

SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP

MONDAY, 9th JANUARY 2017

MEETING OF SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP

Members present: Councillor Kyle (Chairperson);
Alderman Sandford and Councillors Attwood, Johnston and Walsh.

External Members: Ms. A. Chada, Voluntary/Community Sector;
Mr. K. Gibson, Church of Ireland;
Mrs. G. Duggan, Belfast City Centre Management; and
Mr. P. Scott, Catholic Church.

In attendance: Mr. N. Grimshaw, Director of City and
Neighbourhood Services;
Mrs. R. Crozier, Assistant Director;
Mrs. S. Toland, Assistant Director;
Ms. N. Lane, Good Relations Manager;
Mrs. M. Higgins, Senior Good Relations Officer; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillor Nicholl and Ms. O. Barron, Mrs. M. Marken, Mr. P. Mackel, Mr. M. O'Donnell and Mr. S. Brennan.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 5th December were taken as read and signed as correct.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Presentation by the Community Relations in Schools on the Unity Project

The Chairperson reminded the Partnership that it had agreed to receive a presentation from the Community Relations in Schools (CRIS) on its Unity Project which had been funded through the Good Relations Programme.

The Chairperson welcomed to the meeting Mrs. C Creed (CRIS) and Mrs. A. Kerrigan (Ashfield Boys' High School).

Mrs. C. Creed thanked the Partnership for the opportunity to present and she commenced the presentation by advising that CRIS was a multi-disciplinary, education charity that had been specifically established to support and promote greater sharing.

The representative then referred specifically to the work of the Unity Project. She advised that it was a proven, highly effective programme that provided support to young

**Shared City Partnership,
Monday, 9th January, 2017**

people to help them explore and achieve their potential as ‘upstanders’ and to try and influence positive shifts in culture through the safe challenging of degrading and derogatory language and behaviour.

She explained that:

- the Project attempted to address the differences between the intention behind and impact of routine use of “hate speak”;
- it also aimed to provide support to peer leaders to investigate their own roles in challenging bullying language and behaviour, with a focus on homophobia, sectarianism, racism, body image and disability; and
- it was a hard-hitting programme that was ideally suited to young people aged 14 and over and that it closely supported the objective of the Northern Ireland curriculum.

The representative then provided the Partnership with the following information that had been collected from recent Climate Assessments. She explained that 8 schools had participated in the programme and that the following information had been collected from 181 young people who had participated in the climate assessments:

- 87% of focus group participants heard ‘slagging’ linked to appearance (more than one per day);
- the most common reason for harassment was appearance and body image;
- skin colour and Nationality – 47% about once per day and 33% more than once a day;
- sexuality and gender – 32% about once per day and 47% more than once a day;
- religion and beliefs – 27% about once per day and 27% more than once a day;
- 64% know somebody who had become depressed or down because of harassment and bullying;
- 57% know of somebody who had thought about ending their own life because of bullying and harassment; and
- 48% know of somebody who had skipped days off school because of language and harassment.

The representative highlighted to the Members some of the events that had been held with the 8 schools and she concluded her presentation by introducing Mrs. A. Kerrigan who was representing Ashfield Boy’s High School.

Mrs. A. Kerrigan provided the Partnership with a testament on the hugely positive impact that the Programme had made to student life and thinking within the school.

The representatives then addressed a number of questions following which they left the meeting.

**Shared City Partnership,
Monday, 9th January, 2017**

Update on the findings of the Good Relations Audit

(Miss S. McCarthy, SJC Consultancy, attended in connection with this item.)

The Partnership received a presentation from the representative of SJC Consultancy in respect of an audit which it had undertaken on the Council's Good Relations remit and requirements. The Partnership was reminded that the audit was required by the Executive Office to assist in the formulation of the Action Plans which Councils submitted for funding under the District Council Good Relations Programme (DCGRP).

Miss McCarthy advised that the audit had employed the following range of methods to engage with stakeholders and identify the key good relations needs in Belfast:

- online survey – 92 responses received;
- stakeholder interviews and focus groups – 39 individuals participated;
- public engagement event – 46 individuals attended; and
- a co-design workshop – 20 individuals attended.

