

SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP

MONDAY, 10th APRIL, 2017

MEETING OF SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP

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

External Members: Mr. K. Gibson, Church of Ireland;
Mrs. M. Marken, Catholic Church;
Mr. M. O'Donnell, Department for Communities; and
Mr. P. Scott, Catholic Church.

In attendance: Mrs. R. Crozier, Assistant Director,
City and Neighbourhood Services;
Mrs. M. Higgins, Senior Good Relations Officer; and
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillor Kyle (Chairperson),
Mrs. O. Barron and Mr. P. Mackel.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 6th March were taken as read and signed as
correct.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Presentation – Belfast Youth Forum

The Partnership was reminded that, at its meeting on 9th January, it had agreed
to receive at a future meeting a presentation from representatives of the Belfast Youth
Forum on the work of the Forum.

Accordingly, Ms. A. Hargey and Ms. A. McLaughlin, the Council's Young People's
Officer and Play Development Officer, respectively, together with Mr. R. Harrison,
secretary of the Belfast Youth Forum, were welcomed by the Chairperson.

The Young People's Officer informed the Partnership that the Belfast Youth
Forum had been established by the Council in 2006 to provide a mechanism for engaging
with young people between the ages of thirteen and eighteen on a wide range of issues.
In 2016, four young people, including some from Section 75 groups, from each of the ten
District Electoral Areas across the City had been appointed to serve on the Forum for a
two-year period. She provided an overview of the work which it had undertaken to date,
which had included the publication of a Young People's Manifesto, the submission of

**Shared City Partnership,
Monday, 10th April, 2017**

comments in response to consultations on the Belfast Agenda and the Local Development Plan and the delivery of campaigns around homelessness, mental health, poverty and shared space. She added that the Youth Forum would, on 10th May, be launching in the City Hall a research report, to which the Partnership would be invited, which would set out a number of recommendations aimed at eradicating poverty and that, in order to raise awareness of its work amongst Elected Members, it would be publishing a newsletter in the near future and was seeking to hold regular meetings with each of the Political Parties.

Mr. Harrison stated that he had been a member of the Belfast Youth Forum for the past three years and that he now fulfilled the role of secretary. He outlined his experiences with the group and highlighted, in particular, his involvement in the development of a Shared Space campaign, which had been initiated in response to requests from young people for a 'youth friendly' space to be provided within the City centre. That had involved the compilation of a survey, which had been completed by 350 young people, and of a research report, and had culminated in the introduction in April, 2016 of a one month pilot initiative. Under that initiative, a 'youth hub' bus, offering a varied range of indoor and outdoor activities, had been placed on four Thursday evenings and four Saturday mornings in locations such as Bank Square, the Cathedral Quarter and outside the City Hall. He added that the initiative had been endorsed by the many young people who had participated and that consideration was being given to repeating the exercise.

The representatives then provided clarification on a number of issues which had been raised by the Partnership and were thanked by the Chairperson for their contribution.

The Partnership noted the information which had been provided.

Update on Belfast Agenda/Local Development Plan Workshop

The Senior Good Relations Officer reported that, on 6th March, a workshop had been held to provide the Partnership with an opportunity to examine ways of strengthening the priority of good relations within both the Belfast Agenda and the Local Development Plan, given their importance in terms of influencing the priorities of the Council and its partners on a number of key areas which impacted upon people's lives.

She provided a brief overview of the workshop and confirmed that those who had attended had agreed that the final Belfast Agenda document should seek to:

- prioritise good relations issues, which should be placed front and centre in recognition of the ongoing need to support and enhance good relations across the city, make reference to the Shared City Partnership and the role which it can play;
- recognise the unique history of Belfast and make reference to that context in the plan and 'stretch goals';

**Shared City Partnership,
Monday, 10th April, 2017**

- celebrate the diversity and range of cultures that exist within Belfast and further promote cultural diversity and shared/different identities in the City;
- ensure that aims in relation to shared spaces and their use make particular reference to areas of high deprivation; and
- include an effective and ambitious monitoring and evaluation framework for good relations.

She explained that the consultation period on the draft Belfast Agenda document had been extended from 9th March till 20th April, which would allow for a series of information events and briefings to take place with key stakeholders and groups and for comments to be submitted via an online questionnaire on the Council's website. Any feedback received, including from the Shared City Partnership, would be used to improve and refine the final document, in advance of its publication in the autumn.

Noted.

