

SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP

Monday 8th January, 2024

MEETING OF SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Duffy (Chairperson) and
Councillors McLaughlin and Smyth.

External Members: Mrs. B. Arthurs, Community and Voluntary Sector;
Mr. T. Burns, Faith Sector;
Mr. J. Donnelly, Community and Voluntary Sector;
Ms. J. Irwin, Community Relations Council;
Ms. C. McMenamin, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust;
Ms. T. Mimna, Good Relations, TEO;
Interfaith Forum;
Ms. A. Roberts, Community and Voluntary Sector;
Mr. G. Walker, Community and Voluntary Sector; and
Ms. A. M. White, British Red Cross

In attendance: Mr. G. McCartney, Good Relations Manager;
Ms. D. McKinney, PEACE Programme Manager;
Mr. J. Girvan, Neighbourhood Services Manager; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Alderman Copeland and
Mr. W. Naeem and Mr. P. Anderson.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 11th December, 2023, were taken as read and
signed as correct.

Declarations of Interest

Ms. B. Arthurs declared an interest in respect of agenda item 3, Good Relations
Quarter 3 Report, in that she worked for an organisation that was in receipt of funding
and she left the meeting during consideration of this agenda item.

Ms. T. Mimna declared an interest in respect of item 4, Peace Plus Belfast City
Council Local Action Plan Update, in that she worked for the Executive Office, and she
left the meeting at this stage in the proceedings.

SCP Membership Update (verbal update)

The Good Relations Manager advised the Members that he had been in discussions regarding the two vacant positions with the recently appointed Chief Executive of the Belfast Chamber of Commerce. He reported that she was keen to fill the positions and that he was scheduled to meet her in the next few weeks to further discuss. He undertook to provide a further update in due course.

He also reported that he was still awaiting confirmation from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) as to whom its representative would be. He undertook to provide a further update at the February meeting of the Partnership once he had liaised further with NIHE officials.

Noted.

Good Relations Quarter 3 Report

(Ms. Arthurs, having declared an interest, left the meeting for the duration of this item.)

The Good Relations Manager reminded the Members that, as previously reported, the Council's Good Relations Action Plan contained £294,644.00 towards programme costs, made up of funding from both the Council and The Executive Office's District Council's Good Relations Programme.

The Members were reminded that, during Quarter 1, a total of £184,644 had been allocated to projects across the city. He continued that work on programme development and mobilisation had continued in Quarter 2, however, no allocations had been made as budgets were still being finalised. Work had continued on the delivery of the Action Plan during Quarter 3, during which a total of £61,970.84.00 had been allocated to groups, giving a total spend of £246,614.84.

He then drew the Members' attention to the activity, as summarised below:

Code	Project Summary	Budget	Progress in Quarter 3	Total allocated
BCC1	Good Relations Small Grants Programme.	£154,644	All projects in receipt of letter of offer and currently being delivered	Full allocation
BCC2	St Patrick's Day Civic Events programme	Increased to £20,000	Following reprofile of BCC6, it was agreed to provide £20,000 towards the preparation of the Carnival Parade to improve the diversity of the event.	£0. To be allocated in Q4
BCC3	Positive Cultural Expression Programme	Increased to £30,000	Beacon Programme delivered. 11 groups supported to deploy a beacon on the 11th July. Increased allocation	Full allocation. £20K in Q1 and £10K in Q3.

			following reallocation of BCC6.	
BCC4	Civic Engagement and Learning Programme	£10,000	Full allocation delivered in Q1.	Full allocation in Q1
BCC5	Minority Ethnic Inclusion Programme	£30,000	September meeting of migrant forum took place. 5 projects supported and delivered.	£10,077.24 allocated
BCC6	Civic Engagement and Strategic Priorities	£0	Following 2 unsuccessful quotation exercises, this budget was reallocated to BCC2 and BCC3.	Quotation exercise Unsuccessful
BCC7	Interface Engagement and tackling sectarianism and racism	£40,000	9 projects allocated support for interface events. Quotation process undertaken for the remainder of this budget.	£31,893.60 allocated
BCC8	Shared Education Schools Programme	£10,000	Programme being delivered in Q3 and Q4.	£10,000 allocated
BCC 9	Strategic Intervention Programme	£0	N/A	£0
	TOTAL	£294,644		£61,970.84

The Partnership noted the update report on the delivery of the Council's Good Relations Action Plan during Quarter 3, which covered the period October – December 2023, and recommended that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee note the update provided.

