

SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP

Wednesday 3rd June, 2026

MEETING OF SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP

Members present: Councillor J. Duffy (Chairperson); and
Councillors Abernethy, I. McLaughlin and D Lyons.

External Members: Ms. B. Arthurs, Community and Voluntary Sector;
Supt. A. Hagan, PSNI;
Rev. G. Kennedy, Faith Sector;
Mr. M. McBride, Education Authority;
Ms. T. Mimna, Executive Office;
Ms. B. NiBhriain, Department for Communities;
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
Mr. D. Robinson, Acting Senior Good Relations Officer;
Ms. R. Erskine, Project Manager
Ms. N. Lynch, Good Relations Officer;
Ms. F. McIntyre, Project Officer (Good Relations);
Mr. K. Tandon, ArtsEkta;
Ms. N. Tandon, ArtsEkta;
Ms. S. Baillie, NICVA; and
Mr. A. McMullan, Members' Services and Digital Support Officer.

Election of Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson

It was proposed by Councillor Abernethy, seconded by Councillor I. McLaughlin, and agreed that Councillor Duffy be elected as the Chairperson; and proposed by Councillor Duffy, seconded by Councillor Abernethy that Councillor I. McLaughlin be elected as the Deputy Chairperson of the Shared City Partnership until the date of the 2027 Local Government Election.

Apologies

Apologies were reported from Alderman Copeland and from Independent Members Ms. N. Creagh, Ms. L. Euler, Mr. J. Donnelly Ms. I. Sherry and Ms. E. Thompson.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 6th May were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 22nd May.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Duffy declared an interest under item 7, Local PEACEPLUS Community Action Plan Secretariat Update and under item 7a, Thriving and Peaceful Communities Thematic Update, in that he was associated with those organisations delivering projects under the PEACEPLUS Programme.

Councillor Abernethy declared an interest under item 7a, Thriving and Peaceful Communities Thematic Update, in that a family member had participated in the one of the projects funded under this theme. He further declared an interest under item 7b, Celebrating Cultures and Diversity Thematic Update, in that he had previously volunteered for a project funded through that stream.

Ms. B. Arthurs declared an interest under items 6, Community Recovery Fund Update and item 7a, Thriving and Peaceful Communities Thematic Update, in that the organisation she worked for was in receipt of funding through those streams.

Ms. A. Roberts also declared an interest under item 7a, Thriving and Peaceful Communities Thematic Update, in that her employer was in receipt of funding through this stream.

As those items did not come under discussion or debate the Members were not required to leave the room.

Presentations

Presentation from ArtsEkta PEACEPLUS

Ms. N Tandon and Mr. K Tandon provided the Partnership with an update on the Shared Roots project which had received funding through the PEACEPLUS Programme.

They highlighted that the Project explored shared cultural heritage through storytelling, bringing a wide range of people together to explore the city's rich cultural built heritage and included guided tours and events which highlighted Belfast's many traditions. The project sought to promote reconciliation and inclusivity and offered activities and workshops to engage communities in preserving and participating in their shared heritage.

The Members thanked the organisation for their presentation.

Noted.

Presentation from NICVA PEACEPLUS

Ms. S. Bailie provided the Partnership with an update on the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action's (NICVA) Community Empowerment Programme which was funded through the PEACEPLUS Programme.

She explained that the Project was focused on empowering communities across Belfast to become leaders and shape the future of their local areas, strengthen relationships and build lasting change through collaboration and learning. Over the course of the project, NICVA, along with its partner organisations, aimed to support individuals, community groups and local leaders and provided accredited training, networking, cross-border learning and community led action planning.

The Partnership thanked Ms. Baillie for her presentation.

Noted.

Members Update

Ms. Roberts updated the Partnership on the ongoing antisocial behaviour issues across the city, particularly the use of e-scooters at interface areas. She advised that a Tension Monitoring Group representing community support groups met in East Belfast on a monthly basis and had planned to write to local sports clubs seeking their engagement with those issues.