Update on Bonfire and Cultural Expression Programme

The Senior Good Relations Officer informed the Partnership that, on 14th March, an information workshop had been held for potential participants in this year's Bonfire and Cultural Expression Programme. Representatives of over forty groups had been provided with an overview of the programme and discussions had taken place around the cultural networks which would be developed to support its outcomes, in terms of promoting a positive celebration of culture. Initial meetings of networks in each of the four areas of the City were planned for the first two weeks in April and there would be engagement with other groups who had expressed an interest in participating in the initiative.

She confirmed that the application process for this year's programme had commenced on 3rd April and would close on 28th April. It was proposed that, as had been the case in 2016/2017, authority be granted to the Director of City and Neighbourhood Services to approve applications. That would enable Letters of Offer to be issued to groups at an early stage, to allow them to commence the engagement process and would ensure that the aims of the programme's framework, particularly around the collection of materials, were met.

The Senior Good Relations Officer reminded the Partnership that, at its meeting on 13th February, it had agreed that a panel, comprised of both elected and external members on the Partnership, should be established to review the involvement of groups in the Bonfire and Cultural Expression Programme and how they had met the good relations outcomes. At its meeting on 6th March, in discussing the matter further, the Partnership had been invited to consider the merit of appointing an independent assessor to that panel in order to provide it with independent advice on the issues being faced by groups in attempting to meet the objectives of the programme and to monitor the decision-making process to ensure that it was robust and was being applied consistently and fairly. She explained that, as had been suggested by the Partnership, those groups which had attended the workshop on 14th March had been consulted on the matter and

**Shared City Partnership,
Monday, 10th April, 2017**

had identified Rev. Bill Shaw of the 174 Trust as someone who could fulfil that role, given his experience in peace and reconciliation work over a number of years. Rev. Shaw had since agreed to take up that position, subject to the necessary approval being obtained.

Accordingly, she sought the Partnership's approval to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee:

- i. that authority be delegated to the Director of City and Neighbourhood Services to approve applications under the Bonfire and Cultural Expression Programme; and
- ii. that Rev. Bill Shaw be appointed to the role of independent assessor on the panel which would be established to review the involvement of groups in the Programme.

The Partnership granted the approval sought.

Review of St. Patrick's Day Small Grants Programme

The Senior Good Relations Officer submitted for the Partnership's consideration the following report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 **To seek the views of members on the recent Good Relations audit findings in relation to the allocation of resources towards Good Relations activities around the St. Patrick's Day period. Subsequent to the audit, this proposal is being forwarded to enable Members to look at a number of options on how to better achieve the desired Good Relations outcomes through an alternative use of such resources currently deployed through a small grants scheme and to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on one option.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 That the Partnership:

1. **Notes the proposal in this report to review the current approach of St. Patrick's Day Small Grants**
2. **Considers the 4 options being put forward and agrees on one of the options to be recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for approval**
3. **Notes that a consultation and screening process will be undertaken with current grants recipients following any decision of Council and that a final report will be brought back to Members informing them of the outcome of the consultation process.**

3.0 Main Report

Key Issues

3.1 In 2007, the Council undertook the running of the annual St. Patrick's day carnival parade through the City Centre and the follow-up events in Custom House Square, making them an annual event within the Civic Calendar of events. At that stage, the Council provided funding for the organization and delivery of the carnival parade, preparation work with groups wishing to participate, resources for costumes, the acts in Custom House Square and all of the logistical arrangements required to stage such a large scale event. This funding was from the Development Department and has become an annual event within the annual calendar since, with Good Relations staff ceasing involvement in the organization and community engagement elements around the events in 2012.

3.2 In addition, the Council, through its Good Relations Fund, ring-fenced £32,000 to make provision for a small grants scheme, the purpose of which was to enable local groups undertake their own St. Patrick's Day event, within their community. The rationale was that some groups would not feel comfortable engaging with the Council's Civic events and so the small grants enabled them to put on an event in their local area.

3.3 Good Relations Audit and Current Issues

Within the Council's recent Good Relations audit, discussion and consultation sought to ascertain if the current approach to promoting Good Relations around the St. Patrick's period is best served through the delivery of the grants scheme. Within the findings of the audit, the following suggested action is put forward for consideration:

"Opportunity for unifying the city through St Patrick's Day celebrations, which is a huge attraction in other parts of the world. The council aims to use events like St Patrick's Day to be a positive celebration of culture. To make the city more vibrant, to encourage people to come to the city, attain more investment, which will then emanate to neighbourhoods. Delivery should seek to enhance good relations outcomes".

