

GOOD RELATIONS PARTNERSHIP

MONDAY, 7th April, 2014

MEETING OF THE GOOD RELATIONS PARTNERSHIP

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

External Members: Ms. O. Barron, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust;
Mr. S. Brennan, Voluntary/Community Sector;
Ms. A. Chada, Minority Ethnic Groups;
Mr. R. Galway, Confederation of British Industry/
Shorts Bombardier;
Ms. J. Hawthorne, Northern Ireland Housing Executive;
Mr. B. McGivern, Belfast City Centre Management; and
Mr. P. Scott, Catholic Church.

In attendance: Mrs. S. Wylie, Chief Executive Designate;
Mr. S. Lavery, Programme Manager;
Mr. I. May, PEACE III Programme Manager; and
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillor Mac Giolla Mhín, Dr. C. Hughes, Mr. P. Mackel and Mrs. M. Marken.

Minutes

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

Declarations of Interest

Ms. A. Chada declared an interest in respect of agenda item 4, viz., International Day of Peace 2014, in that she was the Executive Director of Springboard, the organisation which was leading the event.

Congratulations

The Chairman, on behalf of the Partnership, congratulated Mrs. S. Wylie on being appointed recently to the post of Chief Executive for the new Council.

Update on Good Relations Grant-Aid Applications

The Programme Manager reminded the Partnership that, at its meeting on 10th March, it had agreed that a report be submitted to its next meeting providing clarification on a number of issues around the Good Relations and Summer Intervention Funds. In

**Good Relations Partnership,
Monday, 7th April, 2014**

terms of applications to the Good Relations Fund, he reported that twenty-three had been received from groups in North Belfast, fourteen from South Belfast and seven each from of the East, West and Shankill areas. Five applications had been submitted by migrant and emerging communities. Eighteen applications for Summer Intervention Funding had originated from groups in North Belfast, twelve from West Belfast, and seven each from the East, South and Shankill areas. No applications to that Fund had been received from migrant and emerging communities.

He reported further that four of the five applications which had been received from theatre companies had been successful, with funding having been allocated to education and outreach programmes for young people, to women's groups and to migrant communities. He added that the Council was working to include all of its grants schemes on the Government Funding Database, which was used by Central Government departments to record allocations across a range of funding streams.

The Partnership noted the information which had been provided and that the Good Relations Unit would continue to work to encourage increased applications to the Good Relations and Summer Intervention Funds from under-represented areas and groups across the City.

PEACE III – Implementation Update

The PEACE III Programme Manager reminded the Partnership that, at its meeting on 10th March, it had agreed that information be submitted to a future meeting on the level of communications activity which had, to date, been undertaken under the Peace III Programme. He reported that, as required under the Programme, a comprehensive communications plan had been formulated by Council officers and that it had been approved subsequently by the Special European Union Programmes Body. The plan had included significant activities, such as a launch event and a major conference, both of which had taken place in the City Hall, and the publication of six editions of the Belfast PEACE III News. He outlined the extent of the communications activities which had been recorded also on the Peace III Programme database in terms of, for example, press releases, media articles and information seminars and stated that he would, on 8th April, be attending an annual meeting of the PEACE III Communications Network for representatives of all PEACE III and INTERREG projects.

He confirmed that it was proposed that an event be held later in the year in order to publicise the work which had been undertaken by projects being funded under the Belfast PEACE III Plan. The event, which had been scheduled provisionally to coincide with Community Relations Week in June, would be an opportunity also to launch the final report by Blueprint Development Consultancy on its evaluation of the Plan. The cost of the event would be approximately £1,000, which could be met from within existing budgets. He added that a copy of the company's interim evaluation had been forwarded recently to the Council and was now available on the Mod.gov site and requested that any comments on the document be forwarded to him for inclusion in the final report which was due to be produced in May.

The Partnership noted the information which had been provided and approved the expenditure for the aforementioned event.

**Good Relations Partnership,
Monday, 7th April, 2014**

International Day of Peace 2014

The Partnership was reminded that the United Nations' International Day of Peace, which had been established in 1982, took place each year on 21st September. The Programme Manager explained that the aim of the Day of Peace was to provide an opportunity for individuals, communities and organisations to highlight efforts to end conflict and promote practical acts of peace. In Belfast, the Day of Peace was led each year by Springboard, of which Ms. Angila Chada, a Member of the Good Relations Partnership, acted as Executive Director. That organisation encouraged Belfast citizens, organisations and governmental bodies to mark the day either privately or publicly and to re-dedicate their ongoing commitment to non-violence, reconciliation and peace-building.

He reported that the Council had, since 2009, supported the Belfast Peace Day event and that, since 2010, the Good Relations Partnership had hosted a principal event in the City Hall. He pointed out that it was proposed that the Partnership hold an appropriate event on 19th September in the City Hall, which would again send out a powerful message that it condemned the use of violence and supported peace-building. He added that information on the International Day of Peace would be included on both the Council's website and its events calendar and that it would be circulated to all Council employees through the internal Intercom magazine.

