined above.

Key actions

A number of key actions were undertaken by the review group including;

- Draft **strategic aims & objectives** for agreement at national level and implementation at local level, which seeks to create a more dynamic role for trades councils and build greater affiliate collaboration locally whilst engaging more closely with the community;
- Working with all **affiliates**, on a national and county basis, to ascertain their level of engagement, identify opportunities for deeper collaboration and sharing of facilities and services which will assist in the realising of this strategic vision, taking account of but not dependent on current premises or facilities in the location;
- Identifying the key **functions** and essential **services** of **new trade union centres** in order to achieve this strategic vision, including making recommendations on their status and relationships (legal, constitutional, financial);
- Providing **consultation opportunities** with key stakeholders to include CCN Co-ordinators, CCN Boards of Management and officers of Trades Councils, to inform the work of the review;
- Developing an **outline governance and financial protocol** for trade union centres;
- Encouraging more **collaborative engagement between unions**, trades councils and the wider community at provincial and county level;

Strategic Aims

The following strategic aims are guidance as to the purpose and function of multi-union collaboration.

- Establish trade union centres in every major town and city to serve as the key focal point and dynamic hub for all local trade union activity, help create better synergies between the local community and trade union movement in order to build power and increase influence for positive change;
- Work collaboratively in the chosen location to consolidate ALL local trade union activity, establish collaborative local structures, develop innovative approaches to building trade union power and create good practice models for collaborative action;
- Build on existing local activities to create a dynamic, strong and accessible local union infrastructure, utilising all local networks, which provides a central focus for all trade union activity encouraging better engagement and participation;
- Establish new multi-union structures which will provide a more sustainable, empowered and dynamic local movement such as the better utilising of inter-union groups;
- Collaboratively and collectively organise workers locally into trade unions to encourage engagement and build their capacity to improve activism and mobilisation at workplace, community and county levels in order to achieve a fairer economy, better society which includes decent jobs and just pay;
- Work more closely with priority local constituencies not in membership, but in particular include the unemployed and precarious workers, and help provide much needed supports at a local level;
- Create a strong and coherent local voice with broad community support through education and awareness raising programmes to improve understanding about and empathy towards trade unionism among working people and their families in each location.
- Achieve political gains by mobilising locally and campaigning locally for policy outcomes that advance the interests of working people, their families and their communities.

Affiliate Engagement

On behalf of the review group, Brian Campfield wrote to all affiliates (Appendix 3) seeking their views on how progress on “a trade union centre in every major city and town” might be achieved. All affiliate returns are contained in Appendix 3.

Generally the responses were positive as unions expressed a willingness and interest to engage in detailed discussions on enhanced co-operation with other affiliates, congress centres and trades councils.

There was agreement in principle to the proposal of greater collaboration, however, further supports came with caveats which mainly rested on the future shape of the process, how it is proposed to be implemented and the levels of support, engagement and resourcing required.

On the basis of those responses, the group identified elements that should be contained within an engagement and implementation process including critical issues such as governance, both financial and policy related, control and areas of responsibility. An outline implementation process, at national and local level, is also described to enable affiliates get a better understanding of what such programmes might entail.

Whilst a broad exercise was undertaken as to the extent of trade union premises across the Island, further detailed work would be required to be undertaken to ascertain the appropriateness of those premises in the context of a shared trade union centre. Shared premises would more easily provide opportunities for further synergy amongst unions and other groups, however, a process for such sharing would need to be outlined on a case by case or location basis.

Other Trade Union Centres

SIPTU

SIPTU has embarked on establishing a number of Worker Rights Welcome Centres across the country, opening centres in Cork, Dublin, Navan and Tralee to date. Each centre provides an opportunity for workers to meet with a member of SIPTU staff to ask about their rights and entitlements within the workplace, but also to directly receive support and advice from their trade union.

SIPTU plan to offer access to this service to all affiliates, who are party to the ONE initiative in the particular location and will accommodate recruitment and other relevant information materials from any affiliate who wishes to avail of this space. In the event of a Local Trade Union Centre being established in a particular city/town where a SIPTU Welcome centre operates, SIPTU are willing to merge their operation within that of the LTUC.

UNITE

The review group is aware of the UNITE in the community initiative. Engagement and discussions should take place with UNITE to ascertain their approach and the potential for participation with this new initiative.

Identifying the role of a Trade Union Centre

Functions & services

Some of the functions which a trade union centre could provide may include what is currently provided by Congress Centres and Trade Unions plus newer additional services. On a regional/local basis a local trade union centre could provide some/all of the following, which would be determined on a local basis. Many of the services could be offered on a collaborative basis, by agreement.

Shared facilities

- Shared facilities provision such as office equipment and resources, training facilities, event hire etc;
- Meeting/office space for regional/local trade union officials and organisers;
- Venue for trade union members events;
- Space for Trades Councils to meet, organise, hold events;
- Networking space for retired workers, branch networks;
- Shared training space for trade unions, community groups;
- Venue space for trade unions, student movement, local community, other NGO events;

Trade union services

- Advice/representation clinics for trade union members;
- General rights information service;
- Union application provision and processing;
- Membership service provision;
- Potential member referral to appropriate trade union;
- Benefits/rights information for members of the public;
- Regional/local training and education programmes
- Meetings for local trade union branch networks;

Community service provision

- Providing CE schemes for qualifying unemployed people;
- Harnessing CE, delivering a range of services to local communities and unemployed
 - Rights and entitlement information;
 - Redundancy seminars;
 - CV prep and job search skills;
 - Participation in labour market activation measures;

Trade Union organising

- Collaborative organising campaigns;
- Sectoral and local organising meetings;
- Meeting of local organisers;
- Regular union meetings;
- Organising seminars and other events;

Trade union training

- Provision of a range of accredited trade union training on a local basis, provided by centre tutors;
- QQI-certified training;
- Seminars/conferences/schools on trade union related topics;
- Venue hire for training;
- Tutor provision for training;

Campaigning

- Centre for local/regional/national trade union campaigns (individual, collaborative and local centric);
- Localising national campaigns amongst trade unions operating in the area;

Relationship development

Shared space promotes a more dynamic synergy across all parties. A visible and accessible presence in the community will enable the trade union movement build new and sustainable links with a range of constituents not in membership including migrant workers, younger workers and students.

