

## **GOOD RELATIONS PARTNERSHIP**

**MONDAY, 12th AUGUST, 2013**

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

Members present: Councillor Hendron (Chairman);  
Alderman Stoker; and  
Councillors Kyle, Mac Giolla Mhín and Reynolds.

External Members: Mr. S. Brennan, Voluntary/Community Sector;  
Ms. J. Hawthorne, Northern Ireland Housing Executive;  
Mrs. M. Marken, Catholic Church;  
Mr. B. McGivern, Belfast City Centre Management;  
Mr. P. Scott, Catholic Church; and  
Mr. U. Tok, Northern Ireland Inter-Faith Forum;

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;  
Ms. A. Deighan; Good Relations Officer; and  
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

#### **Apologies**

Apologies were reported from Councillor Attwood, Mr. P. Bunting, Ms. A. Chada, Archdeacon B. Dodds, Mr. R. Galway and Dr. C. Hughes.

#### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 10th June were taken as read and signed as correct.

#### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were reported.

#### **Ms. M. De Silva**

The Good Relations Manager reported that correspondence had been received from Ms. M. De Silva, who had resigned from the Partnership in June and who had since left Northern Ireland, expressing her appreciation for the messages of goodwill which she had received.

The Partnership noted the information which had been provided and that the matter of nominating a replacement for Ms. De Silva would be addressed at the end of the PEACE III Programme, as part of an overall review of the Partnership's membership.

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**2011 North Belfast Good Relations Survey**

The Partnership welcomed to the meeting Ms. A. Ash and Ms. M. Whyllie, representing Concilium NI, who had been invited to provide a presentation on the outcome of the 2011 North Belfast Good Relations Survey.

Ms. Ash informed the Partnership that Concilium NI was a social research company which had been founded in 2005 and was based in North Belfast. The organisation worked with communities with the aim of achieving economic development and reconciliation at a local level. It provided training for individuals and groups in web-based secondary data analysis and offered a range of facilitation and research services.

She reported that, in 2011, Concilium NI and the Loughview Community Action Partnership had undertaken a Good Relations Survey in North Belfast, which had been funded by the Office of the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister. The organisations had worked in collaboration with five community organisations for the purposes of data collection and a number of the questions which had been used had originated from the Good Relations Section of the 2010 Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey. In total, 2,042 adults residing in North Belfast has responded to the 2011 survey, with the key findings being as follows:

- the vast majority of respondents felt that relations between Protestants and Catholics were better or about the same when compared to five years earlier;
- the majority of respondents felt that relations between Protestants and Catholics would be better or about the same in five years' time;
- a small percentage of respondents reported uncertainty when asked about the future status of relations between Protestants and Catholics. That was more prevalent within the Loughview Community Action Partnership and Crumlin/Tudor/Woodvale areas than other areas;
- the majority of respondents reported that they would prefer to send their children to a school of their own religion;
- the majority of respondents reported that, given the choice, they would prefer to live in a neighbourhood with people of their own religion;
- just over one third of all respondents reported that they felt that their neighbourhood was never a neutral space; and
- respondents from the Loughview Community Action Partnership and Crumlin/Tudor/Woodvale areas reported higher levels of personal intimidation by the presence of Republican murals, kerb painting or flags compared to other areas. In addition, respondents from the New Lodge area cited more frequent expressions of intimidation by

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the presence of Loyalist murals, kerb painting or flags in the past year, followed by those from the Cliftonville and Lower Ardoyne areas.

The Chairman thanked Ms. Ash and Ms. Whyllie for their presentation and they left the meeting.

The Partnership noted the information which had been provided.

**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 Extension**

The SEUPB has indicated that it will allow an extension to the Programme period for the Phase II Plan until 30th June, 2014. The extension is for audit and closure requirements for the Phase II Plan. The end date for all project activity remains the 31st December 2013. In a memo issued on 16th May, the Special European Union Programmes Body (SEUPB) recognised that some projects which are scheduled to complete during Quarter 3 of 2013 might benefit from an extension into Quarter 4 2013. As has been previously considered by the Partnership, this will allow some flexibility in closing those projects which are currently scheduled to end on 30th September.

The SEUPB has yet to respond to the change request submitted on 26th June requesting additional time for delivery of some projects into 2014 and for re-allocation of slippage between the themes, as previously considered by the Partnership in June.