Supt. Hagan. Agreed that that e-scooter use had become more prevalent over the past six months and suggested that this was due to them being the purchase of choice by some parents at Christmas.

He confirmed that the PSNI had been seizing e-scooters, with nineteen removed from the streets in the past two weeks, and that the PSNI were also working with the Health and Social Services Trusts to tackle to issue, but that control and regulation of the sale of e-scooters was needed.

Following a question from a Member regarding the implementation of the recently announced new service instruction regarding the removal of public hate displays, posters and signage, Supt. Hagan reported it was helpful to now have an established publicly available framework in place to deal with those issues. He advised that the PSNI were supporting partners, such as the Department for Infrastructure, and landowners when requested.

A Member highlighted the potential impact on interface relationships, whereby community workers and liaisons were leaving the sector at a noticeable rate mainly due to funding cuts.

Supt. Hagan confirmed that the PSNI participated in the preventative approach to interface issues and would respond to issues as they were reported or became emerging risks.

He also confirmed that a significant policing and public safety operation had been planned for the duration of the upcoming Fleadh event in the city.

Noted.

Minority Ethnic Integration and Inclusion Programme

The Good Relations Manager reported that a sum of £500,000 had been identified in budget underspend and the Council agreed that this would be allocated to support the minority ethnic community in Belfast.

He suggested that officers develop a programme of work and actions to be progressed over the next twenty-two months ensuring that the programme would add value, wouldn't duplicate work already in progress and that integration and inclusion were central. The proposed four areas were:

1. Co-Design an Action Plan to Support Integration and Inclusion £250,000

Work with partners from the Migrant Support Community to Co-Design an Action Plan for Implementation and Delivery;

2. Extend the Schools of Sanctuary with the EA in Belfast £20,000

The programme is aimed at helping schools to further the concept that schools are welcoming places where every child feels safe and accepted regardless of what they believe, where they are from or what they look like; places where cultural diversity is valued and celebrated;

3. Programme for Continued Area Based Work Based on from the Community Recovery Fund £225,000

Council will continue to support the area-based work currently taking place in Sandy Row/Donegal Road, Woodvale, Connswater, Greater Falls and WULO areas working with the existing delivery partners to ensure a proactive approach to integration and inclusion of the Migrant population in Belfast City; and

4. Hub Feasibility £5,000

Council to investigate the Potential in relation to Localised/Centralised Hub Model to support the integration and inclusion of the Migrant population in Belfast City.

The Partnership noted the report and agreed the outlined approach and recommended that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agree the approach outlined in the report.

Good Relations and Fleadh Programme

The Good relations Manager presented a report on support for intercultural programming associated with the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2026 which would take place that summer.

The report proposed a programme incorporating a range of different cultural identity groups and sought to allocate resources from the Council's Good Relations Action Plan, through in-year additional allocations, or a reprofiling of existing allocations, if required.

The proposed programmes and their costs were as follows:

Connections by ArtsEkta, directed by Neil Martin - £10,000

ArtsEkta's acclaimed intercultural music experience, Connections, would bring together a collective of musicians from across cultures, traditions and genres in a powerful celebration of musical dialogue and shared identity. Under the musical direction of award-winning composer Neil Martin, Connections would weave Irish traditional music with global sounds from across Africa, South Asia, the Middle East, Latin America and beyond — creating a vibrant live experience reflecting the rich cultural diversity of contemporary Belfast.

Lectures – £10,000

A programme of lectures and talks would take place in the Linenhall Library, offering an engaging programme of talks, celebrating our rich

musical heritage. Through expert speakers, performers, and scholars, the series would explore the history, evolution, and cultural significance of traditional music, providing audiences with insight, inspiration, and a deeper appreciation of the art form.

Ulster Bands Showcase, by Belfast Bands Forum - £25,000

Held at the iconic Titanic Slipways in the heart of Belfast, the Ulster Bands Showcase would be presented by Belfast Bands Forum and would celebrate the rich and distinct heritage of Northern Irish Unionist and Ulster Scots culture through the living traditions of flute band music, Lambeg drumming, pipe bands and Scottish country dancing. The audience would be taken on a journey – from the deep roots of the tradition, through its living present, to a joyful, shared celebration of what this culture means to those who carry it.