It will also provide the space and platform from which trade unions operating in the locality can come together and collaborate more effectively in their work.

Consultation opportunities

The aim of the CCN review, within the remit of this working group, is to encourage greater integration and collaboration between the network and the trade union movement and to re-establish the CCN identity within the trade union family, where appropriate.

An initial discussion regarding the scope of a review was communicated to Centre Co-ordinators in a meeting during the Summer of 2016, where it was agreed that Brendan Macken would represent them and communicate directly with the network on the progress of the working group.

It was further agreed that Congress Centre Co-ordinators, members of the Centres' Boards of Management and representatives from the Trades Councils, should be consulted directly on the work of the Review group. With this in mind an Autumn School was scheduled in October 2016 which enabled these groups to engage directly in a focussed process to identify the potential opportunities for the CCN to develop a closer relationship with the movement along with the potential for enhanced service provision and to identify capacity constraints, challenges and resources required.

Consultation feedback

A clear strategic view of the role of the Centres did not emerge.

Most centres would characterise their primary role as providing support for the unemployed and some would see, in doing this, that they are providing a visibility for union engagement with the issue.

While education and training programmes, information and advisory services were seen as key services by many centres, it was also evident that these areas were subject to competition from statutory providers such as Education and Training Boards (ETBs) and Citizens Advice Centres (CICs) who were relatively well funded. In these circumstances, the "competitive advantage" offered by the centres was their ability to relate at a more individual level with those using their services. This however, is not being received by Department of Social Protection as a criterion and trainees were therefore being sent to "free providers" as use of the centres would not be considered value for money.

There is a constant financial struggle for survival evident across the network. Many centres are innovative in local fund-raising and developing services but everything is essentially run on a shoe-string.

There is a perception that there is not consistency in application of DSP rules in relation to CE schemes and that often what the centre must do to comply is determined by the attitude of the local official with whom they deal.

Some expressed their wish to have more direction from Congress and many wanted Congress to have a role in providing support staff to identify funding opportunities. In discussion about some of the difficulties (personnel and financial) that have emerged in centres, there was a view that not all Boards currently have the depth and range of experience and knowledge to deal with them effectively.

Those people attending the Consultation Seminar from Boards of Management came from centres where there is typically still a strong trade union association. It is clear however, that there is now quite a range of engagement with local trade union structures. Some centres see their identity as being very strongly determined by their trade union background and either retain very strong links with Trades Councils through their Boards of Management or otherwise have a strong local union involvement. Others however are far less engaged with little or no formal trade union involvement.

APPENDIX 1 – MOTION 13

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- And pursuing properly resourced intelligent political policies.”

APPENDIX 2 - TERMS OF REFERENCE OF PROPOSED REVIEW OF CCN

There have been significant changes to the economic and political landscape in Ireland, both North and South, since the establishment of Congress' network of centres.

At the 2015 Congress BDC, a resolution (Motion 13) was adopted, which among other things, called for "the launching of fully staffed Trade Union Centres in every major city and town". Copy of Motion 13 attached as Appendix 1 to this document. The same resolution also called for the "optimising of Organising Capacity".

In addition the work of the ONE Cork project has progressed to an extent that consideration is currently being given to how similar initiatives can be progress in other cities and towns.

The Executive Council has decided, taking account of the above developments, to conduct a review of the Congress Centres Network so that the terms of Motion 13 and the experiences of the ONE Cork project can be maximised to the benefit of both the trade union movement and working class communities, including the unemployed in cities and towns throughout the country.

It is proposed therefore that a review be undertaken into the future shape and purpose of the trade union presence in cities and towns. The primary objective of this review is to maximise the opportunities and potential for strengthening trade union industrial, political and social presence and effectiveness in local areas.

1. The review will be carried out on behalf of the Executive Council, by a subcommittee comprising 5 members to be nominated by the Executive Council and two members each from the Centres Network and local Councils of Trade Unions.
2. The membership of the review sub-committee will include a geographical spread, including representation from both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.
3. The review sub-committee will report to the Executive Council within 6 months of the commencement of its work.
4. The review will be facilitated by a senior ICTU staff member.

Issues to be Examined

The following issues will be examined by the review sub-committee:

5. The range of work currently being delivered by the current Congress Centres and their connection with the core work of ICTU.
6. The centrality and connection between this work and the current and future priorities of the Trade Union Movement.
7. The relevance and lessons of the Cork project to this review.
8. The participation of local councils of trade unions and branches of affiliated unions in the work of the Centres.
9. The future structural and governance relationship between Congress and Centres.
10. Other matters to be examined as determined by the sub-group in light of its initial deliberations.

The review is designed as a collaborative project involving Congress, Centres and local Councils of trade Unions and the objective is to develop a set of proposals which will ensure that the trade union voice and ethos is strengthened the length and breadth of the country.

*The members of the Review Group as nominated by the Executive Council are as follows;

Brian Campfield, President, Colm Cronin, Local Reserve Panel nominee on Executive Council, Brendan Mackin, CCN, Joe O'Flynn, SIPTU (and General Treasurer), Alison Millar, NIPSA, Aileen Morrissey, MANDATE, Ciaran Rohan, AHCPs, and facilitated by Frank Vaughan and Fiona Dunne from the Secretariat.