**Claim Summary**

The quarterly programme claim was submitted to SEUPB on 31st July and totalled approximately £717K. This was 93% of the claim target set by SEUPB for this quarter. Total expenditure to 31st July 2013 is approximately £2.2 million or 44% of the overall budget. To date £1.9million has been claimed from SEUPB and £1.2million reimbursed as of July 2013.

### Progress on Phase II projects

A summary of each of the approved Phase II projects has been circulated to the Committee. This includes key activities and expenditure to date along with a commentary on progress on the last quarter. Also included in this month's report is newspaper coverage of the Community Cohesion project (034228) led by NI Housing Executive, Belfast Interface Games (035841) led by Peace Players and an extract from the Making Peace Public website hosted in Sligo referring to the Growing Respect Programme (034049) led by the Parks and Leisure Department.

### PEACE III Projects Forum

The next all projects forum is scheduled for the 11th September 2013 and will be held in the Park Avenue Hotel. The Forum will focus on mainstreaming potential of projects and will be facilitated by Diversiton Consulting. All participants will receive materials to assist them in the process of mainstreaming. Costs of the session are approximately £79 per delegate (approx 20 participants) for a half day session and will be met from the existing programme budget.

### Consortium Event

The Community Relations Council and POBAL is holding a conference on 24th September at the Templeton Hotel, Templepatrick. This Conference will conclude the Consortium's programme of development support for the Peace Partnerships. It will draw together the key learning from the past six years from the perspective of the stakeholders involved, including:

- Representatives from the Chairs and Managers Forum,
- Jacqueline Irwin (CEO, Community Relations Council) and Denis Leamy (CEO, Pobal) representing the Consortium, and
- Pat Colgan (CEO, SEUPB).

Further details on the agenda and joining details will be issued by the Consortium later this month.

### Resource Implications

#### *Financial Implications*

None at present

#### *HR Implications*

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**None at present**

**Equality Implications**

**None at present**

**Recommendation**

**The Partnership is requested to note the contents of this report and to approve the proposed mainstreaming workshop on 11th September as part of the scheduled PEACE III Projects Forum.”**

After discussion, during which the Members welcomed the increasing level of positive press coverage being afforded to the Phase II projects, the Partnership adopted the recommendation and noted that a report would be submitted to its next meeting providing details on potential project extensions.

**Migrant and Minority Ethnic Project**

The Partnership was reminded that the Migrant and Minority Ethnic Project was one of the Council-led projects which had been funded under the PEACE III Programme. The Good Relations Manager explained that the project sought to promote integration between members of the migrant and minority ethnic population and the local community and to address issues which represented a barrier to integration. That work had been led by the Good Relations Unit and had been delivered in conjunction with a range of partners, including GEMS NI, the Law Centre (NI), the South Belfast Roundtable and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. The project had been in operation for eighteen months and had worked with over 1,000 people, thereby exceeding significantly its target figure.

She reported that project activity would cease in September and that three initiatives were being proposed to address future requirements for the migrant and minority ethnic population. The first of those, which had been approved jointly by the Party Leaders' Forum and Historic Centenaries Working Group at the request of the Lord Mayor, Councillor Ó Muilleoir, would involve the production of a diversity toolkit/calendar. That facility would act as an accessible resource for those organisations wishing to develop projects aimed at promoting understanding and interaction between migrant and minority ethnic groups and the local community. The second proposal would entail the facilitation by the Council of a planning event for the future provision of services to support the integration of migrant and minority ethnic communities. The event would promote discussions by existing and new project partners around the development of an action plan to meet the continuing needs of those communities and would focus on issues such as awareness raising, employment, education, advice provision and integration. Finally, an event would be launched in the City Hall by the Lord Mayor which would provide an opportunity for partners and participants to highlight examples of best practice which had been identified within the Migrant and Minority Ethnic Project. All costs associated with the delivery of the three initiatives would be recouped in full through the PEACE III Programme.

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The Partnership noted the information which had been provided and that details of the events would, once finalised, be circulated to the Members.

**Update on Consultation on PEACE III Funded Interfaces Project**

The Good Relations Manager reminded the Partnership that, at its meeting on 10th June, it had been advised of the work which was being undertaken by the Council and the Office of the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister to address issues around interfaces. The Partnership had agreed at the meeting that an amount of £10,000 be set aside from within the Good Relations Unit's budget to support community-led consultation in those communities living in interface areas which fell outside the project for which funding of £421,538 had, in 2012, been secured through the theme of 'Transforming Contested Space' under Phase II of the PEACE III Peace and Reconciliation Plan.