The representative then drew the Members' attention to the key findings under the following headings:

1. The top 3 actions that contribute to good relations:
 - improving understanding and awareness through education/dialogue;
 - use of cultural activities to bring people together; and
 - targeted cross community activities.
2. The top 3 issues that caused poor relations and created tensions between communities:
 - unresolved issues (the past, marches, flags and emblems);
 - negative political environment/lack of political leadership; and
 - segregated working and living.
3. Main barriers to developing good relations:
 - fear of intimidation or attack;
 - social deprivation and poverty;
 - lack of groups wishing to engage; and
 - largely segregated schools.

Miss McCarthy advised the Partnership of the primary recommendations as follows:

1. develop a communication strategy that communicates good relations messages to internal and external audiences. This should include definition, terminology, impact and best practice;
2. consider the development of the identity of the Shared City Partnership as a body that promotes good relations across the city. The Partnership should review its membership and operation to ensure that it maximises its role in developing

**Shared City Partnership,
Monday, 9th January, 2017**

responses to contentious issues. This should include a renewed emphasis on the role of the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson as good relations 'champions' across Belfast;

3. consider mechanisms, in partnership with other relevant organisations, to deliver good relations programmes that highlight the role of civic leadership in fostering relationships between people of different backgrounds and the benefits of good relations to the city of Belfast;
4. consider longer term, strategic funding approaches which move away from the current model of four funds administered every six months;
5. consider mechanisms to maximise the good relations outcomes of any capital projects that are being developed by the Council and enhance links with good relations staff;
6. consider 'flagship' projects that would have maximum impact in terms of raising awareness of good relations across the city;
7. consider targeted engagement with P/U/L community that would promote inclusion and develop relationships within that community and with others from different backgrounds;
8. deliver projects that would develop shared space in identified areas. Consider opportunities for the Good Relations Unit to link with other council services to measure and increase the perception of council leisure and community centres as shared spaces;
9. continue to support the integration of new communities into Belfast and develop their capacity to respond to emerging issues; and
10. prioritise engagement with communities living at interfaces /peacewalls to support the development of cross community relationships and networks

She then concluded the presentation by outlining the key recommendations under each of the following headings:

- Strategic/Council wide Issues;
- Children and Young People;
- Shared Community; and
- Safe Community and Cultural Expression.

A Member stated that any new Action Plan developed should be shared with as many people as possible. Another Member concurred and asked the officers to ensure that the results of the audit were progressed and actioned.

The Good Relation Manager advised the Partnership that the outcomes and recommendations of the audit were for a 3 year period and, given that a number of the recommendations were of a strategic/corporate nature, they would be fed into the Belfast Agenda and/or other appropriate networks. In addition, given the volume of key recommendations and the budget available, it would not be possible for all of them to be implemented in the short term but she advised that many of them would be progressed.

The Partnership noted that the completed Action Plan would be submitted to the Partnership's meeting in February for the Members' consideration.

Youth Forum

The Partnership agreed to invite representatives from the Youth Forum to a future meeting to make a presentation on the Council's Youth Forum and to discuss good relations outcomes.

Update on the Christmas Goodwill Events

The Good Relations Manager reminded the Partnership that, at its meeting on 7th November 2016, the Members had made a recommendation to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that, up to £500 would be made available, under the scheme of delegated authority, for a maximum of six local interface groups to deliver cross community Christmas Goodwill Events.

The officer reported that in total five community groups had accessed the funding and the events had been held in the run up to Christmas. She then detailed these groups as follows:

- Forthspring Inter-Community Group;
- Greater Whitewell Community Surgery;
- North Belfast Interface Network;
- Suffolk/Lenadoon Interface Group; and
- Duncairn Community Partnership

The Partnership noted that all costs had been included within the District Council Good Relations Programme and that the Executive Office provide 75% of the funding towards these costs.

Consultation on the Belfast Agenda

The Partnership considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 This report provides Members with an update on the draft Belfast Agenda (public consultation phase).

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to note that

- **A 12 week public consultation period on the draft Belfast Agenda opened on 15 December 2016, closing on 9 March 2017; and**
- **Members of the Shared City Partnership will have opportunity to provide feedback via a consultation workshop focusing on the Living Here priorities of**

the Belfast Agenda in late February/early March
2017 (date TBC).

