

## **GOOD RELATIONS PARTNERSHIP**

**MONDAY, 13th May, 2013**

### **MEETING OF THE GOOD RELATIONS PARTNERSHIP**

Members present: Councillors Attwood, Kyle, McVeigh and Reynolds.

External Members: Mr. S. Brennan, Voluntary/Community Sector;  
Ms. A. Chada, Minority Ethnic Groups;  
Archdeacon B. Dodds, Church of Ireland;  
Ms. J. Hawthorne, Northern Ireland Housing Executive;  
Dr. C. Hughes, Belfast Regeneration Office;  
Mr. P. Mackel, Belfast and District Trades Unions;  
Mr. B. McGivern, Belfast City Centre Management;  
Mr. P. Scott, Catholic Church; and  
Ms. M. De Silva, Voluntary/Community Sector.

Also attended: Ms. D. O'Loan, Community Relations Council/Pobal.

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 the Chairman (Councillor Hendron), Ms. O. Barron, Mr. R. Galway and Ms. M. Marken.

(Councillor McVeigh in the Chair.)

#### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 8th April were taken as read and signed as correct.

#### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were reported.

#### **Creating a Cohesive Community Project**

The Partnership welcomed to the meeting Ms. A. M. White, representing the Lower Ormeau Residents' Action Group, who had been invited to provide a presentation on the Creating a Cohesive Community Project, which was being funded under the PEACE III Programme.

Ms. White reported that the aforementioned project had been established in the Lower Ormeau and Botanic areas of the City by the Action Group, in partnership with South Belfast Roundtable. She outlined the difficulties which had been experienced in recent years by the Roma and student populations in and around those areas and explained that the project had been developed with a view to improving community cohesion at a local and strategic level.

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She reviewed the progress which had been achieved to date, which had included an official launch of the project, the undertaking of a community consultation exercise and the establishment of a Strategic Networking Forum to share information to support community cohesion and to develop collaborative working. Key strategies had been drafted around early intervention/engagement, housing and emergency response and community based training on Ending Hate in Communities and Migration Awareness had been provided. Programmes were being delivered also to seven primary and three post primary schools around themes such as Creating a Caring Community and activities had been organised to coincide with St. Patrick's Day, International Women's Day, Refugee Week and other events. In terms of the future of the project, she confirmed that funding would cease later in the year and that the project partners were in the process of identifying alternative methods of funding.

Ms. White then answered a number of questions on the project and, having been thanked by the Chairman, she retired from the meeting.

The Partnership noted the information which had been provided.

(The Deputy Chairman, Councillor Kyle, in the Chair.)

**Peace III – Implementation Update**

The Partnership considered the undernoted report:

**“Purpose of report**

**To update the Partnership on implementation of the Belfast PEACE III Plan.**

**PEACE III Programme Review Session**

**A session to review progress on the PEACE III Plan by Partnership members has been scheduled for the evening of 4th June 2013 in the Reception Hall at City Hall (6.00pm – 9.00pm). It is proposed that the agenda items will include individual project performance and progress to date and consider options for the future working of the Partnership and the conclusion of the PEACE III Plan.**

**PEACE III Projects Forum**

**It is proposed to continue to bring together all the Phase 2 projects on a bi-monthly basis. Feedback received on the sessions to date has been very positive and it is proposed to convene future meetings of the forum in key locations across the city. A summary of the discussion at the last forum on 30th April has been forwarded to the Partnership. The next forum is scheduled for the 19th June. Costs for venue hire and catering will be met from the overall**

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Programme budget and are estimated to be approximately £600 for the two planned sessions in June and August/ September.

**Meeting of PEACE III Chairpersons and Managers.**

A meeting of all PEACE Partnerships and the Special European Union Programmes Body (SEUPB) was held on 12th April at Crumlin Road Gaol facilitated by the consortium of Community Relations Council and POBAL. The meeting was attended by the Chair of the Good Relations Partnership and the PEACE III Programme Manager. The meeting received an update on key issues from each of the 14 Partnerships and a presentation from SEUPB on the potential for a new PEACE Programme for the 2014-2020 period. Key points raised by the Partnerships included the following:

- Timescale for delivery is challenging as is the administration. A focus on the positive outcomes of the programme is required;
- Peace Partnerships are supporting numerous exciting and innovative peace building projects at a local level;
- The variety of delivery mechanisms has worked well to support Partnerships in implementing strategic interventions. This is important to enable partners deliver relevant actions which will help with mainstreaming work after the programme;
- It is important not to underestimate the complexity of building peace at the local level;
- A challenge is taking the focus away from the administrative burden and focusing on the good work;
- Role of websites and good communications in building profile for the programme activity is vital;
- Partnerships are getting stronger;
- External environmental issues can have an impact on Partnership working. For example, the flags dispute and the absence of the CSI document. Partnership can attempt to mitigate any negative impact locally by assigning and allocating flexible funds. Nevertheless there remains a policy vacuum;
- Ensuring continuity, sustainability and value for money are challenges;

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- **Managing expectations, particularly from the community and voluntary sector, remains a challenge;**
- **Measuring success and the subsequent identification of projects that can be mainstreamed is a significant challenge for Local Authorities. Some projects have been mainstreamed but this remains an issue for Peace Partnerships; and**
- **Tension remains about the paradox of a time bound peace building programme that depends on building local relationships to ensure positive and sustainable results.**