She reported that, to date, one request for funding from the allocation of £10,000 had been received. That had been submitted by the Ainsworth Residents' Association, which planned to undertake a consultation exercise on the future of the interface gate at Workman Avenue.

The Partnership noted the information which had been provided and that it would receive regular updates on additional applications to the fund and the work of the communities involved.

**Council Response – 'Together: Building a United Community'**

The Partnership considered the undernoted report:

**"Relevant Background Information**

**The First and Deputy First Ministers jointly launched the *Together: Building a United Community* strategy on 23rd May, 2013 and the Partnership will recall that, at its meeting on 10th June, the Executive Summary of this strategy was circulated. Members were advised that the proposed strategy had major implications for all public bodies in NI and for local government in particular.**

**This paper summarises the main points in that document and outlines how the Council can become involved in helping to play a key role in the delivery of the new strategy.**

**Key Issues**

***Together: Building a United Community – a Summary***

**The First Minister and Deputy First Minister point out that our society in NI has been transformed in the last decade and note that political stability has enabled us "to begin to shape the**

kind of society that we all want to see ..... a more shared society”.

The strategy outlines a vision of *‘a united community, based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation - one which is strengthened by its diversity, where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced and where everyone can live, learn, work and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance.’*

The strategy represents a key building block in the implementation of the *Programme for Government 2011-2015* and provides the framework for government action in tackling sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance while seeking to address division, hate and separation.

It reflects the Executive’s commitment to improving community relations and places responsibilities on all government departments, requiring them to work together to ensure that the required outcomes are delivered on the ground. It recognises that much important and challenging work has already been done in this area and encourages everyone to play their part on building a new and united community.

### Underpinning Principles

The strategy has a number of underpinning principles: cohesion; diversity; fairness; inclusion; integration; interdependence; respect; responsibilities; rights; sharing; and tolerance.

### Priority Areas

The strategy identifies four key priority areas:

1. Children and young people
2. Our shared community
3. Our safe community
4. Our cultural expression

Each priority area is supported by a shared aim and a number of practical commitments:

#### 1. *Children and Young People*

*Aim: to continue to improve attitudes amongst our young people and to build a community where they can play a full and active role in building good relations.*

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**Commitments:**

- create 10,000 one year placements in a new “United Youth” programme
- develop a Summer Camps/Summer Schools pilot programme with a focus on sport
- roll out a “buddy scheme” in nursery and primary schools
- develop anti-sectarianism resources and ensure that teachers are trained and supported to deliver an effective anti-sectarianism module;
- ensure that our approach to youth intervention becomes a year round programme
- create ten shared educational campuses
- build on the legacy of the Olympics and develop cross-community programmes focusing on reconciliation through sport.

**2. Our Shared Community**

*Aim: to create a community where division does not restrict the life opportunities of individuals and where all areas are open and accessible to everyone*

**Commitments:**

- introduce an enhanced good relations requirement within Equality Impact Assessments
- create a new enhanced Equality and Good Relations Commission
- ensure that government contracts for work at interface areas contain social clauses that provide local training and employment opportunities
- create 4 urban villages
- create 10 new shared neighbourhood developments
- have an overarching review of housing to enhance shared neighbourhoods.

**3. Our Safe Community**

*Aim: to create a community where everyone feels safe in moving around and where life choices are not inhibited by fears around safety.*

**Commitments:**

- create a Programme to remove all interface barriers by 2023
- create an interface barrier support package



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- work to build a culture where people can report intimidation or harassment
- ensure that the Community Safety Strategy links closely to the delivery of this Strategy
- review indicators to reflect the importance of safety on good relations outcomes.

**4. *Our Cultural Expression***

*Aim: to create a community, which promotes mutual respect and understanding, is strengthened by its diversity and where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced*

**Commitments:**

- Use the restructured District Council Good Relations Programme to examine ways in which culture can be celebrated in a shared and mutually inclusive way
- Develop a new annual shared community relations week through the Arts Council
- Encourage the use of the arts and sports as a means of improving good relations.

**All Party Group on Parades, Flags and the Past**

The strategy recognises that certain issues, especially those round cultural expression, are particularly contentious and proposed setting up an All Party Group with an independent Chair.

Members will be aware that Dr. Richard Haass, former US Special Envoy to NI, has now taken up this post and will chair a Group to consider and make recommendations on matters including parades and protests; flags; symbols, emblems and related matters; and the past.