3.0 Main report

Update on draft Belfast Agenda

3.1 Members will recall that an update on development of the Belfast Agenda, Belfast's Community Plan, was recently presented at the Shared City Partnership meeting on 7th November 2016. Since that update, the draft Belfast Agenda was subsequently agreed by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 18 November 2016 (and ratified by Council) as a draft for public consultation.

3.2 Members will be aware that the draft Belfast Agenda highlights the role of good relations in the city, reflecting this within the draft vision, outcomes for 2035, and in relation to the 'Living Here' priorities for the next 4 years (improve community relations), stretch goals (including reducing number of interface barriers, 4000 young people participating in shared city programmes) and workstreams (including Shared space, Peace IV and Interface programmes).

Public consultation on the draft Belfast Agenda

3.3 A 12 week public consultation period on the draft Belfast Agenda document was launched in City Hall on 15th December 2016, and is now open for feedback and comments until 9 March 2017. The purpose of the consultation is to allow the public and other stakeholders to further improve and refine the framework in advance of its adoption and publication in Spring 2017.

3.4 A consultation plan is being implemented which includes a series of consultation information events around the city in late January/early February 2017, as well as targeted briefings and engagement activity with key stakeholders and seldom heard groups. An online questionnaire is available for individuals and organisations to provide feedback on the key elements and proposals within the draft Belfast Agenda on the Council website at: www.belfastcity.gov.uk/belfastagenda. The Belfast Agenda document and a 4 page summary version can also be found on the website.

3.5 Taking into account the recent Belfast Agenda briefing provided to the Shared City Partnership (7th November 2016) and the fact that a significant number of other briefings are

**Shared City Partnership,
Monday, 9th January, 2017**

planned for the agenda of the next Shared City Partnership meeting on 6th February 2017, it is not proposed to provide a further briefing on the Belfast Agenda at that meeting. However, to further develop the 'Living Here' priorities within the draft Belfast Agenda, a focused consultation workshop with key stakeholders is planned as part of the consultation programme. This is anticipated to take place in late February/early March (date TBC shortly) and there will be an opportunity for Members of the Shared City Partnership to provide feedback via this engagement. Further information on the proposed 'Living Here' consultation workshop (including date and time) will be available shortly and will be circulated when it is confirmed.

- 3.6** Members are requested to note that the public consultation period on the draft Belfast Agenda is now open until 9 March 2017, and that information on the proposed 'Living Here' consultation workshop will be circulated to Members in the near future.

3.7 **Financial & Resource Implications**

This next programme phase of the Belfast Agenda is included within current Council resources. Given the significant workload associated with supporting delivery of the Belfast Agenda consideration is being given, as part of the ongoing organisational development programme to the necessary alignment and organisation of staff to ensure effective delivery.

3.8 **Equality or Good Relations Implications**

Equality and good relations implications are being considered in liaison with the Equality and Diversity Officer. A draft Equality Impact Assessment on the draft Belfast Agenda has been produced and is also being subject to a 12 week consultation period (closing 9 March 2017)."

The Partnership noted the contents of the report and requested officers to investigate if a separate consultation workshop could be organised for the Shared City Partnership, to enable it to consider exclusively good relations issues rather than these being considered as part of the proposed generic focused consultation workshop.

Request for Presentation regarding the Local Development Plan

The Partnership agreed to receive an update presentation on the Local Development Plan at the February meeting.

**Shared City Partnership,
Monday, 9th January, 2017**

Upcoming Events

The Members were reminded that they had been invited to attend an event entitled 'Living on the Peacewalls'. This event was being held at the University of Ulster Jordanstown on 19th January from 12.00 noon – 2.00 p.m. and she encouraged attendance at the event.

She also reminded the Members that the Partnership had previously agreed to hold a workshop on interfaces and that Members had been asked to indicate dates which suited them in a previous email. The Good Relations Manager agreed to reissue the information indicating the time required and urged the Members to respond as soon as possible to ensure arrangements could be confirmed.

Noted.

Chairperson