APPENDIX 3 – CONSULTATION REPORT

Introduction

It was agreed by the Motion 13/CCN Review group that a consultation forum would be held during the CCN Autumn school, to provide an opportunity for key stakeholders to inform the work of the review. Centre co-ordinators, representatives from Centre Boards of Management and officers of the Trades Councils were invited to discuss their views on motion 13, which is to establish trade union centres regionally, and the review of the Congress Centres Network.

Following an introduction to the work of the review group, including its terms of reference and strategic objectives, three workshops took place to discuss a number of elements under the headings a) present services b) future vision c) future action. A full list of facilitators' questions appears as an appendix to this report.

Aims and objectives of the consultation

The aims of the consultation forum include;

- Identifying the type and range of services the centres currently provide in their local community;
- Understanding the relationships and level of engagement between the centres, the trades councils and the affiliates;
- Establishing the range of potential services which could be collaboratively delivered locally (or shared facilities);
- Determining stakeholders' understanding of "*a vision for a stronger trade union presence in the community*" and the challenges and opportunities envisaged in realising it;
- Identifying future actions which can be taken to realise this vision;

Aims of the centres

Aims of the centres, as described by the Co-ordinators include:

- Providing access to education and training, including progression for clients;
- Client centred services;
- Provide services and training to Dept of Social Protection referred clients;
- Information and advocacy on work-related issues;
- Provide a stronger voice locally and nationally for more vulnerable groups;
- Greater collaboration with trade unions;
- Better communication of the role and services of centres to wider community;
- Increasing awareness of worker rights and trade unions.

An outline of the role of the Congress Centre (currently)

Each centre has a slightly different approach based on a number of factors such as history, local community needs, relationship with DSP, range of services provided etc. Within the network, the following services and roles are undertaken;

- Training and education;
- Information and advice in relation to jobseekers, employment rights;
- Campaigns on social issues;
- Representation across a range of issues including for those at work or benefit related;
- Supporting vulnerable workers (low-paid, underemployed, migrant, unemployed);
- Hosting training for trade union activists (only 2 centres involved in this);
- Focus is also on changing people's attitudes, not just about gaining qualifications;
- Advisory services;

Local relationships

Due to the nature of their work, the centres have fostered a range of different relationships within the trade union community and wider community. Responses to the type of relationship between the centres, the trades councils, and affiliates were mixed, with some centres having a stronger relationship with trades councils through their Boards of Management, others providing training and related services to affiliates. However, many of the groups identified that there is a growing disconnect between the centres, trades councils and trades unions locally and efforts should be made to renew and rejuvenate such relationships.

The following organisations listed are those with whom the centres have identified they have a working relationship. Three of the organisations, indicated below, were named as most important because they **a)** provide funding for staff and services **b)** assist with governance issues **c)** refer core clients to the centres.

<u>Dept. Social Protection</u>	Local Partnerships	Local Employment Services
Colleges	Education & Training Boards	Solas
CIC/MABs	National Learning Network	CE Schemes
Intreo	NALA	OPEN Door addiction counselling
Victim support	Women's Services	Aware
Mens' Shed	<u>Unemployed groups</u>	Travellers' Initiatives
Local Councils	Trade Unions	Trade Councils
<u>ICTU</u>	Low Paid workers	Chamber of Commerce
Local employers	Local crèches	Local media
Migrant support	Volunteers	INOUE

The groups further identified organisations that are potentially important to the Centres but with whom there is currently no relationship;

Campaign Groups	Public Reps	Community Police
Trades Councils	Media	Landlords
EU funding bodies	Intra-network with Congress Centres	North-South relationships
Retired Members	Local Library	Banks (Financial inst)
ICTU Community Sector Committee		

There were a number of reasons suggested for the lack of a relationship with some organisations listed and ranged from lack of resources to engage, relevance and opportunities to distance, administration failure and ambiguity of roles.

All groups identified the potential strength in deepening links and developing better relationships with the trade union movement. There is however, a diversity of opinions in the implementation of such a strategy, governance issues, scope of control and roles and responsibilities.

Relations with the Trade Union movement

There were very mixed reactions from within all groups to the status of relations with(in) the trade union movement which ranged from no relation to excellent relationships with good solid support. In response to identifying how to improve weak relationships, the following were suggested;

- Centres could become the union "hotspot" locally;
- Use centres for trade union activities such as training;
- Collaboration with Workers' College;
- Improve communications and decide on the best channel of communications to use;
- Centre staff should participate on trades councils (vice versa);
- Union journals should "run" regular articles on work of the Centres and other related news items (vice versa);
- Centres could recruit union members and refer cases directly to local union structures (reps);

A future vision

“A vision for a stronger trade union presence in the community”

In discussing what the future vision for the movement might mean at a local level, the following responses were given;

- A more active and engaging trade union movement which is visible locally (unions & reps);
- Deeper engagement with local communities;
- Help rebuild and rejuvenate trades councils and activate/encourage union members to participate on them;
- Union affiliations to trades councils should be on a compulsory basis including having nominees and representatives engage with them;
- High levels of solidarity between unions and workers;
- Vigorous levels of campaigning and strategies to promote benefits of membership;
- Local union premises/hub/hotspot;
- Regular recruitment drives on a sectoral, organisational or constituent basis;
- Prominent display of union literature in Centres (vice versa);
- Begin to promote unions in a more innovative and “different way”;

Challenges

In order to achieve vision of a stronger movement the groups were asked to identify key challenges, some of which include the following of statements and suggested actions;