**Implementation**

To aid implementation, the strategy envisages a Panel made up of NI Ministers, plus senior representatives from a range of statutory agencies and community partners, supported by broadly based thematic sub-groups who will develop action plans with associated aims, targets, milestones and resources etc.

The document specifically refers to local Council delivery and notes that the recommendations from the recent Evaluation of the District Council Good Relations Programme will be used to develop an enhanced model that reflects the strategic

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priorities set out above, with funding directed through the most appropriate bodies on the basis of the themes. It also states that good relations considerations will be mainstreamed into the revised arrangements under the Review of Public Administration.

**Evaluation of District Council Good Relations Programme August 2012**

Members may be interested to learn that Belfast was selected as one of the case studies in this Evaluation report and was quoted as an example of good civic leadership, with Councillors closely involved with local projects.

Belfast was highlighted as an example of good practice in various areas of work. These included:

- our approach to community engagement, which was recommended to other Councils
- our joint work on the Peace III and Good Relations Programmes, which has reduced duplication and enhanced complementarity
- our bonfire management programme and the Council's inter-Departmental approach to work around interfaces, which were specifically referred to as examples of good practice
- our procedures and grant processes were praised.

Our annual bid under the District Council Good Relations Programme to OFM/DFM for the current year 2013/14 was submitted in late May and included specific references to aligning our proposals to the four new themes included in the *Together: Building a United Community* document.

**Implications for future work in Belfast**

The Partnership will be aware that the Council is already actively supporting many of the types of initiatives outlined in the document – e.g. better integration of good relations and community safety work at both strategic and local level; taking a longer term and more strategic inter-agency approach to youth intervention; supporting interface communities to encourage transformative work regarding barriers; and using sport and art in particular to devise cross-community activities etc.

The Council has already ensured that equality and good relations are key principles which underpin and have been embedded in its Investment Programme.

Members will note that although many of the activities referred to are the responsibility of central govt departments, a broadly based response will be necessary to ensure the success of this strategy. The Council will not only be responsible for direct delivery of programmes on the ground but also for supporting local community and voluntary groups in such activity, through various Council Departments and a range of funding streams. Consequently it is imperative that Belfast City Council should be closely involved in the planning and preparation of the required detailed programmes and action plans which will be drawn up.

**Proposed response to the *Together: Building a United Community* document**

Belfast City Council welcomes this overarching Government strategy as a significant step forward by the NI Executive at a critical period.

We support unequivocally the development of an effective approach to tackling our community divisions and welcome the proposals outlined which will mainstream good relations principles into government policy.

We acknowledge the importance of a central coherent strategic approach, led at the most senior political level that can command widespread support, to be delivered through effective and established structures at local level.

We note that there is a complex agenda of items to be addressed, particularly the well documented link between community relations and social disadvantage, but anticipate that the initiative will be able to build successfully on work already underway both at local government and at community level, where substantial progress has been made to date in a number of areas.

We recognise the many challenges that lie ahead but emphasise the willingness of the Council to use its expertise and experience in reconciling community differences at local level in a very divided city, supported by democratically elected local politicians. We are all conscious that failure to address and resolve the persistent divisions that continue to blight Belfast can have very negative results.

We are aware that the success of this strategy will depend on the Council as a primary delivery agent. We are committed to working constructively with OFM/DFM in the detailed design

and development of the implementation of the policy and in participation in any supporting arrangements that might be required.

The strategy underlines the cross-cutting nature of its proposals, stressing the need for joint working and inter-agency collaboration and has implications for the Council as a whole.

A number of proposals in the strategy highlight the potential synergy with those in the reform of local government, in particular the introduction of community planning powers. We regard this as providing an ideal opportunity to further enhance the alignment of strategies and plans at both central and local government levels and demonstrate the practical determination of the Council to play a key role in building a united community and helping to fulfil the commitments set out in the document.

Given the number of potential linkages with our current work and the fact that the Council will have an important role in supporting delivery on the ground, appropriate engagement will be crucial if we want to make real progress to ensure that key priorities are delivered and resultant benefits maximised.

We recommend that the Chief Executive be authorised to contact the OFM/DFM formally, to ensure that any relevant strategies and work plans are properly aligned and integrated at both regional and local government levels and to request that the Council be given a formal role in the development of this emerging strategy.

A separate report will be submitted to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on this aspect of the strategy.

#### **Resource Implications**

None at this stage.