The Partnership noted the contents of the report and recommended that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agree the proposed allocations as outlined in the report.

Community Recovery Fund Update

(Councillor I. McLaughlin in the Chair)

The Good Relations Manager reported that the Council’s Good Relations Unit was currently overseeing twenty-one active projects funded through the Community Recovery Fund and that three projects had completed delivery with full payment issues to those groups.

He confirmed that two previously reported extension requests had been approved and that addenda to their funding agreements were being finalised. He also reported that a further proposal for WULU support had been received and a letter of offer had been drafted.

The Good Relations Manager undertook to bring a further report to the Partnership detailing the monitoring and evaluation of the Fund once the programme had concluded in September 2026.

The Partnership noted the contents of the report and recommended that Strategic Policy and Resources Committee also note the contents of the report.

PEACEPLUS Local Community Action Plan Secretariat Update

The Partnership considered the following report:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Shared City Partnership members with an update on the mobilisation of PEACEPLUS Belfast Local Community Action Plan (LCAP).

2.0 Recommendations

Members are requested to note the contents of the report and recommend that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee also note the contents of the report.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Mobilisation Contract Awards and Procurement

Mobilisation, procurement and monitoring of project implementation is ongoing, as outlined below and in each of the PEACEPLUS Thematic Reports, included in the Agenda.

3.2 Financial Controller

Members are advised that KPMG verification of Claims 1-8 has been completed, with eligible expenditure of £1.770m as detailed in Appendix I - PEACEPLUS Claims Submitted and Eligible Expenditure.

It should be noted that the verification for Periods 7 and 8 included 8 procurement exercises, with all deemed eligible and compliant.

Some minor expenditure from Period 7 (£129.58) and 8 (£1,300) was declared ineligible, and will be resubmitted in future claims. Clarification on expenditure to be included within the Infrastructure and Works budget line is to be provided by SEUPB. The Partnership should note that any budget line realignment will be a major exercise.

3.3 Claims and Reporting

As reported in May 2026, and detailed in Appendix I, the total value of claims across the programme up to and including Period 9 (31 Mar 26) is approx £2.3m with reimbursement progressing for Periods 1-8 totalling £1.77m approx.

The Period 9 claim, valued at £573K (€659K), is on track for submission to SEUPB by 28 May 2026.

3.4 Forecasting and Expenditure Targets

Members are requested to note that Period 9 claim value (£573K / €659K) is slightly higher than the €641K forecast submitted to SEUPB. although is below the €1.2m spend profile outlined in SEUPB's Memo of March 2026.

The variance is due to performance payments and contracting taking longer than anticipated, which will be outlined to SEUPB.

3.5 Exchange Rate Fluctuations

Following reimbursement of the Period 7 claim, the cost to Council due to exchange rate fluctuations is £16,729.62, which is negatively impacting budgets.

Reduced banking costs for the transfer of monies between the Euro and Sterling accounts have been secured and further discussions on options to manage the exchange rate risk are progressing.

3.6 Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

Delivery of project activity and achievement of participant targets is progressing, and Members are referred to Appendix II – PEACEPLUS Performance Dashboard.

The Dashboard outlines progress of 3,091 participants registered to projects, with 1,760 completed the required activity/contact hours. The attitudinal impacts (pg8) shows that responses on impacts are positive and within the 70% targets, with 78% of programme participants stating they have gained increased respect for cultures/identities different to their own.

Members should note that the Dashboard is to be further refined. M&E system issues continue to be address at the weekly troubleshooting meetings.

3.7 PEACEPLUS Additional Funding Opportunities

The additional funding proposals, as reported in May 2026, are currently being considered by SEUPB senior management

3.8 Staffing

A new Monitoring and Data Analyst post has been appointed and is to commence on 15 June 2026.