3.4 The results of the audit would indicate that this proposed outcome is not achievable through the current small grants process. Within the current Outcomes that are being delivered within the Executive Office's Good Relations

programmes, the focus is on attitudinal change, shared space, safe communities and cultural expression. For most of the groups in receipt of the small grants around St. Patrick's Day, the events and activities delivered tend to be a social party or an excursion for a group of people from predominantly one community, with little overall Good Relations interaction involved. Groups only receive a small amount of funding to stage isolated small events for a relatively small number of people within a small local area. There is no coordination of these small scale events and the resource requirement of officers in administering and monitoring this grants scheme is disproportionate to the quality of the outcomes achieved. There has also been a reduction in the number of applicants to this grants programme of around 25 – 30% since the programme came under the on-line applications system run by the Council's Central Grants Unit; the main reasons being difficulties expressed by prospective applicants in using the system. However, even within this, there is very little challenge in relation to improving attitudes, developing safe and shared spaces and promoting positive expressions of culture.

3.5 In addition, the Millward Browne Ulster survey and evaluation of the civic St. Patrick's Day events in Belfast, carried out periodically (latest evaluation carried out in 2016), points to a number of aspects of peoples experiences of St. Patrick's Day in Belfast that would indicate the potential to adopt a fresh approach to the programming around the main Civic events. For example, the 2016 evaluation has pointed up that:

- 94% of people feel that the events in Belfast for St. Patrick's day are a family day out and 76% of those who come into the City do so specifically for the St. Patrick's Day events organised by the Council
- Once the civic events have ended or passed, there are no other options or product on offer within the City
- Suggested improvements in the 2016 evaluation were to have more floats (19%), more activities for children (14%) & more street entertainment (12%)
- In looking at potential future themes for the St. Patrick's Day events, the vast majority of those who indicated that there should be a theme suggested that a theme should be around Irishness or Irish history and that events could be more culturally authentic

- 86% of attendees were under 55 year of age
- There is also an anecdotal need to develop additional activity to divert young people from engaging in anti-social behaviour within the City Centre after the civic events have ended.

- 3.6** The Council is currently undertaking a Festival and Events review and there is also a corporate review of grants. However, this proposal seeks to add value to that which is already delivered on St. Patrick's Day in order to create a more culturally authentic feel to the City for this important day and achieve the outcomes within the current regional strategic framework in which the Council's Good Relations Action Plan operates. Therefore, in order to bring forward recommendations contained within the audit, a proposal to develop more cultural events within Belfast that provide additionality to what the Council already delivers is now being proposed for consideration. The proposal centres on supporting a number of hubs across the City for events that would incorporate activities such as music, dance, poetry, prose reading and other relevant activities that would create a more authentic cultural feel to the City for St. Patrick's Day.
- 3.7** Through funding from the Development Department, Féile an Phobail delivered a pilot of additional events within the City for St. Patrick's Day 2017. This project is part of wider Council support to Orangefest and Culture Night to create a greater tourism offering and increase economic activity through large public celebrations. This proposal will take into consideration an evaluation of this project once available and any recommendations could be incorporated into any final plans around this particular Good Relations approach and proposal.
- 3.8** There is also significant merit in the events that bring together the mostly elderly groups that avail of the small grant scheme in having a celebratory event to mark the Saints Day and the events do generate a positive sense of celebration and community for those who participate in them. The events that are currently funded, while mainly social and participatory, do provide an important focal point for people to get together, for a specific seasonal occasion. Within these proposals, it is crucial that these opportunities are maintained for those participants who currently avail of this aspect of the Council's programme delivery.

3.9 OPTIONS

Therefore, in light of the requirement to ensure that those groups are not adversely effected in their desire to participate in a celebratory event around St. Patrick's Day, and to also ensure that the findings of the recent audit to create events that will make the City more vibrant around this time and promote a shared city identity, the following options are proposed:

- 1. Do nothing. Continue with the grants scheme in its current format.**

This option would mean that the Council rejects the findings of the audit and that the small scale projects would continue, with little Good Relations outcomes in terms of improving attitudes, creating shared and safe spaces and promoting positive cultural expression. It would mean officers continue to be tied up in the assessment and monitoring of another grants scheme, the outcomes of which are disproportionate to the resources required in its administration and monitoring. On the positive side, doing nothing would remove the requirement to change the Council's approach which could generate some negative reaction and also mean that groups would not lose out on any funding opportunities. Cost would be at £30,000 as is currently the case.

