

SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP

MONDAY, 6th MARCH, 2017

MEETING OF SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP

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

External Members: Mr. S. Brennan, Voluntary/Community Sector;
Mr. P. Mackel, Belfast and District Trades Union Council; and
Mrs. G. Duggan, Belfast City Centre Management.

In attendance: 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 Mrs. O. Barron, Mrs. A. Chada, Mr. K. Gibson, Mrs. J. Hawthorne, Mrs. M. Marken, Mr. M. O'Donnell and Mr. P. Scott.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 13th February were taken as read and signed as correct.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Update on the Bonfire and Cultural Expression Programme

The Partnership considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 To update Members on the approach that was agreed by Council on 1 March 2017 and provide detail of actions and timescale in relation to the delivery of the programme for 17/18.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 That members of the Shared City Partnership note the information presented.

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3.0 Main Report

- 3.1** At the February meeting of the Shared City Partnership, Members agreed a Bonfire and Cultural Expression programme that would be delivered by officers in the Good Relations Unit in 17/18. The new approach will promote the use of beacons and creative approaches to expression of culture within Unionist and Loyalist communities, this should include the use of art forms. The programme will adopt an Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) approach with identified outcomes and indicators.
- 3.2** The programme will provide support for the positive expression of culture within the Unionist and Loyalist community through a capacity building, training and awareness raising programme. The programme will also support networking forums which bring groups from all communities together to raise awareness of cultural diversity, deliver training and support positive change. It was agreed that August groups would be supported through other resources within the City & Neighbourhood Services Department.
- 3.3** It was agreed that a total resource of up to £1,750 be provided to 35 groups. There will be an initial grant of £1,250 and an additional incentive of £500 would be made available for activity from July – March for groups that met the guidelines of the programme. Groups will agree to meet the guidelines of the programme in relation to accessing training and having sites that are free of tyres, flags and paramilitary displays. If groups fail to meet this criteria they will be ineligible to participate in the 2018 scheme.
- 3.4** It is recommended that a review panel, composed of members of the Shared City Partnership should review the involvement of groups in the programme and how they have met the good relations outcomes.
- 3.5** The Partnership recommended also that the 3 suggested additions be included as follows:
- 1.** The review panel should be comprised of Members of the Shared City Partnership and include representation from the Independent Members and Elected Members. It was suggested that the review panel membership would be the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and an independent member of the Shared City Partnership.

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- 2. A process would be created to recognise best practice in cultural programmes and events amongst participating groups; and**
- 3. A complimentary process would be developed for hard to reach groups that were not currently in a position to sign up to the aims of the programme. This approach would operate through an expression of interest and would provide an opportunity to develop knowledge and skills particularly among young people.**

3.6 Some amendments and clarifications to the proposed programme were made at the Strategic Policy & Resources committee meeting on 17 February. The committee agreed that the three suggested additions agreed at the Partnership be amended as follows:

- 1. The review panel should include also an independent assessor, the role of which would be considered in the first instance by the Partnership and subsequently the Committee, and that the review panel would be able to receive additional information from the key statutory agencies;**
- 2. No change to part two;**
- 3. That the expression of interest approach be removed from the complimentary process to be developed for hard to reach groups that were not currently in a position to sign up to the aims of the programme; and, in addition to that complementary process, that cultural development engagement be undertaken with the community and youth groups in areas where there is a Bonfire which is not in the scheme.**

3.7 Members are requested to consider the possible role of the independent assessor and make recommendations. Members should note that the independent assessor will have an advisory and not a decision making role and that there may be a cost associated with this activity. It is not envisaged that this cost will exceed £300.

3.8 It is recommended that the independent assessor role will:

- Provide a challenge function and independent advice to the review panel in relation to the issues that groups face in trying to meet the aims of the programme**
- Make observations on the decision making process to ensure that it is robust and takes a consistent, fair approach to all sites**

3.9 All groups on the programme have been invited to attend an information session at 6.30pm on Tuesday 14 March in City

Hall. This will be an opportunity to learn about the programme and provide input in relation to the structure of cultural networks and training and development opportunities.

