

GOOD RELATIONS PARTNERSHIP**MONDAY, 6th FEBRUARY, 2012****MEETING OF THE GOOD RELATIONS PARTNERSHIP**

- Members present: Councillor Hendron (Chairman);
Alderman Stoker;
Councillors Attwood and Maskey.
- External Members: Mr. S. Brennan, Voluntary/Community Sector;
Mr. R. Galway, Bombardier Aerospace/
Confederation of British Industry;
Ms. J. Hawthorne, Northern Ireland Housing Executive;
Mr. P. Mackel, Belfast and District Trades Council;
Mrs. M. Marken, Catholic Church;
Mr. B. McGivern, Belfast City Centre Management;
Mr. M. O'Donnell, Belfast Regeneration Office; and
Mr. P. Scott, Catholic Church.
- In attendance: Mrs. H. Francey, Good Relations Manager;
Mr. I. May, Peace III Programme Manager;
Mr. D. Robinson, Senior Good Relations Officer; and
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Councillor Reynolds, Archdeacon B. Dodds, Reverend L. Carroll, Ms. A. Chada, Ms. J. Peden and Mr. U. Tok.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 9th January were taken as read and signed as correct.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Matters Arising**Irish Language Event - City Hall**

The Chairman paid tribute to the organisers of the highly successful Irish Language event which had taken place in the City Hall on 31st January.

**Proposed Centenary Event –
Request for Assistance**

The Partnership noted that the list of schools attending a play being staged in Aquinas Grammar School on 14th March to mark the signing in 1912 of the Ulster Solemn League and Covenant would be extended to include non-grammar schools from the local area.

Mr. B. McGivern

The Chairman welcomed Mr. B. McGivern, who had been appointed as the Belfast City Centre Management Company's representative on the Partnership, to his first meeting.

Suffolk Lenadoon Interface Group

In pursuance of its decision of 7th November, the Partnership held its meeting at the premises of the Suffolk Lenadoon Interface Group in order to obtain an update on the good relations work being undertaken by that Group.

The Partnership was advised that the Suffolk Lenadoon Interface Group was operated by the two main community organisations in the area, namely, the Lenadoon Community Forum and the Suffolk Community Forum. Ms. R. Crawford and Ms. J. Brown, representing the respective Forums, provided the Partnership with a brief overview of the work of the Group. They explained that both the Lenadoon and Suffolk areas of the City, with populations of around 10,000 and 700 respectively, suffered from high rates of unemployment, low incomes, low levels of educational attainment and poor health, housing, services and skills. The area had in the past experienced some of the worst interface violence experienced in the City, with families being required to be re-housed in other areas. In order to address those issues, the Forums had established jointly the Suffolk Lenadoon Interface Group, which was committed to building a shared and better future and creating an environment based upon understanding, tolerance and a celebration of all cultures, heritage and identities. The Group had, in 2002, constructed its current premises on the Stewartstown Road, which housed on the ground floor a number of small businesses and shops from which it derived a rental income.

The representatives provided details in respect of ongoing projects which sought to develop health and well-being, educational attainment, social and economic skills and capacity. That work was undertaken through advocacy projects designed to create models of good practice whilst building relationships with other agencies and organisations. The Group promoted also cultural projects which reflected a range of activities combining aspects of the work carried out by youth, sports and health workers. It sought also to create greater health and well-being awareness across both communities by, amongst other things, advocating greater health provision in areas where it was lacking currently. They provided information in relation to the development of enhanced relationships between sporting clubs across the Lenadoon and Suffolk communities and in terms of the various youth projects undertaken between the two communities, with the focus being on tackling sectarianism and building relationships.

The representatives drew the Partnership's attention to a number of areas of particular success, including the Sparkles day care facility, and outlined the nature of future projects, such as the enhancement of the nearby Teeling's Green area of open space and the opening in September, 2012 of a new purpose built integrated playgroup.

The Partnership then undertook a tour of the premises and the nearby interface. Having been assured by the Chairman of the Council's ongoing support, Ms. Brown and Ms. Crawford were thanked and they retired from the meeting.

The Partnership noted the information which had been provided.

Peace III Implementation Update

The Partnership considered a report which provided an update in respect of the implementation of Phase I of the Peace and Reconciliation Action Plan. The Peace III Programme Manager drew the Partnership's attention to the following events:

- 6th February – City Hall (6.00 p.m.) – Launch of City of Neighbourhoods – Health and Wellbeing Project
- 8th February – City Hall (9.30 a.m.) - Training Session on compliance issues
- 21st February – Monaghan Education Centre (10.30 a.m.) – Consortium Workshop on the work of a number of Peace III Theme 1.1 Regional Projects
- 18th April (time and venue to be confirmed) – Information and Networking Session for Projects and Key Stakeholders

The Partnership noted the information which had been provided and deferred consideration of a request from the Development Department seeking approval for budgetary changes to be made to the City of Festivals and Creative Legacies projects to enable further information to be obtained.

Good Relations Grant-Aid Fund

The Partnership considered the undernoted report:

“Relevant Background Information

The Good Relations Partnership will be aware of the Council's Good Relations Grant Aid Fund. This Fund forms a central element of the Good Relations programme of the Council and is financially supported by 75% funding from the District Council Good Relations Programme of the Office of the First/Deputy First Minister.

Key Issues

A During the administration of the grants programme over the past year, officers within the Good Relations Unit undertook a review of all of the documentation associated with the small grants application and evaluation process. This was necessary in order to ensure that the processes and procedures continue to be readily and equitably accessible to community organisations while also meeting the requirements of corporate governance within the Council regarding accountability, audit etc. In addition, the Council is seeking to align a number of different funding streams throughout the organisation in order to create a more generalised funding application process across all Council Departments.