- Identifying and agreeing the vision for all key stakeholders including the type of model of engagement locally;
- Motivating the movement of the need and want to change;
- Ensuring the survival of centres and that decent terms & conditions can be achieved for staff;
- Establishing a sustainable funding model to implement the elements required for the vision;
- Building a stronger media presence;
- Encouraging members to engage with trade unions & councils locally;
- Insurance, legislative requirements and governance issues for the establishment and operation of such centres;
- Obtaining Congress Executive Council buy-in for such endeavours;
- Centre staffing – levels, responsibility, sustainability;
- Developing and sourcing an independent and sustainable revenue stream for each centre;
- Overcoming negativity and anti-union bias;
- Legacy of unemployment;
- Lack of resources (funding, resources, education, support for members)
- Creating an environment free from intimidation and threats to staff;
- Addressing the perceived lack of service by unions;
- Encouraging young people to engage with the movement;
- Include non-traditional groups in members (migrant, youth, unemployed, community activists);

Opportunities

- Engage Community Education staff to work in centres (Wexford CTU mentioned as an example of this practice);
- Retired union members are an under-utilised resource locally and a programme should be developed to ensure such members remain actively engaged locally;
- Encourage more networking and experience sharing between centres;
- Use centres to
 - engage more innovatively with new constituents such as holding open days/evenings for students, migrants, unemployed, community groups;
 - hold intercultural events;
 - provide space to other community groups or student unions engaging locally;

FUTURE ACTIONS

Suggested actions to realise the vision

- Initiate a process for establishing a general framework agreement, to include aims and objectives, roles and responsibilities and governance issues, up to which Congress centres can agree (or not) to sign;
- Refocus the Congress Centres network using the Federation of Western Trades Councils as a model of networking;
- Deliver Youthconnect programme locally;
- Enhance training for trade unionists, activists shop stewards;
- Use successful locally based organisations as a template or model of best practice;
- Develop relationships with County Council groups to raise awareness;
- Rejuvenate the trades councils by engaging in dynamic and creative activities;
- Trades councils and affiliates to agree a clearer role for shop stewards in trades councils and for that to be communicated fully by affiliates;
- One premises (shared union office) to be established locally from which all trades councils and affiliates can provide services to the community such as;
 - Training rooms
 - Meeting venues
 - Employment clinics
 - Retired members workshops
 - Community groups
- Use more innovative ways to attract the public to centres, should as establishing book, coffee shops, library etc.
- Hold competitions to engage with new audiences;
- Provide worker rights stands at jobs fairs and other such gatherings.

Provision of new services

In addition to what is currently provided, the participants indicated that the Trade Union centres, in collaboration with Congress centres, should focus on developing new or improving current services. Whilst some of these may already be provided, they are not common to all centres, with the remainder requiring development across the network. The following are the range of services suggested;

- Ongoing support to obtain project and programme funding;
- Providing a range of training and education programmes for the movement and the community, particularly offering major awards (incl distance learning);
- Key focal point for social activities within local communities;
- Deeper engagement with community groups;
- Outreach clinic to include information provision, advocacy and representation for;
 - Union members
 - Young workers
 - Unemployed persons
 - Worker rights
- Union recruitment and referral service;
- Comprehensive service to unemployed people, including union membership;
- Provision of comprehensive and wide ranging services such as;
 - Disability
 - Career planning
 - Job-seeking support (CV, interview skills, applications)
 - Jobs Clubs
- Support Community Employment;
- Provide a regional employment service;
- Provision of venue, facilities and services for local branch committee (union);
- Dissemination of entitlements/services for members;
- Union premises to be made available facilitate centre activities;
- People's centre to report to Trades Councils (vice versa);
- Pursue EU funding centrally for use by all centres;
- Facility hire (training, meetings,)
- Hub for social activities locally.

Communications

There was a lot of discussion about the necessity to improve communications, in all its forms not only within the movement but also between the different stakeholders. Some tangible suggestions include;

- Improving relationships and better communications between all stakeholders;
- Develop consistent messages across all unions and trades councils for dissemination;
- Publicise union successes across all communications media;
- The power of social, local and online media should be better harnessed to adequately disseminate the message locally;
- Create more dynamic and innovative ways to engage with members rather than use the traditional fora and structures;
- Build a higher union profile on local issues;
- Empower and train union representatives to become local spokespersons for the trade union movement and the work of the centres;
- Better use of technology for ease of access to and dissemination of information for trades councils such as emails, websites, social media;
- Become a more campaign focussed movement locally and focus on non-union, vulnerable and low paid workers along with positive campaigning such as fair hotels, fair shops, fair trade etc.,
- Deepen engagement with local community through organising key events such as MayDay Festival etc;
- Initiate an education programme locally in schools;
- Build local PR profile and relationship with the media;

Suggestions for next steps

- Conduct regional reviews of the needs of trades councils and centres locally;
- Provincial co-ordinators to conduct such reviews;
- Agree at least one more pilot to take place, similar to the ONE Cork project, perhaps considering areas where centres previously existed;
- Establish a network for trades councils to enhance intra-council communications, improve relationships and share experience;
- All trade unions to affiliate, providing fees and nominees to trades councils;
- A co-ordinator should be engaged to pursue funding streams for all centres;

APPENDIX 3a - WORKSHOP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES

Strategically, what are the centres seeking to achieve? (what is their mission, vision for the future, plans – not operational day to day concerns but overall in a 2-5 year scenario)

What do you see as the primary role and functions of the centre?

It is important to have an accurate picture of the current relationships and inter-relationships which the centres may have locally. Ask your groups to “*map their current relationships*” on the flip chart and rank them according to the depth and importance of the relationships. Identify the top three relationships in terms of strategic importance, depth of relationship and shared values.