As such, 3 vacancies remain within the team. Recruitment of the Finance and Data Support and Project Support Officer are progressing, with advertising scheduled for the end of May 2026 with interviews late June 2026. The temporary filling of the maternity cover for a Project Manager is under consideration.

As previously reported recruitment of the Lead Officer is on hold pending consideration by Continuous Improvement.

3.9 Governance

The Partnership is requested to note that SEUPB advised they will be attending PEACEPLUS Programme Board meetings, in

an observer capacity. The SEUPB Case Officer attended the meeting on 27 May 2026.

An update in the Governance Framework is required to reflect this change in the Programme Board attendance, as such a further report will be presented in due course.

4.0 Financial and Resource Implications

All expenditure associated with the PEACEPLUS Action Plan is reimbursed by SEUPB and is eligible from 1 January 2024. As referenced at 3.3 above, PEACEPLUS claimable expenditure to 31 December 2025 submitted to SEUPB is approx. £1.771m.

4.1 Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

The PEACEPLUS Local Community Action Plan has been screened for equality, good relations, and rural needs assessment, and has been screened out.

The Peace Programmes Manager further reported that the Special European Union Programmes Body had requested to attend future meetings of the PEACEPLUS Programme Board in an observer capacity and that officers were considering the implications that would have for the Board's governance frameworks.

The Partnership noted the contents of the report and recommended that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee also note the contents of the report.

Thriving and Peaceful Communities Thematic Update

The Partnership considered the following report:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide the Shared City Partnership with a progress update on projects within the Thriving and Peaceful Communities (TPC) Theme of the PEACEPLUS Belfast Local Community Action Plan (LCAP).

2.0 Recommendations

Members are requested to note the contents of the report and recommend that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee note the contents of the report.

3.0 Main report

Project Delivery

An overview of project progress within the TPC theme is outlined below.

3.1 TPC 1 Community Empowerment – Lead Delivery Partner NICVA

Project Partners: Forward South Partnership (FSP), East Belfast Community Development Agency (EBCDA), West Belfast Partnership Board (WBPB), Falls Community Council (FCC), Greater Shankill Partnership (GSP) and Marrowbone Community Association (MCA).

The Partnership is advised that 17 participants have been confirmed as completed for Cohort 1 of the OCN Level 2 Community Development. Final sessions for the Cohort 2 in OCN Community Development has taken place with up to 20 participants from 14 organisations due to complete. Registration for the third OCN course also opened in April 2026 in preparation of delivery in September 2026.

Five of the ten LCEPs are progressing through Stage 2 activity of the 18-month long programme and are facilitating needs-led programmes including structured learning sessions.

LCEP 09 - Ormiston / Titanic (EBCDA) has designed a Social Action Project which was informed by the Stage 1 Baseline. This community engagement event, scheduled to take place on 30 May 2026, will address issues such as “Isolation – all ages”, and “Lack of knowledge and awareness of services”. LCEP 05 Oldpark (MCA) is currently planning the Social Action Project.

Planning is underway for the residential, taking place in Cavan 18- 19 June 2026. The residential will include workshops on restorative justice and visits to community projects in Cavan. Participants for the residential are those actively involved in the programme, as part of a LCEP, City-Wide Forum, or OCN.

Members are requested to note that officers continue to liaise with NICVA to pro-actively seeking solutions to resolve the technical complexities of two monitoring systems.

3.2 TPC 2 Health & Wellbeing - Lead Delivery Partner Ashton

Project Partners: Shankill Partnership Board, East Belfast Community Development Agency, West Belfast Partnership Board, & North Belfast Community Partnership.

There are currently 494 participants registered on the project and 278 participants achieved.

A substantial amount of activity has taken place and data uploaded to the M&E system to enable verification of achievement to be confirmed. It is anticipated that all data will be uploaded by the next reporting period.