- 2. Cease with the grants scheme and channel the available budget into local groups to deliver programmes in and around St. Patrick's Day at a local level on a north, south, east and west basis that would become local hubs for Irish culture, music and heritage for that short period. This would be a positive celebration of culture, make the city more vibrant, and encourage people to come to the city for a more authentic and culturally sound product which would not just end after the parade has passed. This would attract more investment from families and individuals and support events within local neighbourhoods. The negative aspect of this approach would be the withdrawal of the grants scheme to local groups for their celebration events. The cost would be simply a diversion of the current £30,000 into this scheme, to be led by 4 local organisations.**

- 3. Dispense with the small grants scheme but channel funding to create celebratory events at a number of local community facilities in the north, south, east and west of the City, along with the Greater Shankill area, which would be open to those groups who currently avail of the St. Patrick's Day small grants scheme, to deliver the current outcomes of those small scale local events that are currently funded. In addition, provide resources to local cultural organisations at a local level on a north, south, east and west basis to deliver programmes in and around St. Patrick's Day that would become local hubs for Irish culture, music and heritage for that short period. This would mean that those groups currently in receipt of the small grants would not be adversely effected by the closure of the open grants programme, they would not have to undergo the application process, which for many has become too burdensome, and still, groups would be able to participate in a celebratory event, as they have done through the grants programme funding. Providing funding to local hubs to deliver events around St. Patrick's Day would also mean that there would be a positive celebration of culture, make the city more vibrant, and encourage people to come to the city for a more authentic and culturally sound product which would not just end after the parade has passed. This would attract more investment from families and individuals, and support events within local neighbourhoods. The cost would be in the region of £30,000: 5 X £3,000 for community based projects and £15,000 for cultural hub activity.**
- 4. Dispense with the current grants scheme but channel the existing available budget to deliver a St. Patrick's Day ceili in the Ulster Hall for all those groups who have traditionally availed of the St. Patrick's Day funding scheme, providing an event on the afternoon of the 17th March for those groups. Transport would be required as well as the event itself. In addition, provide resources to local groups at a local level on a north, south, east and west basis to deliver programmes in and around St. Patrick's Day that would become local hubs for Irish culture, music and heritage for that short period. This would mean that those groups currently in receipt of the small grants would not be adversely effected by the closure of the open grants programme, they would not have to undergo**

the application process, which for many has become too burdensome, and still, groups would be able to participate in a celebratory event, on a city-wide basis. Providing funding to local hubs to deliver events around St. Patrick's Day would also mean that there would be a positive celebration of culture, make the city more vibrant, and encourage people to come to the city for a more authentic and culturally sound product which would not just end after the parade has passed. This would attract more investment from families and individuals, and support events within local neighbourhoods. The cost would be in the region of £30,000: £10,000 for a tea dance and transport and £20,000 for local hub activities.

Officers would recommend Option 3 for the following reasons:

- it would more adequately reflect the findings of the recent audit
- it would remove the burden placed on (low capacity) groups to undergo the more complicated applications process, many of whom have already walked away from the application process in any case
- it would lessen the burden required in the administration and monitoring of a grants programme that is disproportionate to the groups and officers
- it maintains the space for such groups to enjoy a celebratory event to mark the occasion. Indeed this past St. Patrick's Day saw events in Community Centres. One such was in the Glen Community Centre, attended by the Lord Mayor, which brought 5 different groups from various parts of the City to a wonderful event which was cross community
- it would bring groups together on a local basis where they can meet other groups and build new relationships, as opposed to each small group delivering celebratory events in isolation
- it would provide resources to various groups in the city to act as hubs for culture, music and heritage activity that would develop a more authentic and culturally sound environment to the day

- it would provide opportunities and choices to visitors and residents to continue their St. Patrick's Day celebrations after the main civic events in the City Centre have finished and create a positive atmosphere which would contribute to minimising the potential for any anti-social behaviour around the City Centre

If option 3 is agreed by Members, officers will undertake a consultation exercise with previous recipients of the St. Patrick's Day small grants. Following this a report will be brought back to the Partnership.

It is the desire to deliver any changes for March 2018. St Patrick's Day grants are currently advertised through the Tranche 2 call for funding which opens in May 2017. A decision on the future delivery of the programme for 2018 would be required by this time.

3.10 Financial and Resource Implications

There are no financial implications contained within any of the 4 options. £30,000 has been included in the current Good Relations Action Plan for delivery of outcomes around the St. Patrick's Day period. There would be positive human resource implications for the Central Grants Unit and Good Relations Officers in not having to deliver the assessment and monitoring required within a grants programme.