- Outline why and how these relationships have become important to the centres?
- Identify what important relationships (to the Centres) are missing from the map? Why is this?
- Identify the type of relationship Centres have with their local trade union organisation? How could these be further improved and deepened?

FUTURE VISION

“A vision for a stronger trade union presence in the community” is the aim of the CCN review and motion 13.

Ask the group to discuss the following;

- What does this statement mean to your centre/trades council in practical terms?
- How might such a vision be implemented in your locality?
- What are some of the key challenges you would expect to encounter in its implementation?
- What local opportunities might be available to assist the realisation of such a vision?

FUTURE ACTIONS

In terms of local centre/trades council;

- What initial actions should be taken to realise this vision?
- What services are currently offered by your centre to the local community?
- What additional services could be provided locally by your centre that would be useful to workers and union members?
- What is the best way to disseminate the trade union message and more deeply engage with the local community and new audiences within it?

APPENDIX 4 – TRADE UNION RESPONSES



TO: General Secretary, ALL AFFILIATES

17th October 2016

Dear Colleagues,

In July 2015, the Congress Biennial Conference carried Motion 13 which *"directs the incoming Executive Council to vigorously promote all the structural changes in the organisation of the movement, which are necessary to optimise the interests of all working peopleLaunching fully staff Trade Union Centres in every major city and town and optimising organising capacity"*.

To give effect to those specific elements and devise an implementation process, the Executive Council established a working group with the primary objectives to maximise the opportunities and potential for strengthening trade union presence and effectiveness in local areas. The review group has decided to focus at this stage on regional towns and cities outside the Dublin and Belfast areas as this approach is likely to be a more manageable piece of work and I s required to report back to the Executive Council by **December 2016** with a clear set of recommendations and suggestions on how this work should proceed.

In order that our work can be properly informed, we have established a series of consultations, one strand of which is to seek the views of all our affiliates on how this work might practically proceed.

The Review sub- committee is interested in your union's views as to how we might progress the issue of *"a trade union centre in every major city and town"*.

In particular it would be extremely helpful if you could express a view on the following matters:

1. Would your union be interested in discussing with other unions the prospects for increasing cooperation and the potential for sharing of physical and other infrastructure in regional towns?
 2. Would you be prepared to also engage in some discussions with local trades Councils and Congress Centres, where either or both exist, about their possible participation in any initiative to establish a trade union centre in regional towns?
 3. Would you be prepared to support any such initiative?
 4. We would be interested in your views as to how effective cooperation among unions can be developed and strengthened in regional towns.
 5. Have you any specific ideas or proposals as to how the "trade union centre" element of Motion 13 can be progressed.
 6. Do you have any other comments or views that you wish to convey to the Review Sub Committee.
- Given the timetable for completing this review I would be grateful if you could respond to this request for information not later than **Friday 4th November 2016** to Fiona.dunne@ictu.ie.

We welcome all your suggestions and comments on this work and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Brian Campfield
Congress President,
& Chair of Review Group

Patricia King
General Secretary

32 Parnell Square
Dublin 1

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APPENDIX 4 – TRADE UNION RESPONSES

All affiliates were written to by the President (see previous section) to ascertain their views as to how the review group might progress on the issue of establishing LTUCs throughout the country.

The following unions responded;

- CWU
- CWU (UK)
- FSU
- IFUT
- IMPACT
- POA
- PSEU
- SIPTU
- TUI

Responses were varied but there was broad agreement to engage in the work of the review group and ascertain the potential to establish LTUCs.

Affiliates also expressed an interest in discussing increased co-operation with other affiliates, the potential for sharing of resources and to engage locally to establish LTUCs. Some affiliates indicated that they already had or were in discussions with local affiliates to share resources.

In terms of how co-operation could be further developed and strengthened, some unions indicated the experience and lessons from the ONE Cork project would be beneficial to this future work, could be used as the basis for further development and is considered a valuable starting point.

Some specific ideas and proposals included;

- Mapping current premises and initiating contact between relevant unions to discuss property consolidation;
- Combining a range of union resources amongst affiliates;
- Engagement on a sectoral basis;
- Shared physical space would be a hugely valuable asset in any location and encourages strong inter-union links,