As a result, a number of minor textual amendments were made, in line with best practice. e.g. fun days will receive a lower priority and residentials will be considered only in exceptional circumstances. The revised application form and guidance notes have been circulated to the Partnership.

In evaluation of projects, increased focus will be placed on outputs and outcomes, in line with the recommendations of the Blueprint review report, presented to the Good Relations Partnership last year.

B Members will also be aware that during the course of any financial year, situations can emerge which have not been planned and budgeted for and which may require urgent intervention, such as the situation in East Belfast in late June 2011. These situations may arise during periods when the good relations funding scheme is closed, meaning that financial support from the Good Relations Unit cannot be provided.

This report also requests approval for authority to be delegated to the Assistant Chief Executive to permit the Good Relations Manager to allocate up to £1,500 during an emergency situation to support good relations activity that would ordinarily meet the criteria of the Fund. Such payments would only be made in exceptional circumstances, following consultation with the Chairman of the Good Relations Partnership, and would be reported back to the Partnership at the earliest possible opportunity.

It is proposed that the funding scheme for 2012 – 2013 will open on the following dates:

<u>Grant scheme opens</u>	<u>Grant scheme closes</u>	<u>GRP decision date</u>
Monday 5th March 2012	Friday 23rd March 2012	May GRP
Monday 6th August 2012	Friday 24th August 2012	October GRP
Monday 8th October 2012	Friday 26th October 2012	December GRP

Resource Implications

The Good Relations Grants Programme is 75% funded by the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister.

Equality and Good Relations Implications

The purpose of the Good Relations Fund is to support local programmes that tackle sectarianism and racism and promote cultural diversity. The revised documents have been equality screened and no adverse impact has been identified within this process.

Recommendations

The Good Relations Partnership is requested to:

1. approve the amended documentation for the Good Relations Grant Aid Programme;
2. grant approval for authority to be delegated to the Assistant Chief Executive to permit the Good Relations Manager to allocate up to £1500 in exceptional circumstances to support good relations activity that would ordinarily meet the criteria of the Fund, as outlined above; and
3. note the funding scheme dates for 2012.”

The Partnership adopted the recommendations and noted that copies of the revised documentation for the Good Relations Grant-Aid Programme were available on the Mod.gov website.

Forum for Cities in Transition Conference

The Partnership was advised that the Forum for Cities in Transition had been founded in April, 2009 by Derry/Londonderry, Kirkuk, the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities of Nicosia and Mitrovicë/Kosovska Mitrovica, with the aim of encouraging mutual learning, dialogue and the resolution of conflict through non-violent means. The Forum operated on the principle that cities which were in conflict were in the best position to assist other cities in similar situations. The Good Relations Manager reported that the Forum had held its 2011 annual conference in

Derry/Londonderry and that an invitation had been received from the organisation's founding director, Mr. P. O'Malley, Moakley Professor of Peace and Reconciliation, University of Massachusetts, inviting the Partnership to send Elected Members to this year's event which was taking place in October in Kirkuk, Northern Iraq. She explained that up to six Elected Members could attend the conference and that the Forum would meet the costs associated with four of those delegates.

She informed the Partnership that the location of the conference in Kirkuk gave some cause for concern in terms of the safety of those attending as there had been a marked rise in attacks in Iraq over the past month and media reports had indicated a significant deterioration in the country's fragile political process. In view of that, she suggested that the Partnership consider whether it wished to be represented at the Forum for Cities in Transition Conference.

During discussion, several Members highlighted the valuable work which was undertaken by the Forum for Cities in Transition in striving for peace and reconciliation in troubled cities and stated that it was important for the Council to be seen to be endorsing that work by attending the organisation's annual conference.

Accordingly, the Partnership agreed to commend to the Strategic and Policy Resources Committee that it be represented at the Forum for Cities in Transition Conference by up to six of the Elected Members of the Partnership (or their nominees) on the basis that the Forum would meet the costs of up to four delegates, with the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee approving the costs, if necessary, for the additional two places.

Street-by-Street Initiative – Request for Funding

The Partnership was advised that "Street-by-Street" was an anti-social behaviour initiative which operated with the support of the Police Service of Northern Ireland in East Belfast. The Good Relations Manager reported that the project had been visited by Baroness Newlove, Government Champion for Active Safer Communities, who had referred to the initiative in a report on building active, safer communities which was due to be published in London on 14th February. She explained that representatives from the initiative had been invited to attend the launch and had requested that the Council consider making available a small amount of funding to help offset the cost of the visit. She explained that the Good Relations Grant-Aid Fund made provision for such requests and, accordingly, she recommended that the Partnership make available £150 to the Street-by-Street project as outlined.

The Partnership adopted the recommendation.

Stained Glass Window – Celtic Myths and Legends

The Partnership noted that the stained glass window depicting Celtic Myths and Legends, which would be located on the ground floor of the City Hall, close to the Conor Room, would be unveiled on the afternoon of Tuesday, 6th March.

Mr. S. Brennan

The Good Relations Manager reported that Mr. S. Brennan, who had left the meeting, had been selected to participate on Boston College's "Alternatives to Political Violence" programme. She explained that part of the programme entailed a study visit to Birmingham, Alabama, and that Boston College was hoping that people from Birmingham would travel to Ireland later in the year to visit projects which programme participants had identified as being models of best practice in developing alternatives to political violence. Mr. Brennan had requested approval to recommend the Council's Good Relations Partnership and, in particular, its Good Relations Unit, as models of best practice and had requested approval also to recommend that the delegation from Birmingham meet with each of them during their visit to Ireland.

The Partnership granted the approvals sought.

Chairman