Officers will attend the next meeting of the Belfast DPCSP on 13 March to update on the issue of bonfires in general and present options in relation to support for August groups who previously took part in the Good Relations bonfire programme. Following the DPCSP meeting a meeting with August groups will be arranged.

3.10 Financial & Resource Implications

An initial provision of 156k has been made for the programme. Officers are working with partners to confirm funding contributions for 17/18.

3.11 Equality or Good Relations Implications

The Bonfire Programme aims to promote the positive celebration of culture which will have a positive impact on good relations. An equality screening exercise is being undertaken on the proposed programme.”

The Partnership noted the amendments made at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and specifically referred to the appointment of an independent assessor. The Senior Good Relations Officer reiterated that this role would be an advisory and not a decision making position.

Following discussion it was agreed that the Members and officers should give further consideration to the appointment of this position and that any suggestions would be considered by the Shared City Partnership in April.

Promotion of Good Relations Activity in Belfast

The Good Relations Manager reminded the Partnership that the recently completed Good Relations Audit had identified the need to promote the range of good relations activity throughout the City. She reported that, to develop this, the Good Relations Unit had commissioned the production of a three minute film that would promote the message ‘Making Belfast Better’ and it would contain images and examples of works from communities across the City.

The Good Relations Manager advised that the Audit had also identified the need for the Good Relations Unit to bring stakeholders together to share best practice on good relations and to create a forum where current issues could be highlighted and addressed. The Partnership was advised that the Good Relations Action Plan included a project that would facilitate quarterly good relations networking meetings. The first event was scheduled to be held on Thursday, 6th April at the City Hall commencing at 10.00 a.m.

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The officer outlined that the event would be open to a range of organisations from across the City and would include examples of best practice from projects that were currently being supported through the District Council Good Relations Programme (DCGRP). In addition, the aforementioned film would be screened at the event and information about the findings of the Good Relations Audit and the 2017/18 DCGRP Action Plan would also be available.

The Members were encouraged to attend the event.

Noted.

Request to Receive a Presentation from the NI Executive Office on the Urban Villages Programme

The Partnership was reminded that the Urban Villages was a headline action within the NI Executive's Together Building a United Community (TBUC) strategy.

The Good Relations Manager advised that the Urban Villages initiative was overseen by The Executive Office (TEO) and that it had been designed to improve good relations outcomes and develop thriving places where there had been a history of deprivation and community tension.

The Partnership was advised that five Urban Villages had been announced as follows:

- Ardoyne and Greater Ballysillan (North Belfast);
- Colin (West Belfast);
- Lower Newtownards Road – known as Eastside (East Belfast);
- Sandy Row, Donegall Pass and the Markets areas (South Belfast); and
- The Bogside and Fountain (Derry/ Londonderry).

The officer reported that TEO were seeking to develop a strategic approach to aligning priorities in Urban Villages across a wide range of stakeholders of which Belfast City Council were an essential partner in relation to capital and programming projects. Given that Urban Villages were a strategic action under the T:BUC strategy and that there were opportunities to align outcomes and work collaboratively through the Good Relations and Peace IV Programmes, the Partnership was asked whether it wished to receive a presentation from TEO.

The Partnership agreed to receive a presentation from TEO on the Urban Villages Programme at a future meeting.

Update on the Department of Justice TBUC Interface Funding Bid

The Partnership was advised that the funding bid had been submitted to the Department of Justice (DoJ) through ring-fenced Fresh Start monies for 2017/18 to deliver good relations work at interfaces that could support delivery on the T:BUC headline action on, 'the removal of all barriers by 2023'.

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The Good Relations Manager advised that the funding bid which totalled in the region of £140,000 included provision for a member of staff to work on interfaces in a strategic manner, pre consultation work for the Shared Space proposal under Peace IV and consultation work at Navarra Place. She advised that a Programme Board Meeting was scheduled to be held during April and it was anticipated that an update in respect of the application would be forthcoming following this meeting.

Noted.

Chairperson