Members are reminded that the DP has requested a modification to expand the areas of influence to include DEA's, which is being considered via approved delegated authority. Clarity on modification questions raised by SEUPB in relation to AIPB Health Inequality Data, geographic locations and target split is currently being confirmed,

3.3 TPC 3 Youth Empowerment, Inspiring Future Belfast

**3.3.1 Lot 1: 9–12 year olds (Juniors) - Lead Delivery Partner Giga Training
Project Partner BEAM Creative Network.**

Currently 411 of 1500 participants have achieved the required activity and contact hours.

As reported previously, the delivery partner is continuing to plan for delivery of Year 2 activity via schools in West and Shankill Areas, with six school partnerships, a community programme and two Digital and two Arts Academies scheduled for commencement.

A significant amount of activity and targets will be delivered during the summer with plans being finalised presently.

Project delivery is as previously reported, 411 achieved participants from 1500 target.

3.3.2 The Partnership is advised that the delivery partner has submitted a request to withdraw from the contract due to increased costs and the administrative burden of the project.

It should be noted that given the progress outlined above, and the reported readiness for Year 2 delivery through contract management meetings and reports there was no indication of any delivery issues.

3.3.3 Preliminary discussions with Legal and Procurement Services on the withdrawal request have progressed and indicate a potential breach of contract.

Officers have been liaising with the Delivery Partner to explore potential mitigations to enable ongoing project delivery, these include reduced contact hours, venue hire costs, streamlined reporting as well as the relocation of delivery of some activity.

Given the significant impact of withdrawal on the delivery of the Action Plan and achievement of targets, members are advised that an initial approach was made to SEUPB on the potential mitigations including reducing contact hours. SEUPB advised the change will require an administrative modification.

The Programme Board has considered reducing the contact hours for the project, and would recommend that the Partnership agree to reduce, the required contact hours from 24 to 16 hours.

The reduced contact hours will require a formal change request from the Delivery Partner, together with a revised implementation plan and an assurance of delivery.

**3.3.4 Lot 2: 12–15 year olds (Intermediate) - Lead Delivery Partner Active Communities Network (ACN)
Project Partners: Ledley Hall Boys & Girls Club, Lagmore and Rosario Youth.**

Delivery of activity is ongoing, with reported recruitment of 100 young people for cohort 2 with 97 completers. Recruitment of Cohort 3 has commenced and registration is progressing.

Members are reminded, that the Delivery Partner has outlined challenges in delivering residential activity in cross border venues, due to the suitability of residential facilities, group sizes and safeguarding issues.

To address this issue, a change request has been submitted to allow the use of residential accommodation in NI-based youth facilities, with activity, such as site visits, taking place across the border. This will maintain the cross-border programme delivery.

The Programme Board has considered the request and advises members that it does not contravene the requirements. As such, the Board would recommend that the Shared City Partnership agree this change request.

**3.4 Lot 3: 16–18 year olds (Seniors) - Lead Delivery Partner Streetbeat Youth Project
Project Partner YEHA (Youth Educational Health Advice).**

The Partnership is requested to note the overall participant target for the project has been confirmed as 160, as outlined in the tender specification and approved action plan.

41 participants to date have completed activity, and recruitment is on track to achieve the 2026 targets

Delivery of sessions is continuing with young people engaging and planning is underway for the second residential with the International School of Peace.

A case study to capture the narrative journey of a Year 1 young person has been provided, which detailed the project

impact including increased confidence which enabled them to volunteer and continue Youth Work through a degree course.

3.5 Lot 4: 19-25 years olds (Young adults) – Lead Partner GEMS NI

Project Partners: Diverse Youth NI (DYNI), Training Network for Women (TWN).

Participant achievement has been confirmed as 20 completed the international residential element of the project, with 25 registered participants completing the required level of activity.

Officers are liaising with the Delivery Partner to ensure that the M&E accurately reflects participation across the strands of the project.

A celebration event for Cohort 1 took place in April 2026. The transformational experience of Year 1 participants is continuing, with internships, placements, and university courses.

Lessons learnt from delivery of the activity for Cohort 1 include additional one to one support and needs of participants, whose first language is not English.