3.11 Equality or Good Relations Implications

An equality screening exercise will be undertaken with current and former grants recipients on any proposals recommended to assess whether there could be a negative impact on older peoples groups and some groups within the Unionist Community on these proposed changes."

After discussion, the Partnership agreed:

- to adopt recommendations 1 and 3, as set out within the report;
- in terms of recommendation 2, that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee be recommended to adopt, in principle, option 3, as set out within paragraph 3.9 of the report, subject to further information being provided in due course around the detail of that proposal; and

**Shared City Partnership,
Monday, 10th April, 2017**

- iii. that discussions be held with the Council's Events Unit, with a view to enhancing and maximising participation in the St. Patrick's Day Parade.

Good Relations Small Grants Scheme 2017/2018

The Partnership was reminded that the Good Relations Grant-Aid Fund was funded jointly by the Executive Office (75%) and the Council (25%), through the District Council Good Relations Programme. The Senior Good Relations Officer reported that the first call for applications for funding under the 2017/2018 Fund, to undertake activities between April and September, 2017, had closed on 20th January. She explained that, by that date, a total of forty-nine applications had been received, requesting in total £286,240. Those had been assessed by Good Relations Officers, using pre-agreed criteria, following which thirty-one organisations had been recommended for funding totalling £142,940. A sample of submissions had then been assessed by an independent panel comprised of three officers from outside the Good Relations Unit, which had confirmed that they had been evaluated and scored in line with the criteria.

She informed the Partnership that, whilst the Council had yet to receive from the Executive Office confirmation of the level of funding which it would receive under the Good Relations Action Plan, it had allocated £220,000 towards two tranches of funding under the Good Relations Small Grants Programme.

The Senior Good Relations Officer reported further that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 17th February, had adopted a recommendation by the Partnership that, in line with the findings contained with a recent independent audit of the Council's Good Relations function, authority should be delegated to the Director of City and Neighbourhood Services to approve grants administered by the Good Relations Unit. Accordingly, she recommended that the Partnership note the following list of thirty-one organisations which had been approved for funding totalling £142,940 by the Director, details of which would be submitted also to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for notation:

Ref No	Organisation	Recommended Amount
1	South Belfast Partnership Board	7,185
2	Kabosh	4,890
3	East Belfast Community Development Agency	4,075
4	Whiterock Childrens Centre	3,075
5	Lower Ormeau Residents Action Group (LORAG)	6,390
6	South Belfast Alternatives	3,662.25
7	Barnardo's Family Learning And Integration Project	2,015
8	Conway Education Centre	4,865
9	The Fellowship Of Messines Association	4,020
10	Hannahstown Heritage & Cultural Society	7,400
11	Falls Women's Centre	10,000
12	Charter For Northern Ireland	6,692
13	St. Peters Immaculata Youth Centre	10,000
14	South Belfast Roundtable	3,350

**Shared City Partnership,
Monday, 10th April, 2017**

15	Women's Resource And Development Agency	3,982
16	Colin Neighbourhood Partnership	2,630
17	East Belfast Football Club	3,660
18	Westland Community Group	9,405
19	The HUBB	3,420
20	EPIC NI	3,180
21	PeacePlayers International - Northern Ireland (PPI-NI)	6,720
22	Belfast Community Circus School Limited	5,797.75
23	Teach Na Failte	600
24	Poleglass Community Association @ Sally Gardens	4,100
25	Ormeau Road Boxing Club	1,310
26	Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum	7,200
27	Forthspring Inter Community Group	2,075
28	Greater Village Regeneration Trust	3,860
29	Blackie River Community Groups	2,310
30	The Warehouse Project	2,550
31	British Red Cross	2,520

The Partnership adopted the recommendation.

Update on PEACE IV Programme

The Senior Good Relations Officer provided the Partnership with an update on the status of the Council's application for funding under the PEACE IV programme. She reported that the Stage 2 application and business plan for the Local Peace Action Plan had, on 10th February, been submitted to the Special European Union Programmes Body and that it had, subsequently, obtained clarification from Council officers on a number of finance and programming matters.

She explained that the Programmes Body had indicated that the Steering Committee, which was responsible for assessing applications submitted under the PEACE IV programme, was scheduled to meet in July and that the Council's final application and all additional information would be considered at that time.

The Partnership noted the information which had been provided and that it would receive a further update on the application at its meeting in May.

Venue for Next Meeting

The Partnership was reminded that it had agreed previously to hold a minimum of three meetings a year outside of the City Hall.

Accordingly, it agreed to hold its monthly meeting in May in the offices of the Suffolk Lenadon Interface Group, subject to that venue being available.

Chairperson