APPENDIX 5 - Process of Engagement

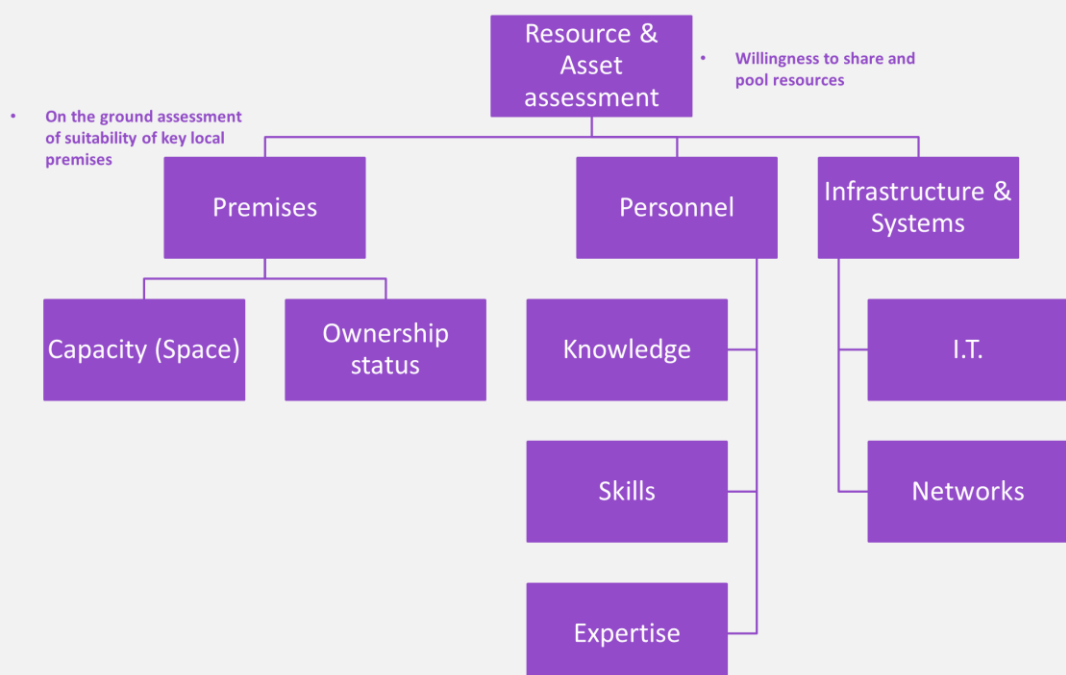
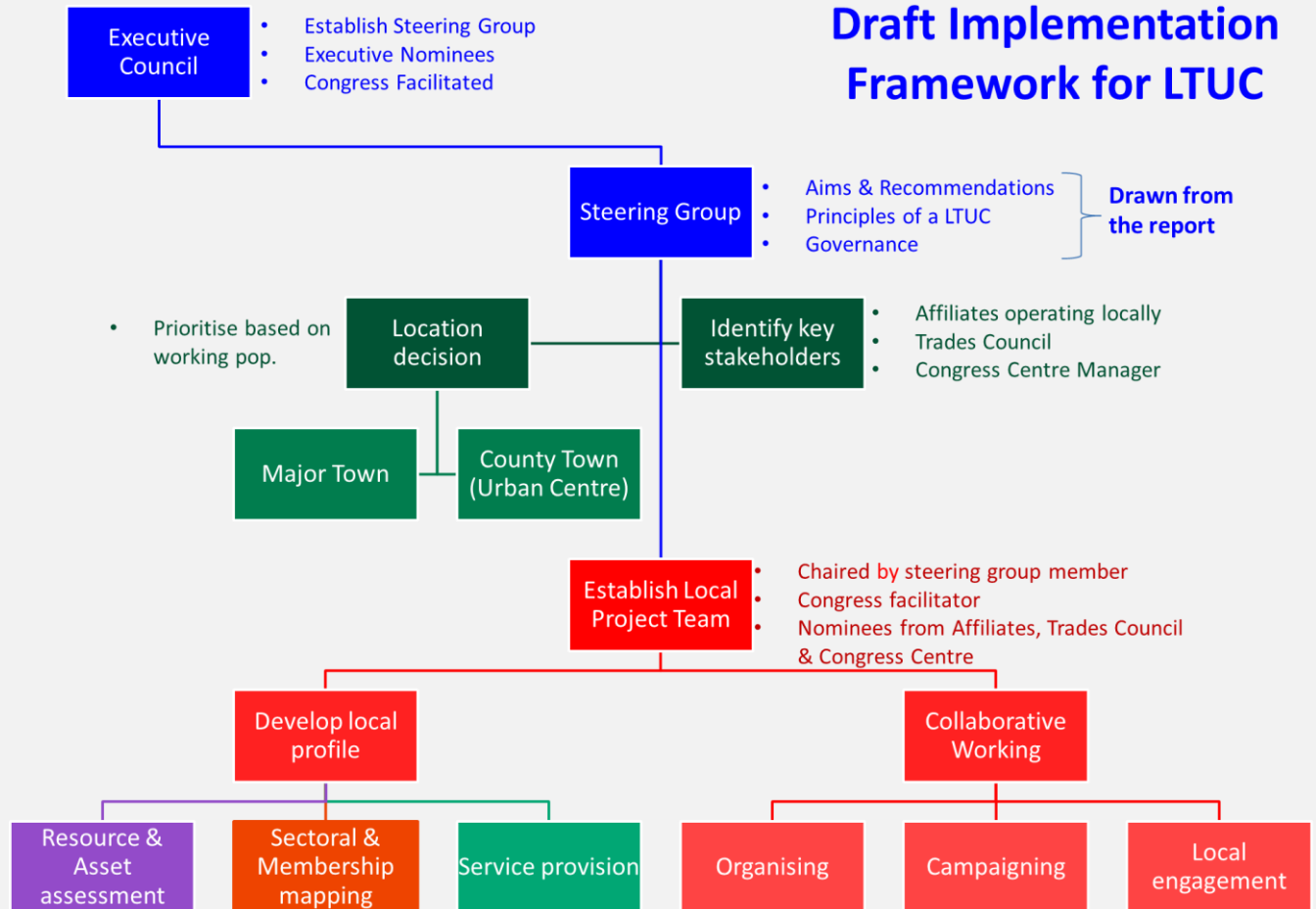
The following process could be used in each location as a way to establish the collaborative project and subsequently a LTUC:

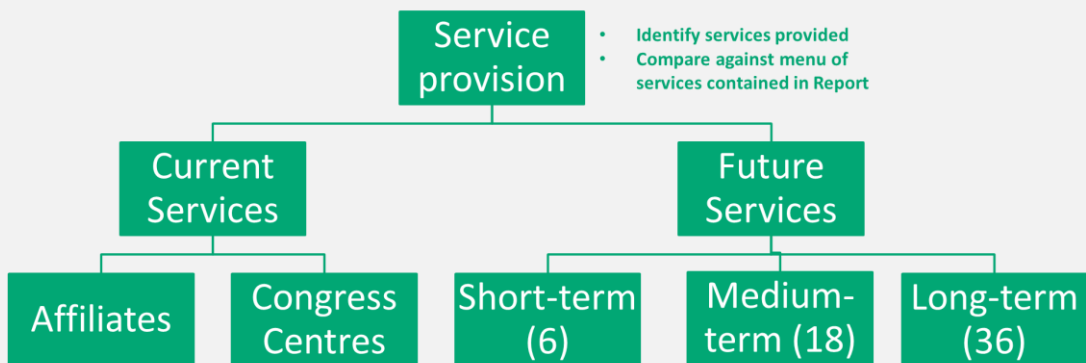
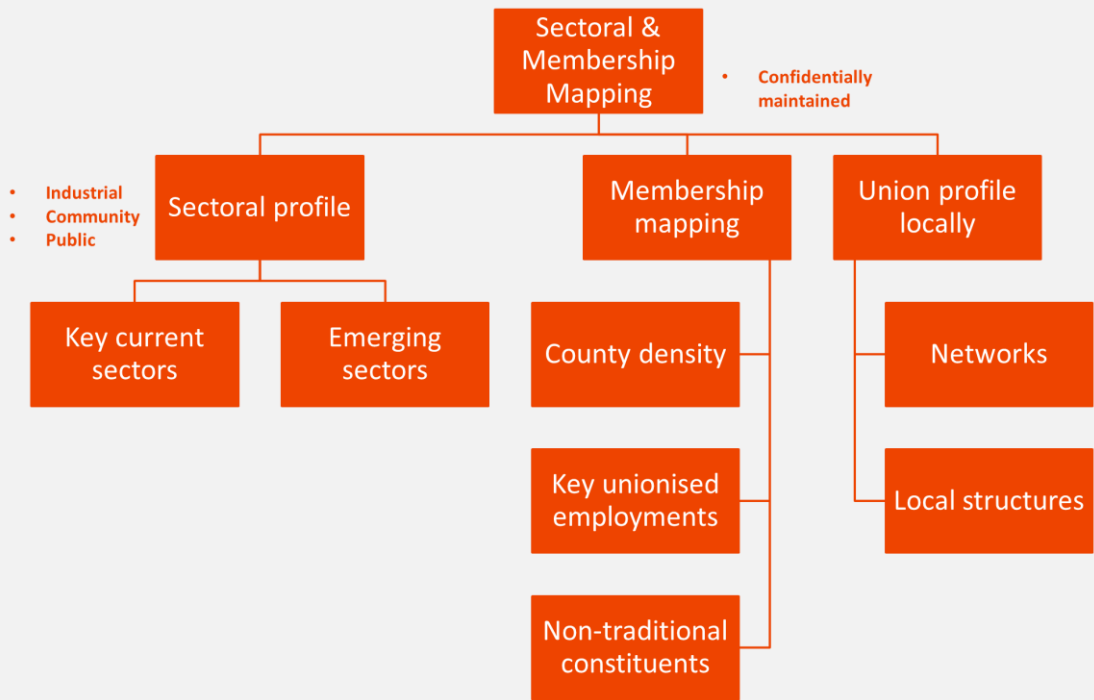
- Communication to issue to local affiliates, trades councils and congress centres (where applicable) requesting engagement and nominations to a local project team;
- The project team to be established with representatives from local affiliates, trades councils, and congress centres, who will act as the drivers of this work locally, in collaboration and communication with the National Steering Group and in line with agreed National Strategic objectives;
- Agree a co-ordinator/facilitator for the location to drive and support the project;
- Project team to develop an agreed work programme or implementation plan containing key actions/projects for the short to medium-term. For an example of local initiatives, please see next section;
- Affiliates identify and agree on the premises which are most suitable to share, the type of resources required based on the key activities agreed to be undertaken, and how these resources will be shared more efficiently;
- Agreement reached on the funding and resource mechanism with local responsibility for the day to day operation of the project and ongoing Congress support for facilitation in the achievement of agreed objectives.

Factors critical to local success

- Affiliate willingness to engage and make a long-term commitment, including that of local resources (financial and personnel);
- Develop and agree a detailed work programme for a two-three year period complete with key roles and responsibilities;
 - An acceptance by affiliates that engagement with the local project, to establish collaborative projects and subsequently a LTUC, should be given due priority within their own organisation and personnel are given the time and resources to ensure its success;
- Agree in principle of the value of sharing information/experience and contributing to collaborative actions;
- Strong levels of co-operation and trust from all participants engaging in the local project;
- Manage and encourage strong inter-relationships;
- Disout mechanism or procedure for dealing with local “territory” or other issues as they arise;
- Nominees to the project team and their subsequent activity within the project, should be given an official allocation of their time to deal with this new project and way of working, rather than it being “added on” to their core work;

Draft Implementation Framework for LTUC





Local Action examples

The following are some of the local activities taking place in other areas:

Sectoral organising working groups

Working groups have been established in the following areas comprising representatives from each affiliate which operates in the area;

- Health
- Construction & public procurement developed a work programme which includes
- Retail & associated trades
- Education

Each group developed their own specific work programme based on the needs of local membership. However there are a number of common actions which have proven to be successful and were subject to group discussion and subsequent agreement and include;

- specific site agreement
- collaborative site mapping in terms of union density
- information sessions
- recruitment events
- establishment of an inter-union group
- pursuit of issues of common interest (car-parking, flexible working, sub-contracting rules)

Media & communications

A multi-union group is established which has responsibility for communication to internal and external audiences across all media channels (local press, online, direct, print, social). They have agreed a media and communications protocol, have received media skills training and meet regularly to write and agree local press statements and arrange media conferences.

Campaigns

A lead multi-union group has been established for the Living Wage for Cork campaign. The aims and objectives and agreed timeframe are in development.