Recruitment is now underway for Cohort 2 and is on track to meet the 40 participants target. An International residential to the Basque region is being developed.

3.6 TPC 4 Sport for Peace - Lead Delivery Partner Active Communities Network

Project Partners: Sport Changes Life Foundation, PeacePlayers NI and Community Sports Network.

Delivery of activity across all pillars is progressing, as follows:

Pillar 1 – Coach Education.

Currently 33 active participants across all 4 areas of training and development, which are OCN Level 1, Dodgeball Level 1. Safeguarding training and First Aid Training.

Pillar 1 baselining has been completed which links into the Pillar 4 research.

Pillar 2 – Community participation

158 participants are currently engaged across 2 education organisations, 4 sports clubs and 4 community projects. Activities include building confidence, leadership, and resilience through sport, delivered via both primary school

and community-based sessions (aged 11+). Anticipated date of completion for this cohort is being confirmed.

Pillar 3 - Mentoring & Employability

There are 8 active participants in this strand and 6 have acquired employability hours in various sports organisations/ roles which is a resounding success.

Pillar 4 – Research

Terms of Reference for the research project submitted for review and approval and is presently with officers for consideration.

3.7 TPC 5 Employability Language Up – Lead Delivery Partner People1st

Project Partners: Belfast City Mission, Conway Education, Donegall Pass, Fane Street Primary, Food Stock, Footprints, Holy Rosary Primary, Mears, Refuge Language, Russian Speaking Community, Street Soccer NI, The Suitcase Project, Wee Chicks, Windsor Women’s Centre.

A total of 30 new participants has been registered which brings the total participant registrations to 385.

Members are reminded that a change request to increase recruitment targets and reduce contact hours from 36 to 28, to mitigate against retention and completion issues. This request has been considered and agreed via delegated authority by the Good Relations Manager and Programme Manager.

The change request was also referred to SEUPB who advised that if the change does not amend or contradict the contact hours that have been approved by Steering Committee and outlined on Jems, a formal modification is not required.

As the change request has been formally agreed, new participant data will be input to evidence the level of achievement.

3.8 TPC 6 Arts Across the Genres – Delivery Partner MayWe
Project Partners: BEAM Creative Network

322 participants are registered to the project, with 196 participants achieving the required number of meaningful contact hours.

Project 2: Suitcases & Skies (84 actively participating, 38 complete) Target 120

Activity is ongoing with 2 showcases held during May 2026 in Cultúrlann and the Ulster Hall.

The Ulster Hall event focussed on a co-designed performance created by participants, those with additional needs across 6 different community organisations. Additional training for auxiliary roles such as tech, sound, lighting and stage management was offered to those who did not want to perform on stage. The event received extensive media coverage and was exceptional in demonstrating the impact of relationships and collaboration.

Project 5 participants continue to attend Project 2 activities to capture footage and content for the newsletter, socials and documentary. Recruitment has commenced for Project 3 and planning is also underway for the delivery of Project 4.

4.0 Financial and Resource Implications

All expenditure associated with the PEACEPLUS Action Plan is eligible from 1 January 2024.

4.1 Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

The PEACEPLUS Local Community Action Plan has been screened for equality, good relations and rural needs assessment, and has been screened out.

The Partnership noted the contents of the report and recommended that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee:

- also note the contents of the report;
- approve the reduction in the contact hours for the TCP3 Lot 1 project from 24 to 16 hours; and
- approve the use of residential accommodation in Northern Ireland for the TCP3 Lot 2 project, with activity taking place across the border.

Celebrating Cultures and Diversity Thematic Update

The Partnership considered the following report:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide the Shared City Partnership with a progress update on projects within the Celebrating Cultures and Diversity (CCD) Theme of the PEACEPLUS Belfast Local Community Action Plan (LCAP).

2.0 Recommendations

Members are requested to note the contents of the report and recommend that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee also note the contents of the report.