After discussion, during which the Members commended the Springboard organisation on its contribution to the ongoing success of the International Day of Peace, the Partnership agreed that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee be recommended to approve the holding on 19th September of an appropriate event in the City Hall and to allocate funding of up to £1,500 to the event.

Community Relations Week 2014

The Programme Manager informed the Partnership that the Community Relations Council had, for each of the past eleven years, co-ordinated the holding of Community Relations Week in Northern Ireland, with a view to raising awareness of community relations work and to encourage others to become involved. In 2013, over 150 events, including exhibitions, festivals and debates, had been organised by community and voluntary groups, district councils and other agencies around community relations themes.

He reported that Community Relations Week would, this year, take place from 16th till 22nd June and that, in view of the positive feedback which had been generated in 2013, it was proposed that the Council again facilitate the 'Living Library' event. He explained that the initiative, where visitors were afforded an opportunity to speak informally with 'people on loan' from a range of religious, political and cultural backgrounds, was an innovative way to promote dialogue, reduce prejudice and encourage understanding between individuals. It enabled also participants to break stereotypes by challenging common prejudices in a positive and humorous manner. He suggested that, in order to maximise participation amongst visitors, it would be beneficial if the members of the Partnership could become involved in the event.

**Good Relations Partnership,
Monday, 7th April, 2014**

The Programme Manager reminded the Partnership that, at its meeting on 9th December, 2013, it had agreed to allocate funding of £5,000 towards the production of an information guide for refugees and advice providers. He pointed out that key elements of the guide would be translated into four languages, details of which would be circulated to the Partnership, and that it would be launched, on a date to be determined, in the City Hall during Refugee Week, which would coincide with Community Relations Week. A number of speakers would be present to promote the guide and individuals who had attained refugee status and who were living in Belfast would relay their experiences. Accordingly, he recommended that the Partnership agree to the hosting of the 'Living Library' event and the launch of the Transition Guide, the total cost of which would not exceed £2,500 and which could be met from within existing budgets.

The Partnership adopted the recommendation, subject to approval being granted by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Meeting of Forum for Cities in Transition

The Partnership considered the undernoted report:

"1 Relevant Background Information

1.1 The Forum for Cities in Transition was 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 methods. The Forum's founding director, Pdraig O'Malley, is Moakley Professor of Peace & Reconciliation, University of Massachusetts, Boston, USA.

1.2 The Forum for Cities in Transition works on the principle that cities that are in conflict or have emerged from conflict are in the best position to help other cities in similar situations. Delegates at events have included Mayors, Councillors, municipal officers, and representatives of the business, voluntary and community sectors. The participating cities are:

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|---------------------|-------------|
| • Beirut | • Kirkuk |
| • Belfast | • Mitrovica |
| • Derry-Londonderry | • Mitte |
| • Haifa | • Mostar |
| • Jerusalem | • Nicosia |
| • Kaduna | • Ramallah |

Members may recall that the Annual Conference of the Forum for Cities in Transition was held in 2011 in Derry/Londonderry from 23rd-26th May, 2011 and the Partnership granted approval for three political Members to attend the Conference.

**Good Relations Partnership,
Monday, 7th April, 2014**

- 1.3 In 2012, the Council was again invited to send representatives and four elected Members attended the Conference held in Kirkuk, Northern Iraq, in October 2012. A post-event report back was provided to the Good Relations Partnership**
- 1.4 At the last meeting in Kirkuk, it was decided the 5th Anniversary meeting would be hosted in Belfast. The meeting will take place from 27th till 30th October, 2014 and is scheduled to draw over 100 delegates from many countries.**
- 1.5 The conference is being organised by Alan Leonard, Director of the Northern Ireland Foundation together with a sub group of the Council's Good Relations Partnership and other members such as Jim Wells MLA, Peter Osbourne and Quintin Oliver. Alan and Quintin also form part of the FCT secretariat which will organise facilitate and supervise the meeting. The conference will have keynote speakers of global reputation including the Assistant General Secretary of the United Nations for Habitats. Arrangements are being made for the speakers and delegates to meet the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, First Minister and Deputy First Minister including politicians both at the Assembly and the Council. In addition to the meeting there will also be a parallel Peace Panel Conference involving many players who facilitated the Northern Ireland Peace Process.**
- 1.6 The subgroup has met several times and as a result has agreed a provisional programme that is currently being put in place.**
 - 26th October - Delegates arrive**
 - 27th October - 1st Session in Parliament Buildings**
 - 28th October – 2nd Session in Skainos or 174 Trust**
 - 29th October – 3rd Session in Farset or Belfast City Mission**
 - 30th October - Final Session in City Hall (Rooms already booked)**
- 1.7 Details of the programme will be confirmed as soon as possible and will depend on size, costs and availability of the venues.**
- 1.8 Whilst the Meeting has received core funding from organisations such as the Department of Foreign Affairs, it has**

**Good Relations Partnership,
Monday, 7th April, 2014**

a current shortfall to ensure a successful conference. They are preparing bids at present for OFM/DFM, Community Relations Council, International Fund for Ireland etc. and wish to make a funding bid to the Council. Initially, this bid was to be made to Good Relations but the ceiling on funding within that budget is currently £10,000. As the bid is more likely to be in the region of £25,000 it was thought prudent that the Good Relations Partnership if satisfied take this bid directly to the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee (SP&R) of the Council. Due to the elections and therefore no meetings next month this bid would need to go to SP&R in April.