#### **Equality and Good Relations Implications**

All expected to be positive. The Strategy has been equality screened by the OFM/DFM and since its intent is clearly intended to be positive it has been screened out.

#### **Recommendation**

The Partnership is requested to note the information within this report and agree that a brief report be submitted to the

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**Strategic Policy & Resources Committee seeking authority for the Chief Executive to contact the OFM/DFM in a formal manner regarding this strategy as outlined above.”**

After discussion, during which the Members welcomed the publication of the Together: Building a United Community strategy and highlighted the important role to be played by the Council in its delivery, the Partnership adopted the recommendation.

**Good-Relations Grant-Aid Fund**

The Partnership was advised that the second call for applications for funding under the Good Relations Grant-Aid Fund for 2013/2014 had been made on 28th May. The Good Relations Manager reported that, by the closing date, a total of 52 applications had been received, requesting a total of £278,276. Those had been assessed in line with the pre-agreed criteria, following which 51 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 the Deputy First Minister through the District Council’s Good Relations Programme.

Accordingly, she recommended that the Partnership agree that grant-aid of £169,057 be awarded under the delegated authority of the Chief Executive to the following organisations:

Ref No	Organisation	Recommended Amount, up to £
895/3152	Holy Trinity Youth Centre	7,700
1238/3142	Peace & Reconciliation Group	4,220
1037/3175	St. John Bosco Amateur Boxing Club	1,900
573/3148	Stadium Projects	1,742
792/3144	Teach na Failte	2,443
1263/3153	Youth Link NI	10,000
749/3176	Gleann ABC	3,425
664/3164	Greater Shankill Alternatives	10,000
1323/3140	Fitzroy Presbyterian Church	970
1240/3141	Newstart Education Centre	1,380
1112/3146	Fairhill Community Association	700
1324/3147	Russian Speaking Community Northern Ireland	915
1087/3156	Ullans Academy	2,615
1328/3177	Eastside Amateur Boxing Club	800
1329/3180	Donegal Celtic Youth Football Club	400
1016/3181	Belfast Junior Giants	400
1318/3182	Phoenix Basketball Club	575
967/3186	Arts & Disability Forum	1,000
1221/3149	Ardoyne Fleadh Project	1,000
1258/3178	Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre	7,305
848/3161	Black Box Trust	1,000
471/3155	Bruiser Theatre Company	4,000

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491/3145	Community Dialogue	5,000
484/3150	Interaction Belfast	5,000
607/3163	NB Women's Initiative Support Project (NBWISP)	2,300
475/3188	North Belfast Play Forum	3,000
806/3185	The Hubb	4,100
797/3165	Twaddell Women's Group	3,000
954/3136	Women's Common Path Network	3,000
245/3168	Suffolk Lenadoon Interface Group	2,450
1217/3158	Short Strand Community Forum	7,780
1036/3187	The MAC	3,000
952/3160	Youth Initiatives	4,306
1125/3183	Mornington Community Project	4,200
713/3159	Lower Castlereagh Community Group	3,820
821/3151	Annadale & Haywood Residents Association	5,000
319/3157	Short Strand Community Forum Women's Group	3,000
1065/3170	Unionist Centenary Committee	5,000
764/3139	Short Strand Partnership	3,000
1326/3167	QE1 Club	992
426/3173	Lower Ormeau Residents Action Group	2,740
1205/3162	Adullam Christian Ministries	3,000
595/3143	Barnardo's Black, Minority Ethnic and Refugee (BMER) Family Support Service	4,300
256/3174	Ulster Bank Belfast Festival at Queens	3,000
1327/3169	Castlereagh Business Association	480
1249/3179	Horn of Africa People's Aid NI	3,000
1161/3166	Mediation NI	5,000
1163/3138	NI Youth Forum	2,200
336/3184	Pobal	3,000
1213/3171	Romanian Roma Community Association NI	4,899
1248/3137	Youthworks CIC	5,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>169,057</b>

During discussion, a Member highlighted the fact that some organisations had, within their application, indicated that they would be recruiting participants from across all of the City's District Electoral areas. He stated that he was unaware of those organisations having approached groups from within the Balmoral and Laganbank areas and stressed the need for them to provide clear evidence of cross-community participation in advance of them obtaining funding.

In response, the Good Relations undertook to have the application form amended to reflect the Member's comments.

The Partnership agreed that funding be awarded to the fifty-one organisations, as set out above, and noted that the final call for applications to the 2013/2014 Good Relations Grant-Aid Fund would be made on 2nd September.