Peace Plus Belfast City Council Local Action Plan Update

(Ms. Mimna, having declared an interest, left the meeting for the duration of this item.)

The Partnership considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

The purpose of this report is to provide Shared City Partnership members with an update on the submission of PEACE PLUS 1.1. Co-designed Local Community Peace Action Plan for Belfast. Note some correspondence that has been received from SEUPB following engagement with TEO which includes the offer of a £30,000 advance eligible spend available to Councils.

2.0 Recommendations

That Members note the contents of the report and recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that they too, note the contents of the report.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Background

SCP members are aware that the development of the £15.1 million Local PEACE Action Plan has been developed in three stages:

Stage 1 Co-design needs and opportunities

Stage 2 Co-design long list of priority projects

Stage 3 Action Plan submission

The plan will be delivered under the following 3 Thematic Areas

1. Community Regeneration and Transformation (Capital Projects)
2. Thriving and Peaceful Communities
3. Building Respect for All Cultural Identities

3.2 Current Status – Stage 3 Submission - Complete

Since the last SCP meeting 11th December both the Officer Team with assistance from consultants compiled significant detail required for both Belfast City Council's Local Peace Plus Local Action Plan and the Funding Application to the Special EU Programmes Body.

Officers can confirm that the Local Peace Action Plan and Funding application (along with mandatory Attachments and appendices) has been submitted to SEUPB on the 14 December 2023. As mentioned at the last meeting to arrive at this position has taken a considerable amount of time in terms of Co-Design and drafting of required documents. It is worth noting that the overall application including all of the above is circa 800+ pages plus worth of documentation which will now be assessed by SEUPB.

As agreed at the last SCP meeting officers will now work with colleagues to develop the skills and capacity of local community organisations to enable them to bid for such opportunities i.e., prepare to procure.

3.3 TEO Engagement

In December TEO as the accountable department for PEACEPLUS have been engaging with local Council officers collectively to discuss some concerns that have been raised with regards to the development and delivery of Local Peace Action Plans.

Members should be aware that some of the issues raised included:

1. Level of risk for Councils who have submitted their action plan to incur expenditure before receiving a Letter of Offer.
2. Financial constraints on Councils who are waiting on reimbursement from PEACE IV.
3. Changing parameters for the submission, assessment, and approval
4. Extended application period which resulted in an increasing gap between programmes.
5. Role and responsibility of the Financial Controller function (now assigned to Councils)

Members should note that the key points mainly applicable to the Belfast PEACEPLUS Local Action Plan, are 1, 2,3 and 5 above.

3.4 SEUPB Correspondence

TEO has subsequently liaised with their ROI counterparts, Department Rural and Community Development and SEUPB on these issues. In response to these discussions, correspondence from SEUPB, as attached, has been issued to Council.

Members are requested to note the correspondence and given the financial constraints and risk to Council, agree that a request for the £30,000 advance is made to SEUPB.

Members are also advised that officers will be meeting with TEO and SEUPB in January 2024 to confirm the assessment process, timeframe, and way forward for the Belfast PEACEPLUS Local Action Plan.

3.5 Financial and Resource Implications

Within existing budget to be claimed retrospectively from SEUPB.

3.6 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

The Plan has been screened for equality and good relations implications along with completion of a rural needs assessment, and forwarded to Council's Equality Team."

The Members asked that their concern and dismay be noted regarding the ongoing delay with the reimbursement to the Council from the SEUPB of the outstanding Peace IV monies.

Both the Good Relations Manager and the Chairperson, on behalf of the Partnership, commended the work of the Peace Plus officers for the dedication and long hours that they had undertaken to ensure that the Local Peace Action Plan and funding application had been submitted to the SEUPB by the 14th December deadline and asked that their thanks be passed to all the relevant officers.

The Partnership noted the update report on the submission of PEACE PLUS 1.1. Co-designed Local Community Peace Action Plan for Belfast and that some correspondence had been received from the SEUPB following engagement with TEO, which included the offer of a £30,000 advance eligible spend available to Councils and recommended that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee note the update provided.

Chairperson