Policy

Arising from the work of the Construction group, a housing document was developed and launched locally which suggests sustainable solutions to tackle the housing crisis, provide efficient solutions to the delay in void the collapse in social housing provision and provide a direct labour model. This was developed and agreed on a multi-union basis.

APPENDIX 5 - Location of Congress Centres

Congress Centres	Sites	Location
Antrim	1	Belfast Congress Centre
Armagh	0	
Carlow	0	
Cavan	0	
Clare	0	
Cork	0	
Derry	0	
Donegal	1	Letterkenny
Down	0	
Dublin	3	Dublin 12, Tallaght, Fingal
Fermanagh	0	
Galway	1	Galway People's Resource Centre
Kerry	2	Cahirciveen, Tralee
Kildare	2	Athy, Newbridge
Kilkenny	1	Noreside, Kilkenny City
Laois	0	
Leitrim	1	North Leitrim Resource
Limerick	1	Limerick Resource Centre
Longford	1	Longford Town (Ind. Estate)
Louth	1	Drogheda
Mayo	2	Ballina, Castlebar
Meath	0	
Monaghan	0	
Offaly	0	
Roscommon	0	
Sligo	0	
Tipperary	0	
Tyrone	0	
Waterford	0	
Westmeath	2	Athlone, Mullingar
Wexford	0	
Wicklow	1	Bray

APPENDIX 6 - Trades Councils

Trades Councils	Sites	Location
Antrim	1	Belfast Trades Council, Lisburn
Armagh	1	Craigavon Trades Council
Carlow	0	
Cavan	0	
Clare	1	Clare
Cork	1	Cork
Derry	3	Causeway Trade Union Council, Derry Trades Council, Mid-Ulster Trades Council
Donegal	1	Letterkenny
Down	2	Newry, North Down & Ards Council of Trade Unions
Dublin	1	Dublin
Fermanagh	1	Fermanagh
Galway	1	Galway Trades Council
Kerry	2	Killarney, Tralee
Kildare	1	Kildare
Kilkenny	1	Kilkenny Trades Council
Laois	0	
Leitrim	0	
Limerick	1	Limerick Trades Council
Longford	0	
Louth	2	Drogheda, Dundalk
Mayo	2	Ballina, Castlebar
Meath	0	
Monaghan	1	Monaghan Trades Council
Offaly	0	
Roscommon	0	
Sligo	1	Sligo Trades Council
Tipperary	1	Clonmel Trades Council
Tyrone	2	Omagh Trades Council, Strabane Area Trade Union Council
Waterford	1	Waterford Council of Trade Unions
Westmeath	1	Athlone,
Wexford	1	Wexford Council of Trade Unions
Wicklow	1	Bray

APPENDIX 7 - Presence Analysis

Number of premises		
All Island	Union	Congress Centres
133	111	22
Republic of Ireland		
114	93	21
Northern Ireland		
19	18	1

County Analysis	Number of counties	Counties
No presence	4	Armagh, Fermanagh, Roscommon, Tyrone
Congress Centre only	1	Leitrim
Union site only	13	Carlow, Cavan, Cork, Derry, Down, Laois, Meath, Monaghan, Offaly, Sligo, Tipp, Waterford, Wexford
Union site & Congress Centre	14	Antrim, Clare, Donegal, Dublin, Galway, Kerry, Kildare, Kilkenny, Limerick, Longford, Louth, Westmeath, Wicklow

Union Analysis	Sites	Unions
Antrim	15	ATL, BFAWU, CSP, CWU UK, FSU, INTO (2), NIPSA (2), POA (NI), SIPTU, UCATT, UNISON, USDAW
Armagh	0	
Carlow	1	SIPTU
Cavan	1	SIPTU
Clare	1	SIPTU
Cork	9	IMPACT, INMO, MANDATE, OPATSI, SIPTU, TEEU (IMPACT building), UCATT
Derry	2	NIPSA, UNISON
Donegal	1	SIPTU
Down	1	FBU
Dublin	38	AHCPS, ASTI, BATU, CPSU, CWU, ESU, FSU, GSU, IFUT, IMO, IMPACT, INTO (7), INMO, MANDATE (2), MLSA (SIPTU building), NUJ, OPATSI, POA, PSEU, SIPTU (4), TEEU, TSSA, TUI, UCATT, UNITE, VI, VOA (AHCPS)
Fermanagh	0	
Galway	5	IMPACT, INMO, MANDATE, SIPTU, TEEU (shared)
Kerry	2	SIPTU (2)
Kildare	1	SIPTU
Kilkenny	2	BATU, SIPTU
Laois	1	SIPTU
Leitrim	0	
Limerick	9	BATU, IMPACT, INMO, MANDATE, OPATSI, SIPTU, TEEU, UNITE
Longford	1	POA
Louth	3	SIPTU, UNITE
Mayo	1	SIPTU

Meath	1	SIPTU
Monaghan	1	SIPTU
Offaly	1	SIPTU
Roscommon	0	
Sligo	2	IMPACT, SIPTU
Tipperary	3	SIPTU
Tyrone	0	
Waterford	4	MANDATE, SIPTU, TEEU, UNITE
Westmeath	2	SIPTU (2)
Wexford	1	SIPTU
Wicklow	2	SIPTU (2)

APPENDIX 8 – Membership of Executive Council Review Group

Chair: Brian Campfield, President, Irish Congress of Trade Unions

Members: Colm Cronin, EC Member representing Trades Councils
Brendan Mackin, Chairperson, Congress Centres Network
Alison Millar, GS NIPSA, EC Member
Aileen Morrissey, MANDATE, EC Member
Joe O’Flynn, GS SIPTU, EC member and Treasurer of Congress
Ciarán Rohan, GS AHCPs, EC Member

Secretariat: Frank Vaughan, Congress
Fiona Dunne, Congress