**Good Relations Grant Aid – Emergency Intervention Funding**

The Partnership considered the undernoted report:

**“Relevant Background Information**

The Good Relations Partnership will be aware that, although applications for Good Relations grant-aid are considered on a formal basis three times per year, plus once for Summer Intervention funding, occasionally a clear need for financial support arises at times when the main fund is closed.

The Partnership may recall that, at its meeting on 6th February 2012, it granted approval for authority to be delegated to the Assistant Chief Executive to permit the Good Relations Manager to allocate up to £1,500 in exceptional circumstances, to allow for this.

This was in response to serious public unrest in East Belfast in the summer of 2011.

The Partnership’s approval applied to requests for funding during an emergency situation to support good relations activity that would ordinarily meet the criteria of the Fund. Such payments were only to be made in exceptional circumstances, following consultation with the Chairman of the Good Relations Partnership and were to be reported back to the Partnership at the earliest possible opportunity.

**Key Issues**

The Partnership will be aware that the purpose of the Summer Intervention Fund is to support local programmes that address potential anti-social behaviour round interfaces and hot spots over periods of heightened tension and attempt to mitigate the impact of any disorder on established cross-community relationships.

In early July 2013, the Office of the First Minister/ Deputy First Minister (OFM/DFM) contacted the Good Relations Unit regarding potential late intervention in response to unforeseen community tension for areas which not been included in the planned programme delivered through the Summer Intervention Fund. The OFM/DFM noted that such need is often identified by Ministers and local representatives in response to local community tensions that have arisen suddenly and they planned to put into place emergency contingency arrangements with the Council’s Good Relations Unit.

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The Partnership will be aware that such a response usually requires small scale, targeted interventions such as placing additional community workers at 'hotspots' during the evenings/weekends or providing transport for young people to access alternative positive activities away from the area of tension, to divert young people from anti-social and potentially criminal behaviour round contentious parades and public assemblies.

Accordingly, an additional emergency arrangement has been made. This includes contact arrangements between OFM/DFM and the Council and the facility, once approved by two of the named OFM/DFM officials by e-mail, to allocate additional intervention funding up to the maximum value of £1,000 per intervention and a maximum spend of £5,000 in 2013/14.

To date, we have had four applications, all of which have been approved by OFM/DFM:

10th July: Ardoyne Youth Providers Forum, for the sum of £750 to cover additional outreach and detached youth provision over key dates in July and August.

31st July: Pitt Park Women's Group, for the sum of £1,000 for emergency funding for work with young children 4-16 years, who are not involved in other resourced diversionary activity that is mostly directed at young adults.

31st July: East Belfast Mission, for the sum of £960, for supporting workshops with the Pitt Park Women's Group in the Skainos Centre in August and early September.

2nd August: Greater Village Regeneration Trust, for £1,000 for diversionary intervention at the Village/Broadway interface round 8/9 August.

The Chairman, Councillor Hendron, was consulted on each occasion.

#### **Resource Implications**

Any approvals made under this arrangement will not be subject to the normal 25% match funding from the Council and the related expenditure will be reclaimed at 100%. This will be done in the normal manner through the District Council Good Relations Programme.

#### **Equality and Good Relations Implications**

The purpose of the Good Relations and Summer Intervention Funds is to support local programmes that tackle sectarianism



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**and racism and potential anti-social behaviour respectively. The relevant documents have been equality screened and any implications are considered to be positive; the policy has been screened out.**

**Recommendation**

**The Good Relations Partnership is requested to note the new arrangements for Emergency Intervention Funding with the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister and the applications which have been approved under delegated authority, as set out above.”**

The Partnership adopted the recommendation.

**Roma Inclusion Exchange Project**

The Good Relations Manager informed the Partnership that, on 1st January, 2014, the current employment restrictions on Bulgarian and Romanian citizens would end, which could lead to an increase in the number of Romanian nationals migrating to Belfast. She reported that the Council, through its Good Relations Unit, had been invited, in partnership with Glasgow and the Arad region, from where the majority of Romanian Roma people living in South Belfast originated, to participate in a European Roma Inclusion Project.

She informed the Partnership that the Council, together with the aforementioned partners, had submitted to the Eurocities network an application for funding for the initiative and had been awarded in total £15,000. A sum of £2,000 had been set aside to deliver a joint project, the content of which would be developed over the course of three exchange visits involving three representatives from each region, which would take place between September and November, 2013. The remaining funding allocation would be utilised to meet the travel and accommodation costs associated with the visits. She explained that the visits would seek to transfer knowledge and skills between municipal and other key staff on issues such as inclusive service delivery and health and social care, participatory governance, education, employment initiatives and housing.