**It was recognised by the SEUPB that Partnerships were raising issues around extensions and the need for continuity of planning to mitigate the potential negative impact of a gap period between PEACE III and a new programme. SEUPB stated that Partnerships must work to their current Letter of Offer end date of 31st December 2013. SEUPB stated also that there will be no automatic extension to the Programme but that they are keeping the issue under review and may consider specific requests for additional time on a case by case basis in the summer. This will be subject to availability of budget provision from the accountable government departments and there is no guarantee that this will be available.**

**Progress of Phase II Projects**

**Total expenditure at 31st March 2013 was £1,337,082 or approximately 27% of the overall budget. Claims to the value of £378,606 were submitted to SEUPB by 30th April relating to the previous two quarters. This is approximately 62% of the anticipated claim value with the shortfall for the most part being projects experiencing delays in receiving and processing invoices from contractors. A short summary of progress on each of the projects by theme, along with details of expenditure as of 31st March, project status and any key actions required, has been circulated to the Partnership.**

**Resource Implications**

- **Financial Implications**  
None at present
- **HR Implications**  
None at present

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- **Equality Implications**

**None at present**

**Recommendation**

**The Partnership is requested to note the information relating to the implementation of the Belfast PEACE III Plan and to approve the costs for delivery of the PEACE III projects forum in key locations across the city.”**

After discussion, the Partnership adopted the recommendation.

**Provision of Information to City Hall Visitors**

The Good Relations Manager informed the Partnership that Belfast was becoming an increasingly diverse city and that there had been a noticeable rise in the number of people from European countries seeking information and advice from staff at the City Hall reception desk on issues such as health, housing and job opportunities. She pointed out that staff often faced language difficulties in providing such assistance and, as a result, the Good Relations Unit was proposing to develop, in consultation with organisations such as the Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities, an appropriate multi-lingual leaflet which could be used to direct visitors to the relevant service. She explained that the Unit, under the Migrant and Minority Ethnic Project which was funded under the PEACE III Programme, delivered to Council staff a number of diversity initiatives aimed at broadening their knowledge and experience and supporting their service delivery capabilities within a shared city. That Project would cover the cost of developing and printing the leaflet, which would be in the region of £1,000.

After discussion, the Partnership approved the development of an appropriate multi-lingual leaflet as outlined.

**Good Relations Grant-Aid Fund**

The Partnership was advised that the first call for applications for funding under the Good Relations Grant-Aid Fund for 2013/2014 had been made on 4th March. The Good Relations Manager reported that, by the closing date, a total of thirty-eight applications had been received, requesting in total £179,448. Those had been assessed using pre-agreed criteria, following which thirty-two submissions had been recommended for funding. She pointed out that 75% of the expenditure would be recouped from the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister under the District Council's Good Relations Programme.

Accordingly, she recommended that the Partnership agree that grant-aid of £97,753 be awarded under the delegated authority of the Chief Executive to the following organisations:

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<b>Ref No</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Recommended Amount, up to £</b>
1311/3096	1st South Belfast Somme Society	1,000
1320/3130	Church of Pentecost (Belfast Assembly)	400
1071/3129	SOS Bus NI	1,000
850/3100	Royal Irish Rangers Old Comrades Association	700
1315/3118	1st North Belfast Somme & Historical Society	825
1317/3120	Newtown Forest Football Club	1,000
1313/3102	Northshore Somme Society	825
706/3103	Green Shoot Productions	3,000
350/3134	An Droichead	1,000
1322/3133	Cathedral Quarter Trust	3,000
1321/3132	Place of Victory for All Nations (PVN)	3,000
685/3108	Ligoniel Improvement Association	5,000
711/3131	New Lodge Arts	3,000
908/3105	The Belfast Boxing Ring	3,600
3130/3113	Cultúrlann McAdam Ó Fiaich	10,000
1278/3125	The Happy Stitchers	4,630
1057/3121	Woodvale Football Club	5,000
913/3123	Anti-Racism World Cup	750
803/3098	East Belfast Community Historical & Cultural Association	5,000
1206/3115	East Belfast Alternatives	4,938
771/3124	TIDES Training	3,000
878/3117	Tiger's Bay Mens Support Group	3,000
802/3128	Cosy Historical & Cultural Society	5,000
1314/3116	East Belfast Arts Festival	1,000
707/3106	Ballynafeigh Community Development Association	5,000
1144/3126	Ashton Community Trust	5,000
1319/3127	Connswater Community & Leisure Services	5,000
1316/3119	Minority Focus	1,000
1265/3111	One World Creative	735
975/3107	Rivers Community Project	1,620
723/3104	Solway Stars Football Club	5,000
1015/3099	Crossover Basketball	4,730
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>97,753</b>

The Partnership adopted the recommendation and noted that further calls for applications to the Good Relations Grant Aid-Fund would be made on 28th May and 2nd September.

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**International Conference**

The Partnership was advised that an international conference on integration and related issues would take place in Riga, Latvia, from 15th till 16th May. The Good Relations Manager reported that the conference had been organised by the National Integration Centre of Latvia, in conjunction with the British Council, the Danish Cultural Institute and the Goethe Institute, and that she had been invited to attend in order to present a paper on community relations and integration in Belfast. The paper would showcase some of the positive work which the Council had undertaken in terms of encouraging positive interaction between cultures, addressing cultural conflict and establishing the Migrants' Forum. All costs associated with her attendance would be met by the conference organisers.

The Partnership noted the information which had been provided.

**Community Relations Council Annual Conference**

The Partnership noted that the above-mentioned event, entitled "Expressing Identity-Addressing Division", would take place on 20th May in Derry/Londonderry. The conference would explore the challenges and opportunities around cultural expression and identity and would include contributions from international, national and local speakers. An invitation had been extended to the members of the Good Relations Partnership.

Chairman