- 1.9 Additionally, there will be a separate bid made to the Lord Mayor's Office to both welcome and possibly host a civic reception for the speakers and delegates on the first night of the meeting.

Key Issues

- 2.1 Belfast, through Elected Members, is part of the Forum for Cities in Transition with Belfast agreeing to host the 5th Meeting in October. Arrangements are currently underway in terms of invitations, speakers, programmes and venues.
- 2.2 Funding is a key issue and whilst core funding has been obtained from Department of Foreign Affairs bids are currently being made to other organisations including Belfast City Council. Because of the elections bids must be made in April.
- 2.3 The Lord Mayor's Office is being approached separately to see if a welcome and civic reception can be arranged.

3 Resource Implications

3.1 Financial

Approval is being sought from the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to provide funding of up to £25,000.

3.2 Human Resources

It is proposed to employ a team of temporary staff to assist with the conference arrangements by the organisers however some Council staff may be involved in facilitation during the meeting.

**Good Relations Partnership,
Monday, 7th April, 2014**

3.3 Assets and Other Implications

None.

4 Equality Implications

4.1 The organisation will undertake its own Equality Impact Assessment

5 Recommendation

5.1 The Partnership is requested to endorse the work of the Sub-Group and request that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee allocate funding of £25,000 for the 5th Meeting of the Forum for Cities in Transition."

After discussion, the Partnership adopted the recommendation.

Request for Funding – Yad Vashem

The Partnership was advised that the Yad Vashem organisation had been established in 1953 in order to document the history of the Jewish people during the Holocaust period. The organisation, which was committed to four elements of remembrance, namely, Commemoration, Documentation, Education and Research, was based in a campus in Jerusalem which housed various archives, exhibitions, memorials and museums.

The Programme Manager explained that, as part of its work, Yad Vashem produced mobile exhibitions for display at locations across the world in order to inform people of the history of the Jewish people during the Holocaust period. He reported that the organisation, in partnership with the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, had sought from the Council a financial contribution towards the cost of an exhibition, entitled 'No Child's Play'. He pointed out that the exhibition, which would cost in total approximately £10,000, would relay the personal stories of the children who had experienced the Holocaust, through toys, games, artwork, diaries and poems. It was envisaged that it would be displayed in schools, art centres, museums, churches and other suitable venues across Northern Ireland. Accordingly, he recommended that the Partnership seek approval from the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for funding of up to £2,500 to be allocated towards the cost of the exhibition.

During discussion, several Members suggested that the Council should seek to ensure that the City Hall would be included within the list of venues to host the exhibition and that it should be displayed there for as long a period as possible. The point was made that the Council should discuss with Yad Vashem the possibility of providing at an appropriate location within the City a permanent venue to mark the Holocaust.

**Good Relations Partnership,
Monday, 7th April, 2014**

In response, the Programme Manager undertook to raise those issues with the Yad Vashem organisation and to advise the Partnership in due course of its views in that regard.

The Partnership adopted the recommendation, subject to the level of funding to be requested from the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee being increased to £5,000.

Bonfire Management Programme 2014

The Chief Executive Designate reminded the Partnership that, at its meeting on 13th October, 2013, it had considered a report relating to the delivery by the Council of a Bonfire Programme for 2014. The Partnership had agreed, in view of the fact that PEACE III funding had been due to end in December, 2013, that the Council would deliver a similar programme as in previous years, with its contribution being increased to £100,000 and further funding to be secured from external sources. It had agreed also that revised guidelines be put in place for those groups which qualified for funding under the Programme. She confirmed that, in addition to the aforementioned contribution, a total of £41,100 had been secured from the Policing and Community Safety Partnership and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. 75% of the total Council funding allocated to the Programme could be recouped from the Office of the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister, subject to the receipt of a Letter of Offer.

She reported that Council officers were in the process of identifying an appropriate delivery mechanism for the Bonfire Programme. Initial indications had suggested that the initiative could be provided in-house through the realignment of existing staff and the procurement of specialist services for, amongst other things, the installation and removal of beacons. She highlighted the limited time available before the commencement of the bonfire season and the fact that the Partnership, due to the forthcoming elections, would not be meeting during the month of May and, accordingly, she recommended that authority be delegated to the Programme Manager to oversee the delivery of the initiative once a preferred option had been agreed. She stressed that, whilst there could be some changes to the way in which the initiative would be delivered, it would still be in keeping with the Partnership's decision of 13th October, 2013.

The Partnership adopted the recommendation and noted that it would, at its next meeting, be advised of the progress of the Bonfire Management Programme.

Chairman