It was proposed that the Council be represented by an officer from either the Good Relations or Community Safety Units and that a representative from the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and the South Belfast Roundtable should attend, given that both organisations had been involved extensively in developing services to assist with the integration of Roma people into the community. A final conference would be held in December in Budapest which would bring together all of the regions involved in the project.

The Partnership approved the Council's participation in the Roma Inclusion Exchange Project as outlined.

**Provision of Support to East Belfast Community Workers**

The Good Relations Manager informed the Partnership that the East Belfast area had, for the past eight months, been affected disproportionately by street violence and public disorder, which had placed significant pressure on both paid and voluntary community representatives. She explained that the demands of dealing with tense situations over a prolonged period had affected relationships between individuals from different organisations who, due to the ongoing need to maintain peaceful communities, had not been afforded the opportunity to address the impact which that situation had had on such relationships.

She reported that the Good Relations Unit had been requested to support a facilitated residential event for community workers within the Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist area of East Belfast. The event, which would be organised by the East Belfast Mission and which would cost approximately £2,690, would offer attendees the opportunity to report in an honest way on the violence and public order issues of the past eight months and to consider how any challenges which might arise over the coming months could be met. Accordingly, she recommended that the Good Relations Partnership approve funding of £1,500 towards the facilitation of the residential event, with the balance being met by the East Belfast Mission.

The Partnership adopted the recommendation and agreed that officers examine ways of delivering similar events in North Belfast and in the Short Strand area in the East of the City, both of which had, in recent months, been similarly affected by street violence and public disorder.

**Recognition Event for Summer Volunteers**

The Partnership was reminded that the Council provided substantial funding, through the Good Relations Grant-Aid Fund, the Summer Intervention Fund and the PEACE III Programme, to enable communities to provide programmes and diversionary activities over the summer months. The Good Relations Manager explained that those communities provided volunteers to undertake a range of actions around that work, including the design of programmes, the planning of projects and the supervision of participants. In the majority of cases, those volunteers were unpaid and their contribution to an extent went unrecognised. In recent years, the Good Relations Unit had invited to an event in the City Hall those volunteers and community activists who had played a major role in helping to maintain relatively peaceful summers and a comparatively stable environment in which political progress could continue to be made. It was considered important to demonstrate publicly the Council's acknowledgement of those individuals and groups who played such a key role over the summer months in helping to make Belfast a better city.

She confirmed that it was proposed that an event be held in September in the City Hall for that purpose and that an invitation would be extended to all Members of the Council and to the Good Relations Partnership. It was suggested that a number of awards be presented at the event to recognise individuals who had made the most positive contribution to the quality of life within their community. She added that the

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estimated cost of the event would be £2,500, 75% of which could be recouped through the Office of the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister.

The Partnership approved the hosting of the event and the associated expenditure.

**East Belfast Artwork Project**

The Partnership was reminded that, at its meeting on 11th March, it had agreed that funding of £10,000 be awarded to Charter NI in order to cover the costs associated with the removal of three paramilitary-type murals from walls in East Belfast and their replacement by ones of approved themes. The Partnership had been advised that, subject to the satisfactory completion of the first phase of the project, further mural replacement work would be required over the coming months and that the Good Relations Unit would be working with Charter NI to source the additional funding for that work. The overall cost of the artwork project would be in the region of £30,000.

The Good Relations Manager reported that the first phase had been completed satisfactorily by Charter NI and that it had now been successful in securing from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive funding of £15,000 to undertake the final phase of the project. She pointed out that an additional sum of £5,000 was required to complete the work and launch the new artworks and she recommended that the Partnership make that amount available.

The Partnership adopted the recommendation and noted that 75% of the funding could be recouped through the Office of the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister.

**Equality Consultative Forum and Screening Outcome Report**

The Good Relations Manager reminded the Partnership that Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 required public authorities, in undertaking their functions, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and good relations across a range of categories as set out within the Act. The Council was committed to having in place effective internal arrangements for ensuring its effective compliance with the statutory duties contained within Section 75 and for monitoring and reviewing its progress.