3.0 Main report

Project Delivery

Project implementation is continuing as outlined in the report below:

3.1 CCD1 – Interfaith and Belief Lead Delivery Partner: Corrymeela Community Consortium Partners: Redeeming Our Communities, Belfast Islamic Centre, NI Inter-Faith Forum

An updated implementation plan has been provided, and officers continue to work with the delivery partner to confirm project progress, reporting requirements and a timeline for achievement of objectives.

Stream 1: Delivery of the schools' work pilot achieved good engagement and feedback will inform any amends to the Interfaith and Belief learning materials. It was noted that the content is flexible and can be tailored to facilitate conversations with adult stakeholders across the project streams.

Stream 2: Unity and Welcoming Programme, Mapping of the welcome, care and social action work provided by faith and belief groups is ongoing.

Stream 3: Scoping of similar events has taken place, and updates are expected at the next contract management meeting, which was delayed this month due to leave.

3.2 CCD2 – Community Connections Lead Delivery Partner (DP): GEMS NI Consortium Partners: Business in the Community (BITC), Belfast City of Sanctuary, Diverse Youth NI, Migrant Centre NI, Ballynafeigh Community Development Association

Participant recruitment and engagement is continuing, with 39 new participants registered which brings the total registered on the project to 115. To date 99 participants are actively participating and 14 have completed the required hours.

A successful Welcome Hub launch and Leadership celebration event took place on 13 May 2026 in Morton Community Centre. The Chair of the Partnership attended and spoke at the launch / celebration event.

As previously reported, the Delivery Partner is approximately 6 months behind on targets and deliverables for all strands of activity. A revised implementation proposal is under consideration, and a

formal change request to realign programme targets to mitigate against recruitment and delivery delays will be submitted. At this stage, the project RAG status remains red.

The Partnership is requested to note that the Programme Board on 27 May 2026, agreed to delegate authority to the Good Relations Manager and Programme Manager to consider the change request.

3.3 CCD3 – LGBTQIA+ Community Engagement Project (Out Connections Belfast) Lead Delivery Partner: The Rainbow Project Project Partners: Cara Friend, HERe NI

There are currently 95 participants registered and 41 actively participating on the project.

Strand 1 Coordination activity is ongoing, and Strand 2 Strategic Planning activity is coming to a close, with a Strategic Plan for the LGBTQIA+ sector within the city due to be complete in the coming months.

Delivery of Strand 5 research has commenced, with focus groups progressing, and preparations are under way to commence Strand 4 Outreach activity.

Some strands are slightly behind schedule, and officers are liaising with the Delivery Partner to confirm delivery timeframes.

3.4 CCD4 – Community Empowerment Ex Politically Motivated Prisoners Lead Delivery Partner: Coiste Project Partners: Tar Anall, Action for Community Transformation, Charter NI, and Tar Isteach.

The project has 149 registered participants with 77 actively participating and delivery of sessions are ongoing. The delivery partner is working on uploading M&E data to evidence activity.

Course options for the counselling training are being finalised, and a schedule of trainings has been requested. The courses provided will address to organisational and demographic need, such as Levels 2 and 3 in counselling, Youth Trauma Studies. The Board should note that training in complimentary therapies is also under consideration.

The Terms of Reference for the Advisory Group has been submitted to BCC for review prior to final agreement by the Advisory Group.

Following consideration by Officers and SEUPB, the proposed Storytelling publication, did not meet

Programme requirements and the delivery partner was advised. The potential to recruit participants for the Storytelling project through the launch of the new Orange Museum in Shankill is under consideration.

3.5 CCD5 From Multiculturalism to Interculturalism

3.5.1 Lot 1 – Language and Cultural Access

The contract initiation meeting with the Ulster Scots Agency has taken place, and project implementation is being prioritised. Due to delays in the contract award an updated implementation plan has been requested, which will enable monitoring and payment terms to be confirmed.

3.5.2 Lot 2 – Cultural Spaces (Come on Over) Lead Delivery Partner: MayWe

77 participants are registered and actively participating in project activity, with 10 venues registered and 7 groups actively participating on the steering group.

The April 2026 steering group took place in Banana Block, and a second grassroots capacity building session is planned for 28 May 2026.

Discussions with four additional venues about joining the project are progressing. However, despite extensive effort, difficulties remain in getting any substantial contact with Orange Order groups. All 12 venues are due to be on board by July 2026 and a further update on outstanding venues will be reported at the next meeting.

3.5.3 Lot 3 – Festivals and Flagship Events Lead Delivery Partner (DP): Féile an Phobail

Participant registrations have increased slightly, with 46 actively participating in the project across a range of activity including the Mentors/Mentees Programme, Flagship Events Steering Group and Musical Fusions Steering Group. Overall project target is 404.

Delivery of the OCN Level 2 Event Management is progressing with 5 sessions delivered during the reporting period. The co-designed social action activity at the May Day Workers Rights Rally went well. Mentoring engagement is ongoing.

Clarity on the content of the PEACEPLUS element, contribution and participant engagement at the Young at Art Festival is progressing.

Members are reminded that clarity on the Social Action Festival activity was requested and should note that the activity is subject to co-design by the participants undertaking the Event Management OCN. The Delivery Partner is aware that PEACEPLUS activity must be distinct from any other funding support.

**3.5.4 Lot 4 – Culture and Shared Built Heritage - Lead Delivery Partner (DP): Arts Ekta
Project Partners: Cairde na Cille, Kabosh Theatre**

Event series 6 took place at the Old Carnegie Library in North Belfast in partnership with members of the North Belfast Heritage Cluster. Two tours were completed in the period focusing on Templemore Baths and surrounding spaces in East Belfast working in partnership with Eastside Partnership.

Delivery of the Tour Guide Training for Cohort 2 is progressing steadily.

Further planned activity includes delivery of event series 7. The Board is requested to note the activity was originally planned for the Old Town Hall, however security access and vetting for all attendees has prohibited the event. Another venue; the Good Shepard Gate Lodge, has been secured and further summer tours are scheduled for this new site.

Additional upcoming activity includes the Phase 2 burial traditions programme, a third theatre piece with Paperclips in City Centre and ongoing development of the faith-based trail, which will be launched as part of Mela 2026 in August 2026.

4.0 Financial and Resource Implications

All expenditure associated with the PEACEPLUS Action Plan is eligible from 1 January 2024.

**4.1 Equality or Good Relations Implications/
Rural Needs Assessment**

The PEACEPLUS Local Community Action Plan has been screened for equality, good relations and rural needs assessment, and has been screened out.

The Partnership noted the contents of the report and recommended that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee also note the contents of the report.

Community Regeneration and Transformation Thematic Update

The Peace Programmes Manager provided the Partnership with an update on the delivery of the Community Regeneration and Transformation theme of the PEACEPLUS Local Community Action Plan.

She highlighted that the Department of Justice's decision on the works at the gates at the Distillery Street site was still outstanding but that the Council was continuing to progress the planning application for the public realm works. She indicated that, although there were land and community issues affecting the site, discussions with Elected Members were proceeding and she was confident that the project would progress with some minor modifications.

She advised that some alterations to the route planned for the Access to the Hills project could be necessary due to changes of land ownership and further updates would be provided in due course.

The Partnership noted the contents of the report and recommended that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee also note the contents of the report.

Any Other Business

The Good Relations Manager confirmed that up to twelve projects would be funded through the Asylum Funding open call agreed at the May 2026 meeting of the Shared City partnership and funding allocations would have a value of £10,000 to £20,000.

He reported that letters of offer were currently being drafted and would be issued under delegated authority and that an update report would be brought to the August meeting of the Partnership.

The Deputy Chairperson informed the Partnership that this would be Rev. G. Kennedy's final meeting as a member of the Shared City Partnership. He thanked Rev. Kennedy for his valuable contributions over the past twelve months.

Date of Next Meeting

The Partnership agreed to move its next meeting from Wednesday 5th to Wednesday 12th August.

Chairperson