She reported that the Council met its statutory obligations through, amongst other things, the Consultative Forum and the publication of a Screening Outcome Report. The Consultative Forum, which had been held on a biannual basis since 1995, played a significant role in the consultative process by providing feedback to inform Council policies and strategies. The Council sought to ensure that the Forum was representative of the Section 75 categories and its membership had been reviewed recently with that in mind. The latest meeting of the Forum had taken place on 17th April in the City Hall, during which the following policies had been discussed:

- Good and Harmonious Working Environment;
- The Belfast Community Investment Programme;
- The Revised Slim Bin Policy;

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- The Dilapidated Building Project;
- New Roads Closure Legislation and the Setting of Fees;
- The Redesigning of the Mobile Response Website; and
- Age-Friendly Belfast

The Good Relations Manager reported further that the Council's Equality Scheme set out how the organisation proposed to fulfil its statutory duties under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. The Council was committed within its Equality Scheme to applying screening methodology to all new and revised policies. Such screenings identified policies which would be likely to have an effect upon equality of opportunity and/or good relations and their likely impacts. Upon completion of the screening process, a template was approved by the senior manager who would be responsible for implementing the policy. The template was included within a Screening Outcome Report which was published on a quarterly basis on the Council's website, the most recent of which covered the period from May to July, 2013.

Noted.

**Review of the Good and Harmonious Working Environment Policy**

The Partnership was reminded that the Council, like all public bodies in Northern Ireland, operated a policy which promoted a good and harmonious working environment. The Good Relations Manager confirmed that the current policy had been drafted in 1997 and that it had been formulated in line with the 1989 Fair Employment Code of Practice which had recommended that, in order to advance equality of opportunity, all employers should seek to promote a good and harmonious working environment and atmosphere in which no worker felt under threat or intimidated because of his or her religious belief or political opinion.

She explained that, since that time, there had been significant changes in Northern Ireland at political, legislative and other levels. Those had included the introduction of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the implementation of equality legislation and the adoption by the Council of an Equality Scheme. In addition, the Equality Commission had been established and, in 2009, it had issued revised guidance on Promoting a Good and Harmonious Working Environment.

In response to those changes, the Council had established an Inter-Departmental Officer Working Group to review its existing Good and Harmonious Working Environment Policy and to identify any required amendments. She reviewed the terms of reference for the Working Group, which was being chaired by a senior officer from the Human Resources Section and which included representatives from the Good Relations Unit, the Legal Services Section, other Council Departments and various Trades Unions. It was anticipated that the review would be completed early in 2014, following which a report on its outcome would be submitted to the Partnership.

Noted.

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**Celebrating Life – Mindfulness Event**

The Partnership was reminded that the good Relations Unit had, through the Peace III Programme's Growing a Shared City Project, supported a Celebrating Life conference which had been held in the City Hall on 12th April, 2012. The Good Relations Manager reported that the event had examined the links between mental health issues and the fact that Belfast was emerging from an extended period of conflict. It had generated a greater awareness of the issue of suicide in the City and the positive actions and practical steps which were available to support individuals, groups and communities.

She explained that one of the practical actions arising from the conference had been the introduction of an engagement process with the citizens of Belfast, with a view to developing an emotional wellbeing and resilience strategy. A survey of over 130,000 households had been undertaken in order to seek their views on their own emotional health and wellbeing and that of their family/social environment. Over 3,000 people had responded to the survey, the results of which would form the basis of the strategy. The Belfast Strategic Partnership, which had developed a framework for action for tackling life inequalities and which had identified addressing mental health and emotional wellbeing in the City as being a key priority, was working to define actions which would make a significant difference to the mental health of all communities.

The Good Relations Manager informed the Partnership that, as the next step in the process, the Council and the Belfast Strategic Partnership was proposing to host a 'mindfulness' event in the City Hall on Thursday, 22nd August. She stated that mindfulness was regarded as being a recognised practice which was used to improve a person's wellbeing. In being mindful of their everyday activities, a person could improve their physical and emotional wellbeing, reduce stress levels and promote a sense of calm. She provided an overview of the event, which would be led by the Lord Mayor, and pointed out that an invitation had been extended to all Members of the Partnership. The estimated cost of the conference would be £4,000, which would be met primarily by the Health and Environmental Services Department. However, in view of the growing concern within the community around the problem of suicide and poor mental health in Belfast as a result of the legacy of the conflict, the Good Relations Partnership had been requested to contribute up to £1,500 towards the event. That sum would be used to cover the cost of promotional material, conference packs and supporting information.

The Partnership agreed to allocate funding of £1,500 towards the hosting of the Mindfulness event.

Chairman